



ISRAEL NOTES THREAT OF IRAN-BUILT AIRFIELD IN LEBANON

Amir returns home

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 12, (KUNA): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah returned home on Tuesday after a private visit to Italy.

His Highness the Amir was welcomed upon arrival by His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, Acting Prime Minister and Interior Minister His Highness Sheikh Talal Al-Khaled Al-Sabah, Deputy Prime Minister and Defense Minister His Highness Sheikh Ahmad Al-Fahad Al-Sabah and Minister of Amiri Diwan Affairs His Highness Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah Al-Sabah, in addition to senior state officials.



In this photo made available by UME (Military Emergency Unit), members of the UME unit search for survivors under a collapsed building near Khair Anougal, Morocco, Monday.

Moroccan villagers mourn loss

Survivors struggle in 'scene of horror'

TAFEGHAGHTE, Morocco, Sept 12, (AP): His dead relatives have been dug out and buried, but the remnants of Musa Bouissirfane's former life are still trapped under rubble and dust in the ruins of the mud-brick Moroccan village of Tafeghaghte.

"It's incredibly challenging to lose your entire family and all your possessions," Bouissirfane said as tears welled in his eyes in the community less than a two-hour drive from Marrakech. "We have lost everything - our homes, our livestock and all our possessions."

Less than a week ago, he was excited about his daughter starting second grade. Now he's mourning her death. Far from ambulances and authorities, villagers could not retrieve her body for more than 14 hours, until Saturday afternoon. The earthquake also killed Bouissirfane's mother and father and a niece. His wife is hospitalized in an intensive care unit.

The toll of the massive earthquake that killed more than 2,800 people was on stark display Monday in remote villages such as Tafeghaghte, where more than half of the 160 inhabitants are thought to have died, including the four in Bouissirfane's family.

Bouissirfane joined with other survivors as they worked to clear debris and recover the dead. They toiled in a scene of horror: Bulldozers dug through dust and rubble hoping to find a body. The air in parts of the village was filled with the stench of dead cattle. People warned each other not to

walk near the few buildings that remained standing because they looked like they could topple at any moment.

"God save us," said Khadija Babamou, a resident of nearby Amizmiz who came to Tafeghaghte to check on relatives. As her eyes panned around the remnants of the village, she covered her mouth and began to cry while gripping her sister.

Also Monday, Moroccan Prime Minister Aziz Akhannouch met with King Mohammed VI and gave his first public remarks since the earthquake. The prime minister said the North African country was committed to funding rebuilding.

Although Tafeghaghte has received food and water, it needs much more.

"Residents lack the means to purchase even a single brick," said Bouissirfane, who is living in a tent and has only the change in his pocket.

The efforts in Tafeghaghte mirrored those happening across the disaster zone as Moroccan soldiers, non-governmental organizations and teams sent by Spain, Qatar, Britain and the United Arab Emirates arrived to assist with rescue efforts and immediate needs.

So far, Moroccan officials have accepted government aid from approved non-governmental organizations and just four countries - Spain, Qatar, Britain and the United Arab Emirates. Officials say they want to avoid a lack of coordination that "would be counterproductive."

Zain hosts ZGI Demo Day

— Details Page 7 —

Biden urged to boycott Bibi

JERUSALEM, Sept 12, (AP): Thousands of Israeli academics and artists have urged U.S. President Joe Biden and United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres to shun Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu during his visit to the United States next week, underlining the divide between Israel's far-right government and segments of the country's population.

In an open letter published Wednesday, over 3,500 signers, including well-known Israeli writer David Grossman and painter Tamar Getter, called on Biden and Guterres not to meet with Netanyahu or invite him to speak at the U.N. General Assembly's yearly meeting of world leaders.

The prime minister's office has said Netanyahu will travel to the

U.S. next week to visit high-tech leaders in California before flying to New York to address the U.N.

"Netanyahu accuses citizens against each other, threatens the country's security and economy, and turns his face away from the historical conflict that tears Israel apart - the forceful domination of the Palestinian people," the open letter read.

Netanyahu's public itinerary so far does not feature an appointment with Biden at the White House. Biden said earlier this year he had no intention to meet Netanyahu "in the near term," but the president softened his position in July, leaving open the possibility of informal talks between the leaders or a meeting on the sidelines of the General Assembly.

Biden waiver frees \$6bn for Iran in prisoner swap

Senators angry

WASHINGTON, Sept 12, (AP): The Biden administration has cleared the way for the release of five American citizens detained in Iran by issuing a blanket waiver for international banks to transfer \$6 billion in frozen Iranian money from South Korea to Qatar without fear of U.S. sanctions. In addition, as part of the deal, the administration has agreed to release five Iranian citizens held in the United States.

Secretary of State Antony Blinken signed off on the sanctions waivers late last week, a month after U.S. and Iranian officials said an agreement in principle was in place. Congress was not informed of the waiver decision until Monday, according to the notification, which was obtained by The Associated Press.

The outlines of the deal had been previously announced and the waiver was expected. But the notification marked the first time the administration said it was releasing five Iranian prisoners as part of the deal. The prisoners have not been named.

The waiver drew criticism from President Joe Biden from Republicans and others who say the deal will boost the Iranian economy at a time when Iran poses a growing threat to U.S. troops and Mideast allies.

On X, the platform formerly known as Twitter, Sen. Chuck Grassley of Iowa said "it's ridiculous for US to be blackmailed into paying \$6B for hostages which will help indirectly finance the number 1 foreign policy of Iran: terrorism." Sen. Tom Cotton of Arkansas accused Biden of "paying ransom to the world's worst state sponsor of terrorism."

Another Iran hawk, Sen. Ted Cruz, R-Texas, said the waivers were a sign the administration was secretly pursuing a broader deal with Iran to include more than the release of the detainees.

"Today's news confirms there has already been a side deal including a \$6 billion ransom and the release of Iranian operatives," Cruz said in a statement.

The waiver means that European, Middle Eastern and Asian banks will not run afoul of U.S. sanctions in converting the money frozen in South Korea and transferring it to Qatar's central bank, where it will be held for Iran to use for the purchase of humanitarian goods.

The transfer of the \$6 billion was the critical element in the prisoner release deal, which saw four of the five American detainees transferred from Iranian jails into house arrest last month.

Continued on Page 5



This satellite image from Planet Labs PBC shows an airfield in southern Lebanon that Israel alleges is an Iranian-built Hezbollah base on Saturday, Sept. 9, 2023. Israel accused Iran on Monday, Sept. 11 of building an airport in southern Lebanon to be used as a launchpad for attacks against Israelis across the border, signaling a possible escalation in tensions between the regional foes. (AP)



Streets flooded after storm Daniel in Marj, Libya, Monday, Sept. 11, 2023. The head of one of Libya's rival governments says that 2,000 people are feared dead in flooding that swept through the eastern parts of the north African nation. (AP)

Toll expected to reach into thousands

Libya says 10,000 missing in floods

Newswatch

New school timing to cut traffic jams

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 12, (KUNA): Kuwait's education ministry on Tuesday set new hours for school classes nationwide, saying the measure aims to ease traffic congestion ahead of the new academic year.

As per the new schedule approved by Education Minister Dr. Adel Al-Mane, nurseries start at 7:15 am and end at 12:05 pm, while elementary schools will begin at the same but would let students out an hour later at 1:15 pm, said a ministry statement.

Middle and high schools have had their class hours adjusted as well, with the former starting classes at 7:30 am until 1:40 pm, while attendance for high school students starts at 7:45 am until let out at 1:55 pm, according to the new schedule.

The new timings are set to come into effect for the 2023/2024 school year, added the statement.

MOSCOW: Minister of Economic Development Maxim Reshetnikov said on Tuesday that his country suggested visa-exemption for several countries including Kuwait.

Russian News Agency (TASS) quoted Reshetnikov during the Eastern Economic Forum, held in Vladivostok, as saying that Russia was proposing the scheme for citizens of Kuwait, Oman, Bahrain, Saudi Arabia and Malaysia.

He added that Russia is looking to increase tourist exchange with said countries as they are working towards establishing a visa-free tourism system with countries of the Middle East and South-east Asia. (KUNA)

CAIRO, Sept 12, (Agencies): Emergency workers uncovered hundreds of bodies as they dug through the wreckage of Libya's eastern city of Derna on Tuesday, and 10,000 people were reported still missing after floodwaters broke through dams and smashed through the city, washing away entire neighborhoods.

At least 700 recovered bodies have been buried so far, the health minister for eastern Libya said. Derna's ambulance authority put the current death toll at 2,300.

But the toll is likely to be far higher, in the thousands, said Tamer Ramadan, Libya envoy for the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. He told a U.N. briefing in Geneva via videoconference from Tunisia that at least 10,000 people were still missing.

The situation in Libya was "as devastating as the situation in Morocco," Ramadan said, referring to the deadly earthquake that hit near the city of Marrakech on Friday night.

The destruction came to Derna and other parts of eastern Libya on Sunday night, when Mediterranean storm Daniel pounded the coast. Residents said they heard loud explosions and realized that dams outside the city had collapsed, unleashing flash floods down Wadi Derna, a river running from the mountains through the city and into the sea.

The wall of water sweeping through Derna "erased everything in its way," said one resident, Ahmed Abdalla.

In Kuwait, Highness Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah sent on Monday a cable of condolences to Chairman of the Libyan Presidential Council, Dr. Mohammad Al-Manfi, expressing sorrow over victims of the floods that hit the North African country.

Reaffirming the State of Kuwait's full solidarity with the sisterly Arab nation in facing impacts of such natural disaster, His Highness prayed to Almighty Allah to bestow mercy upon the dead and speed recovery for the injured.

His Highness the Deputy Amir and Crown Prince Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah also sent on Monday a cable of condolences to Chairman of the Libyan Presidential Council, Dr. Mohammad Al-Manfi, express-

ing sorrow over victims of the floods that hit the North African country.

His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah sent a similar cable of condolences to Chairman of the Libyan Presidential Council, Dr. Mohammad Al-Manfi.

Meanwhile, Chairperson of Kuwait Red Crescent Society Dr. Hilal Al-Sayer declared on Tuesday the society readiness to send urgent aid to Libya to relieve victims of the floods caused by the hurricane "daniel."

Dr. Al-Sayer said in a statement to KUNA that the society is coordinating with the Libyan Red Crescent to determine pending needs in the regions ravaged by the hurricane.

He affirmed readiness to dispatch assistance to the victims in line with the State of Kuwait's policy to relieve the afflicted worldwide.

Videos posted online by residents showed large swaths of mud and wreckage where the raging waters had swept away the residential neighborhoods on both banks of the river. Multi-story apartment buildings that once were well back from the river had facades ripped away and concrete floors collapsed. Cars lifted by the water were left dumped on top of each other.

Residents in the city of some 90,000 were on their own in the immediate aftermath of the disaster, with authorities in eastern Libya saying they were unable to reach Derna. On Tuesday, most of the eastern government had arrived in the city.

Local emergency responders, including troops, government workers, volunteers and residents were digging through rubble to recover the dead. They also used inflatable boats to retrieve bodies from the water.

Footage showed dozens of bodies covered by blankets laid out in the yard of a hospital in Derna. Many bodies were believed trapped under rubble or had been washed out into the Mediterranean Sea, said eastern Libya's health minister, Othman Abduljaleel.

"We were stunned by the amount of destruction ... the tragedy is very significant, and beyond the capacity of Derna and the government," Abduljaleel told The Associated Press on the phone from Derna.



THE CONVERSATION

Seismologists can't predict an impending earthquake

Brief warnings after one starts best on offer

By Harold Tobin

University of Washington

Almost like aftershocks, questions about earthquake prediction tend to follow disasters like the one that occurred Sept. 8, 2023, in Morocco. Could advance notice have prevented some of the devastation? Unfortunately, useful predictions are still in the realm of science fiction.

University of Washington professor of seismology and geohazards Harold Tobin heads the Pacific Northwest Seismic Network. He explains the differences between predicting and forecasting earthquakes, as well as early warning systems that are currently in place in some areas.

In short, no. Science has not yet found a way to make actionable earthquake predictions. A useful prediction would specify a time, a place and a magnitude - and all of these would need to be fairly specific, with enough advance notice to be worthwhile.

For example, if I predict that California will have an earthquake in 2023, that would certainly come true, but it's not useful because California has many small earthquakes every day. Or imagine I predict a magnitude 8 or greater earthquake will strike in the Pacific Northwest. That is almost certainly true but doesn't specify when, so it's not helpful new information.

Earthquakes happen because the slow and steady motions of tectonic plates cause stresses to build up along faults in the Earth's crust. Faults are not really lines, but planes extending down miles into the ground. Friction due to the enormous pressure from the weight of all the overlying rock holds these cracks together.

An earthquake starts in some small spot on the fault where the stress over-

comes the friction. The two sides slip past each other, with the rupture spreading out at a mile or two per second. The grinding of the two sides against each other on the fault plane sends out waves of motion of the rock in every direction. Like the ripples in a pond after you drop in a stone, it's those waves that make the ground shake and cause damage.

Most earthquakes strike without warning because the faults are stuck - locked up and stationary despite the strain of the moving plates around them, and therefore silent until that rupture begins. Seismologists have not yet found any reliable signal to measure before that initial break.

On the other hand, earthquake science today has come a long way in what I'll call forecasting as opposed to prediction.

Seismologists can measure the movement of the plates with millimeter-scale precision using GPS technology and other means, and detect the places where stress is building up. Scientists know about the recorded history of past earthquakes and can even infer farther back in time using the methods of paleoseismology: the geologically preserved evidence of past quakes.

Putting all this information together allows us to recognize areas where conditions are ripe for a fault to break. These forecasts are expressed as the likelihood of an earthquake of a given size or greater in a region over a period of decades into the future. For example, the U.S. Geological Survey estimates the odds of a magnitude 6.7 or greater quake in the San Francisco Bay Area over the next 30 years is 72%.

Only about 1 in 20 damaging earthquakes have foreshocks - smaller quakes

that precede a larger one in the same place. By definition they aren't foreshocks, though, until a bigger one follows. The inability to recognize whether an earthquake in isolation is a foreshock is a big part of why useful prediction still eludes us.

However, in the past decade or so, there have been a number of massive earthquakes of magnitude 8 or more, including the 2011 magnitude 9.0 Tohoku earthquake and tsunami in Japan and a 2014 magnitude 8.1 in Chile. Interestingly, a larger fraction of those very biggest earthquakes seem to have exhibited some precursory events, either in the form of a series of foreshocks detected by seismometers or sped-up movements of the nearby Earth's crust detected by GPS stations, called "slow slip events" by earthquake scientists.

These observations suggest perhaps there really are precursory signals for at least some huge quakes. Maybe the sheer size of the ensuing quake made otherwise imperceptible changes in the region of the fault prior to the main event more detectable. We don't know, because so few of these greater than magnitude 8 earthquakes happen. Scientists don't have a lot of examples to go on that would let us test hypotheses with statistical methods.

In fact, while earthquake scientists all agree that we can't predict quakes today, there are now essentially two camps: In one view, earthquakes are the result of complex cascades of tiny effects - a sensitive chain reaction of sorts that starts with the proverbial butterfly wing flapping deep within a fault - so they're inherently unpredictable and will always remain so. On the other

Continued on Page 3



A woman tries to recover some of her possessions from her home which was damaged by an earthquake in the village of Tafeghaghgte, near Marrakech, Morocco, Monday, Sept. 11, 2023. Rescue crews expanded their efforts on Monday as the earthquake's death toll continued to climb to more than 2,400 and displaced people worried about where to find shelter. Inset: A man reacts as he speaks about the damage caused by the earthquake to his home, in the old Medina of Marrakech, Morocco. (AP)

Artisans hit hardest

The 'marginals' of Marrakech

By Abbey Stockstill

Southern Methodist University

A powerful earthquake that hit close to the medieval city of Marrakech in Morocco on Sept. 8, 2023, has killed thousands and injured many more. It has also put at risk buildings and monuments of major historic importance, among them the minaret of the Kutubiyya mosque, a 12th-century structure that is an icon of the city.

The Medina, the medieval walled portion of the city, is now littered with rubble. The cultural significance of the Medina extends far beyond the antiques and trinkets sold to tourists.

It is the location of numerous artisan workshops that make the ceramic tiles, carved plaster and intricate woodwork that decorate the city. Many of these workshops have maintained traditional methods for centuries, transmitting skill sets down through the generations.

Part of Morocco's bid for Marrakech's UNESCO status was based on these craft traditions being "intangible cultural heritage," which the U.N. describes as knowledge or skills that are passed down orally rather than in written form.

I've been working in Marrakech since 2014, living there on and off as I completed research on a book about the development of Marrakech as a medieval metropolis. Although my work focused on the 12th century, the more I learned about the city, the more I realized that most of the urban fabric and architectural sites I was looking at were thanks to the conservation efforts of local workshops.

The UNESCO designation was a historical acknowledgment of the tradi-

tions of poor and rural communities that can often get left out of larger conversations about art history. It is precisely these communities that have maintained Marrakech's architectural heritage for generations, but the earthquake has destroyed the workshops and residences of many in the Medina.

These poor and rural communities are at their most vulnerable just when their skills will be needed the most to help rebuild the city after this disaster.

Marrakech was founded in 1070 by the Almoravid dynasty, which derived from a tribe that was part of a larger non-Arab confederation of peoples now referred to as Berbers.

It was one of the first major cities in the wider Islamic west, known as the Maghrib - now comprising Morocco, Algeria and parts of Tunisia - to be founded by a group indigenous to the region.

The majority of the community spoke a dialect of Tamazight, an Afro-Asiatic language distinct from Arabic. It was primarily an oral language, meaning that knowledge was more commonly handed down via poetic stories rather than written texts.

Some Arabic sources described the Almoravids as "unsophisticated" and "illiterate," yet the evidence of their architectural and artistic heritage suggests otherwise. In Marrakech, they built an elegantly proportioned dome known as the Qubba al-Barudiyyin and commissioned the elaborate wooden minbar (pulpit) that now sits in the Badia Palace Museum.

They were followed by the Almohad dynasty, another largely indigenous

group, that faced similar accusations in historical accounts despite building the Kutubiyya minaret, Marrakech's signature monument.

The city's origins as a Berber capital contributed to making Marrakech the epicenter of contemporary Moroccan national identity, rooted in a pride and independence centuries old. Whereas other North African cities had roots in Arab or Roman tradition, Marrakech could claim to be distinctly Moroccan.

In the face of Ottoman expansion in the 16th century, the kingdom of Morocco, based out of Marrakech, was the sole region of the Arabic-speaking world to maintain their autonomy from Turkish control.

Although the French and the Spanish would compete for colonial rule of the country, the Moroccan independence movements of the 20th century were largely based out of Marrakech. The city was so prone to revolt that the French administration moved the colonial capital further north to Rabat.

Even the word "Morocco" is derived from an etymological transmutation of "Marrakech."

And yet, recovering the city's significant past is an exercise in reading between the lines.

The oral traditions of the city's founders were rarely faithfully transcribed. Written sources are often scattered and unpublished, and those that do exist are often written by outsiders or visitors to the city.

The Ottomans were excellent record-keepers, enabling scholars to explore

Continued on Page 3

editor's choice



Prayer Timings

Fajr	04:11	Asr	15:15
Sunrise ..	05:31	Maghrib ..	17:58
Zohr	11:44	Isha	19:15

Local

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

Expected weather for the next 24 hours:

By Day: Very hot and relatively humid over coastal areas with light variable wind to light to moderate northwesterly wind with speeds of 06-26 km/h.

Weather

By Night: Hot to rather hot and relatively humid over coastal areas with light variable wind to light to moderate northwesterly wind with speeds of 06-30 km/h.

Station Max Exp Min Rec
Kuwait City 47 35

Kuwait Airport	47	31
Abdaly	47	30
Jahra	48	33
Salmiyah	43	35
Ahmadi	40	35
Nuwaisib	45	30
Wafra	47	29

Marrakech

Continued from Page 2

extensive centralized archives on every part of the Arabic world - except Morocco, whose archives remain dispersed and underfunded. Historians have had to work obliquely to uncover concrete details, relying on archaeological and anthropological research to supplement oral traditions.

Integral to these efforts was the role of craft traditions in and around Marrakech. Craft was a key point of France's colonial efforts in Marrakech, where they established "artisan schools" in the Medina to ostensibly document and preserve their methods. In doing so, the French Protectorate - which ruled the country from 1912 to 1956 - created a kind of living nostalgia within the Medina, conflating the people who actually lived there with the city's medieval past.

This effectively created a form of economic and social segregation in which craftsmen and their families were siloed into the old town, while the wealthier expatriates and tourists occupied the Ville Nouvelle outside the medieval walls.

At the same time, these craft traditions are also what made it possible to preserve and restore many of the sites in and around Marrakech that now draw thousands of tourists each year.

The Qasba Mosque, the city's "second" major mosque after the Kutubiyya and originally built between 1185 and 1189, underwent successive restorations in both the 17th and 21st centuries after political instability led to their decline. In both cases, local artisans were employed to renovate the mosque's stucco walls and the mosaic tile work known as zellij.

The 11th-century Almoravid pulpit required a team of Moroccan craftsmen to successfully restore the minbar's intricate marquetry.

Artisans have also been important ambassadors for Morocco's place in the larger canon of Islamic art, building a courtyard as part of the Metropolitan Museum of Art's 2011 renovation of their Islamic galleries using 14th-century techniques and materials.

With the Marrakech Medina partially destroyed, many of these artisans and workshops will face tough choices regarding their future. Gentrification over the last decade has priced many residents out of their ancestral homes, and many of these workshops operate on thin margins - too thin to both pay for damages and retain control over their property.

Parts of the city walls cracked in the earthquake, and an 18th-century mosque in the main square lost its minaret. The historic 12th-century site of Tinmal, not far from Marrakech and nestled in the Atlas Mountains, has also collapsed.

The human toll of the earthquake is still being tallied, and the material damage is likely to be extensive. Nothing can replace the loss of life. Yet the history and resilience of a place are instrumental in any recovery.

It will be the role of Marrakech's intangible heritage - its artists and artisans - to rebuild after this disaster. In the midst of narratives about caliphs and sultans, philosophers and poets, it can be easy to forget that the people who built these places often went unnamed in the historical texts.

But these artists will need support to maintain Marrakech's history, to preserve the past for future historians to discover.

The Conversation is an independent and non-profit source of news, analysis and commentary from academic experts. The Conversation is wholly responsible for the content. (AP)

Warnings

Continued from Page 2

hand, some geophysicists believe we may one day unlock the key to prediction, if we can just find the right signals to measure and gain enough experience.

One real breakthrough today is that scientists have developed earthquake early warning systems like the USGS ShakeAlert now operating in California, Oregon and Washington state. These systems can send out an alert to residents' mobile devices and to operators of critical machinery, including utilities, hospitals, trains and so on, providing warning of anywhere from a few seconds to more than a minute before shaking begins.

This sounds like earthquake prediction, but it is not. Earthquake early warning relies on networks of seismometers that detect the very beginning of an earthquake on a fault and automatically calculate its location and magnitude before the damaging waves have spread very far. The sensing, calculating and data transfer all happen near the speed of light, while the seismic waves move more slowly. That time difference is what allows early warning.

For example, if an earthquake begins off the coast of Washington state beneath the ocean, coastal stations can detect it, and cities like Portland and Seattle could get tens of seconds of warning time. People may well get enough time to take a life safety action like "Drop, Cover and Hold On" - as long as they are sufficiently far away from the fault itself.

While earthquake prediction has often been referred to as the "holy grail" of seismology, it actually would present some real dilemmas if ever developed.

First of all, earthquakes are so infrequent that any early methods will inevitably be of uncertain accuracy. In the face of that uncertainty, who will make the call to take a major action, such as evacuating an entire city or region? How long should people stay away if a quake doesn't materialize? How many times before it's a boy-who-cried-wolf situation and the public stops heeding the orders? How do officials balance the known risks from the chaos of mass evacuation against the risk from the shaking itself? The idea that prediction technology will emerge fully formed and reliable is a mirage.

It is often said in the field of seismology that earthquakes don't kill people, buildings do. Scientists are already good enough today at forecasting earthquake hazards that the best course of action is to redouble efforts to construct or retrofit buildings, bridges and other infrastructure so they're safe and resilient in the event of ground shaking in any area known to be at risk from large future quakes. These precautions will pay off in lives and property saved far more than a hoped-for means of earthquake prediction, at least for the foreseeable future. (AP)

Bid to enhance company's growth, strategic initiatives

Neo Capital appoints Babak Soltani as new CEO

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 12: Neo Capital, a leading global real estate investment management company, has announced the appointment of Babak Soltani as its Chief Operating Officer (CEO). Babak will be based in Dubai, the United Arab Emirates, and will assume his position with immediate effect.

As CEO, Babak will be responsible for strengthening Neo Capital's market position with the aim of increasing the company's assets under management from approximately US\$1 billion to US\$3 billion in the medium term. Babak will also lead initiatives to expand the company's investor base in the GCC countries, in addition to leading acquisitions and asset management, to ensure optimal company performance and value creation for investors and shareholders.

Babak Soltani, CEO of Neo Capital, has more than 25 years of experience in real estate investments. Before joining Neo Capital, Babak served as General Manager of the Real Estate Group at Investcorp. This investment has successfully grown Investcorp's real estate

assets under management to over \$10 billion. Prior to Investcorp, Babak held senior positions at Addax Bank, Bahrain Financial Harbor and Taib Bank. Babak holds a Master of Science in Accounting and a Bachelor's degree in Accounting from the University of Texas at Arlington.

In this regard, Hani Obaid, Founder and Chairman of Neo Capital, said: "We are pleased to welcome the new CEO Babak Soltani. His extensive experience in the real estate sector, coupled with his strategic and leadership skills, will have an effective role in the next phase of Neo Capital's growth. This appointment will add structure and greater focus to customer service to the company."

Babak Soltani, CEO, added: "I look forward to joining the Neo Capital at this time in the growth journey. It is the right timing for the markets and I see great potential and opportunities to enhance the company's growth. With an integrated and highly experienced work team, we have the skills required to achieve our strategic goals and seize more opportunities to create value for our customers."

Neo Capital was founded in 2015. The company's assets are worth approximately \$1 billion, and it has a proven track record in real estate investment in the United States, Western Europe, and the United Kingdom. The company

recently acquired the Royal Albert Docks in Liverpool, is a historic site and tourist attraction in Liverpool, United Kingdom.

Neo Capital was established with the aim of creating and leading unique investment opportunities in the global real estate market to give our investors confidence in achieving high returns on their investments, benefiting from our long experience as founders and the trust of our clients that we have gained over many years.

Many people interested in investing are looking for real opportunities to invest their money in projects that will bring them high returns.

Some of these people are learning about investing for the first time, while others are experienced investors, business and institutional owners, CEOs and financial advisors who are looking to expand their investment portfolios.

Hence, "we created Neo Capital to be the largest and most trusted partner in driving direct opportunities for all those interested in unique investments," said Babak Soltani.



Babak Soltani



Minister queried on 'deal' for KD1b defense systems

MP: How many firms bid offers?

By Saeed Mahmoud Saleh
Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 12: MP Adel Al-Damkhi has proposed transferring the Criminal Investigation General Department, Forensic Medicine General Department and the concerned laboratories from the Ministry of Interior to the Ministry of Justice.

He explained that his proposal is aimed at developing the justice system and for the aforementioned entities to become autonomous.

'Conduct drug tests in state institutions'

By Abdul Rahman Al-Shammari
Al-Seyassah Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 12: On the basis of the principle "an ounce of prevention is better than a pound of cure" and in a strategic pre-emptive strike to protect society, especially young people, from falling into the pits of white poisons, the Chairman of the Ethics Committee in the National Assembly MP Muhammad Hayef Al-Mutairi revealed that he, along with the Director General of the Public Authority for Applied Education and Training (PAAET) Dr. Hassan Al-Fajjam, researched on generalizing the tests for drugs and psychotropic substances in some state institutions, especially educational ones.

In a press statement issued after the meeting on Monday, MP Hayef explained that his meeting with Dr. Al-Fajjam focused on the mechanisms for conducting periodic tests on students applying to study at PAAET, and considering it as one of the conditions for admission to its colleges. The goal is to protect educational institutions from the spread of this scourge.

The problem of the spread of drugs is one of the files assigned by the parliament's Ethics Committee to study this phenomenon, its repercussions, and the proposed solutions to address its effects and limit its spread in society particularly among students. He added, "Statistics issued by judicial authorities from time to time indicate that drugs are the common denominator in most crimes".

MP Al-Hayef stressed the importance of cooperation of all state ministries, especially Education, Health, Awqaf, and Communication, in combating the phenomenon, along with the strenuous efforts exerted by the security services to confront this scourge and its promoters.

According to informed security sources, this approach comes in line with the fact that they had confirmed more than once that the Ministry of Interior does not clap alone. It is playing its role in controlling drugs, but confronting this imminent danger requires an integrated plan with the participation of all state agencies. Kuwait has become targeted by a mafia gang that smuggles and peddles narcotics more than ever before.

of Education bear a great responsibility towards educating students. We consider it a duty that cannot be neglected.

"We must work with transparency, diligence, and dedication in order to achieve our desired goals in the field of educational development, and to overcome challenges with team spirit and cooperation to ensure the provision of a safe, high-quality educational environment for all."

Dr. Al-Manea confirmed the continuation of his inspection tours of schools in all levels and educational zones before and after students start going to their schools next week, in order to determine the reality of the situation and ensure the availability of all necessary needs, monitor all challenges that may arise under any circumstances, and find appropriate solutions for them.

In a press statement issued during his inspection tours of Jahra and Farwaniya schools yesterday, Dr. Al-Manea said, "All of us in the Ministry

5-year 'Schengen' for Kuwaitis

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 12, (KUNA): The EU Mission to Kuwait stated that the European Commission adopted specific rules regarding the multiple-entry Schengen visa for Kuwaitis.

The new visa system "Cascade" will enable eligible Kuwaitis who apply to obtain Schengen visas, including those traveling to Schengen countries for the first time to obtain visas valid for 5 years, it added in a statement Tuesday.

The mission stressed that this decision reflects the European Union's firm belief that Kuwait is an important partner.

The Schengen Area consists of 27 European countries, including 23 member countries of the European Union: Belgium, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Germany, Estonia, Greece, Spain, France, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Hungary, Malta, Netherlands, Austria - Poland - Portugal - Slovenia - Slovakia - Finland - Sweden, in addition to 4 countries outside the European Union: Iceland - Liechtenstein - Norway - Switzerland.

nance company - Cushman & Wakefield LLP.

MP Khalid Al-Tamar asked Minister of Social Affairs and State Minister for Communication Affairs Fahd Al-Shulab about the vacant senior and supervisory positions at Kuwait Ports Authority in 2022 and 2023, if these vacancies have been filled, and procedures adopted for filling up these vacancies.

MP Mehalhal Al-Mudhaf forwarded queries to Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defense Sheikh Ahmed Al-Fahd about the contract with the Norwegian company KONGSBERG for the supply of short to medium range air defense systems valued at more than KD1 billion.

He demanded for copies of the minutes of meetings of the concerned committee and the decision on forming this committee.

He also inquired if other companies submitted offers for the supply of air defense equipment or system called NASAMS that was provided by KONGSBERG, if the latter was chosen without considering the other offers, if NASAMS is experienced in the field and proofs if the response is 'yes'.

Legal action vowed for negligence

By Abdul Rahman Al-Shammari
Al-Seyassah Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 12: The Minister of Education and Higher Education Dr. Adel Al-Manea affirmed that he will not be lenient in dealing with any shortcomings or negligence in the preparation for the academic year and the readiness of schools.

He said, "We will conduct an evaluation of the performance of each party in all relevant sectors, and will not hesitate to take the necessary legal measures to hold those who are negligent accountable, in order to correct the situation and improve performance."

In a press statement issued during his inspection tours of Jahra and Farwaniya schools yesterday, Dr. Al-Manea said, "All of us in the Ministry

Other Voices

For those who dream US fall

I am not surprised by the positions of leftist academics or intellectuals, or what remains of them, or the positions of the semi-educated, and I am not far from them. If they "get high" with the news of hostility to the West, and America in particular, or stand with Russia in its war against Ukraine, it is not out of love for it, but rather out of hatred to America and its "henchmen", but I am painfully surprised by the positions of businessmen, the sons and grandchildren of businessmen, and capitalists to the core, towards America and everything it represents, and their insistence of standing on the side of the anti-Western forces with all that the West represents in terms of liberalism in life and work, and they "get drunk" even if a hurricane struck a Western country, they are completely confident that if they were forced one day to choose between resorting to Russia or the West, they would not hesitate for a moment to choose the latter!

I am not defending America. In my opinion, all major powers are criminals and are looking out for their own interests, but there is a criminal who is less criminal than others. If one day we became as powerful as America, our crimes would not be less than their crimes.

The current Homo sapiens, to which all modern humans belong, and whose species dates back no more than 200,000 years, invented hundreds of inventions throughout its history, but researchers agree that the greatest of them are three:

Fire: Controlling it enabled him to advance human civilization, as it provided him with warmth, light, cooking, and protection.

The wheel was the second most important invention, and the people of Mesopotamia knew it 5,500 years ago. Its invention helped man develop transportation, agriculture, industry, and construction, and convey knowledge to the rest of the world. Without it, there would have been no vehicle, train, or plane.

The third invention is the printing press, which Gutenberg invented in the fifteenth century, and it revolutionized the dissemination of knowledge, culture, and beliefs.

As for the modern era, the mobile phone is considered, in my view, the most influential, important, and dangerous device in the lives of people in the twenty-first century, both positively and negatively, after it marginalized or eliminated the role of the landline, television, cinema, fax, telex, camera, photocopying devices, and messaging, paper, printed newspapers, paid external calls, the laptop, the watch, the lamp, the office diary and calendar, the alarm clock, the pocket mirror, the compass, tools for measuring heights and distances, the dictionary, and the linguistic assistant, and it has become an important tool for detecting crimes, violations and accidents, because it is present at the moment in everyone's hand.

Even when waiting in the most boring places, such as clinics and hospitals, has also become a normal thing, and it has become used for walking, knowing the regularity of the heartbeat, monitoring the factory, home, and office remotely, a notebook to save secret numbers, and writing down ideas and notes, a recording machine, and its holder is richer than a pen.

It has become possible to operate all office, home, and factory devices with it, remotely and closely, and it is a tool for simultaneous translation to and from any language, and with it bank accounts are managed, without having to visit the bank, and a tool for transferring and receiving money, and dozens of other functions and tasks that there is not room to mention.

Despite all its advantages, the mobile phone is considered a small American invention, and yet one of its smallest products, the AirPod, which is used to answer cell phone calls without using hands, has generated huge revenues, despite its relative short lifespan.

It began marketing in 2016, and yet in 2022 it achieved revenues amounting to \$14.5 billion, half of which were profits, and this is only one product, for the giant Apple company, whose market value is close to \$3 trillion, and it is a company that has excelled in the gradual implementation of a long-term strategy, since its founding, 43 years ago, which was famous for always offering new products, so that Apple actually knew what the phone user wanted or needed, before he knew what he wanted, and this is the secret of its greatness and strength, and the strength and greatness of America.

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Kuwait's financial wealth to grow by 2.7%

Influence of UHNW individuals anticipated to remain consistent



Group photo during the Chinese Embassy celebration.

Chinese Embassy marks medical team 47th anniversary

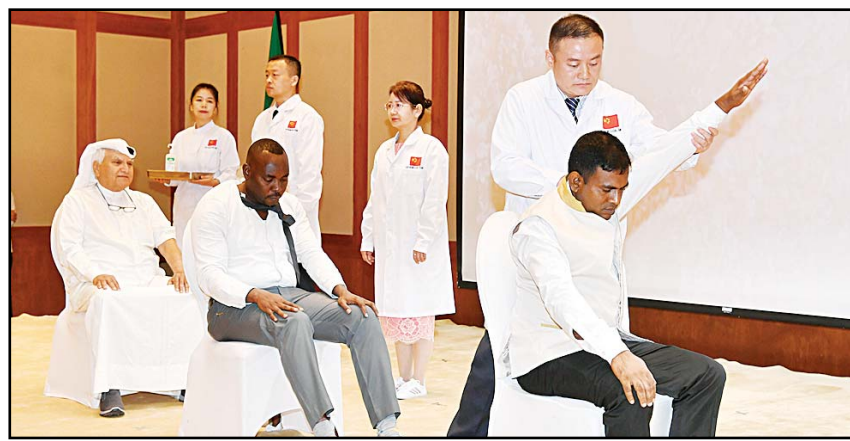
Kuwait aspires to strengthen ties with China

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 12, (KUNA): Kuwait's Minister of Health Ahmad Al-Awadhi on Monday expressed aspiration to strengthen relations with China.

During a celebration held by the Chinese Embassy marking the 47th anniversary for dispatching the first Chinese medical team to the country, Al-Awadhi said, "it is an example of cooperation in accordance with agreement signed between both countries in the health sector field."

Viewing the Chinese team as a model, especially in traditional medicine and rehabilitation, Minister Al-Awadhi voiced anticipation for an integrated team specialized in organ transplantation as well.

On his part, Chinese Ambassador to Kuwait Zhang Jianwei pointed out that more than 810,000 patients were treated by the Chinese team in Kuwait since 1976.



Review of Chinese remedies.

KUNA photos

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 12: Kuwait's financial wealth is anticipated to experience a steady Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) of 2.7% in new wealth, rising to USD 302 billion by 2027, according to a new report by Boston Consulting Group (BCG).

The BCG report, titled 'Global Wealth Report 2023: Resetting the Course,' reveals that equities and investment funds in Kuwait continue to make up the largest asset class at 57% of total personal wealth in 2022, while bonds are expected to grow the fastest with a CAGR of 6.5% between 2022 - 2027. Life insurance & pensions are set to become the third largest asset class by 2027.

"Representing 3.6% of the Middle East and Africa's financial wealth in 2022 and growing at a rate of 1.7% per annum from 2017 to reach USD 265 billion in 2022, Kuwait's trajectory signals calculated risk-taking and continued economic development, despite global market challenges," said Markus Massi, Managing Director and Senior Partner at BCG.

UHNW Individuals Remain Major Contributors to Kuwait's Wealth Growth

In 2022, a significant portion of Kuwait's wealth, approximately 24%, originated from Ultra High Net Worth (UHNW) individuals worth more than USD 100 million. The influence of these individuals is anticipated to continue to remain consistent until 2027. Furthermore, individuals with wealth between USD 1 million - USD 20 million held 24% of Kuwait's wealth in 2022, with this expected to remain the same in 2027. A significant 30% of the wealth was held by individuals' worth under USD250,000, which is expected to remain the same by 2027.

"The concentration of Kuwait's wealth in the hands of UHNW individuals garners its sustained growth. These individuals are driving investments in the region and their contribution to the economic landscape is significant," said Markus Massi, Managing Director and Senior Partner at BCG.

Real Assets and Liabilities on the Rise

The report also presents notable findings on Kuwait's real assets and liabilities. Real assets in Kuwait grew by 1% per year from 2017 to 2022, reaching USD 219 billion, and are projected to increase by 3.3% per annum to USD 257 billion by 2027.

Simultaneously, Kuwait's liabilities sector expanded by 4.9% per annum to USD34.1 billion during the same period and is expected to grow by 3% per annum to USD 39.6 billion by 2027. This balanced growth invokes a financial profile of a nation that is confident in taking calculated risks, potentially enhancing the all-around growth narrative.

Achieving Sustainable Profitability in Wealth Management

The report provides a detailed analysis of the performance of wealth managers across different areas of their businesses, as well as market-sizing and the quest for

long-term profitability. It outlines eight initiatives on both the revenue and cost sides that can aid firms in positioning themselves optimally for the future. The aim is to provide actionable information and insights for wealth managers looking for a competitive advantage amidst a challenging marketplace and tough overall economic conditions.

On the revenue side, the strategies include scalable client acquisition, distinctive private-market offerings, revising product shelves towards fixed-income products, and incorporating generative artificial intelligence (GenAI) in financial advice. For cost reduction, the focus is on end-to-end (E2E) process review, making informed

shoring decisions, utilizing third-party tech and operational solutions, and simplifying products and services via advice-like discretionary portfolio management (DPM) to streamline operations and cater to various client needs effectively.

"To ensure long-term profitability in wealth management, strategic adoption of initiatives such as scalable client acquisition, distinctive private-market offerings, and the integration of new technologies into financial advice can accelerate revenue generation. Simultaneously, focusing on reviews, decisions, and tech-based solutions is key to strategic cost management. By redesigning wealth management with these insights, we can unlock a future of growth, efficiency, and scalability," concluded Nimrod Pais, Managing Director, and Partner at BCG.

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About Boston Consulting Group

Boston Consulting Group partners with leaders in business and society to tackle their most important challenges and capture their greatest opportunities. BCG was the pioneer in business strategy when it was founded in 1963. Today, we work closely with clients to embrace a transformational approach aimed at benefiting all stakeholders—empowering organizations to grow, build sustainable competitive advantage, and drive positive societal impact.

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Laying the foundation stone for the construction of a residential village for displaced people in Marib, Yemen, with Kuwaiti funding.

Namaa launches housing project in Marib

EDEN, Sept 12, (KUNA): Kuwait NAMA Charity started on Monday building a 50-unit housing project for the displaced in the Yemeni governorate of Marib, as part of (Kuwait By Your Side) campaign.

Namaa Director of the Relief Department Khaled Al-Shamri said the housing project includes, in addition to the 50 units, a health clinic, a school with all its facilities, a mosque, an artesian well, and a public garden.

He added that the project aims to shelter 50 displaced Yemeni families, improve and stabilize their living conditions, and provide education for their children.

NAMA has also launched its first medical and surgical camp in the area last week where 500 patients were treated for several conditions, pointed Al-Shamri.

On his part, Deputy Director of the Executive Unit for Displaced Persons in Marib, Ali Abu Rabb expressed his gratitude and appreciation towards Kuwait for providing humanitarian aid for Yemen in all different crisis, affirming the deep brotherly feelings shared between the two countries.

THE GUEST SHOW
WITH Host CHAITALI B ROY
Guest MR SALMAN BOLOND
DATE: 14 SEP 2023 TO AM & 10 PM
TIME: 9:33 PM / 9:33 AM
DIRECTOR: ANEES BACKER
RADIO KUWAIT INTERNATIONAL ENGLISH STATION

The Guest Show poster

Salman Bolond on TGS

In the 20th century, traditional crafts around the world started declining because of increasing modernisation and mechanisation. Kuwait was no exception.

Home to several traditional crafts including Sadu, Syaqaq (jewelry making), Bisht making, ship making, Kuwait also began to see a slow erosion of material culture. Individual and state efforts became important for the survival of traditional crafts.

Recently, Salman Bolond, Former Superintendent of Kuwait National Museum, and some like-minded people like him co-founded The Old Crafters Association to help revive traditional crafts and give them a new lease of life.

In this episode of The Guest Show (TGS), he speaks to Chaitali B. Roy about his involvement with history and heritage, the importance of traditional craft and the urgent need to preserve heritage craft for the future.

'Need mechanisms, new legislation to prepare for the upcoming stages'

"KUWAIT is renowned for its commitment to its Constitution and the profound respect of its people for its principles, which have cultivated a culture of strength and progress. Article 6 of the Constitution explicitly states that "the system of government in Kuwait is democratic, and sovereignty belongs to the nation, the ultimate source of all powers," columnist **Dr Ghadir Muhammad Asiri** wrote for **Al-Qabas** daily.

"Moreover, Article 36 of the Constitution underscores the guarantee of freedom of opinion, scientific research, and the right of every individual to express their thoughts through various means, whether verbal, written, or otherwise.

"In recent times, there has been a noticeable trend towards the introduction of proposed laws, originating from both Parliament and the government, which appear to encroach upon individual freedoms and aim to impose certain societal norms.

"These proposals often touch on subjects ranging from freedom of thought to freedom of expression, including the citizens' right to critique the services and rights provided by state institutions. In a world characterized by progress, critical thinking, and comparative analysis, it is disheartening to observe that some legislative initiatives harkens back to a more traditional approach, fostering silence and undermining citizens' awareness of the potential delays they may face in their country.



Dr Ghadir Asiri

"One of the earliest official documents to safeguard human rights related to thought and expression is the French Declaration of Human Rights, established in the wake of the French Revolution in 1789. Article 11 of this declaration asserts the principle of "the free circulation of ideas and opinions." This fundamental right allows citizens to express their thoughts freely while bearing responsibility for any misuse of this freedom as specified by law.

"At the global level, in 1948, the United Nations General Assembly adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which enshrines "the right of everyone to enjoy freedom of opinion and expression." In 1966, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights was ratified, further emphasizing the principles outlined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

"This covenant, binding upon the countries that ratify it, explicitly recognizes in Article 19 the right of every individual to hold opinions without facing harassment. This underscores the importance of affording individuals the right to think critically, analyze, and share their ideas.

"Such freedoms empower individuals to engage in self-examination and critical thinking, promoting depth and focus. However, these essential qualities are sometimes lacking in educational systems and within society, which can hinder progress and development in the modern era.

"Many countries worldwide are deeply engaged in the exploration of artificial intelligence (AI) and are forging connections with leading nations in this field. The implications of AI are vast, impacting military, economic, technological, medical, and security sciences.

"As AI strives to reduce human error and align priorities while addressing emerging challenges, it is crucial to approach this transformative technology with utmost caution. The primary challenge AI poses lies in its ability to eliminate human errors and manage new and evolving gaps.

"Consequently, it is imperative that Kuwait, including its legislative bodies, demonstrates a readiness to establish mechanisms and enact new legislation to prepare for the impending stages. This readiness necessitates comprehensive preparation of citizens and society, including revisions to educational curricula to align with the future.

"In a landscape where cybersecurity breaches affect not only government agencies but also individuals and where wars are increasingly waged electronically, adapting to global challenges calls for unconventional thinking and strategic planning.

Also:

"In a few days, as schools and classes resume, we will once again find ourselves entangled in the familiar saga of traffic congestion and interminable waits at

traffic signals," columnist **Hassam Al-Issa** wrote for **Al-Jarida** daily.

"The headlines will be flooded with press releases discussing the crisis, detailing the General Traffic Department's strategies to mitigate it, and featuring statements and media interviews with senior officials. We'll witness a cacophony of applause and criticism, yet, in the end, the issue remains unresolved, much like the chronic crises that afflict our state.

"The GTD, like many other government agencies is plagued by seemingly incurable ailments, can offer nothing more than stopgap solutions.

"This state of perpetual crisis management is perpetuated by a culture deeply entrenched in our society. We rely on temporary painkillers to postpone the inevitable reckoning with these crises, never daring to tackle their root causes head-on. Addressing these issues requires boldness, courage, a readiness to confront, and a willingness to make sacrifices, qualities that often elude us.

"We will inevitably hear calls for changes to traffic laws and stricter penalties for offenders, rooted in a punitive mindset of "we will rule with an iron fist."

"However, the problem lies not in the abundance or strictness of laws but in our ability to enforce them effectively on the ground. No one is demanding the establishment of a subway network or the development of public transportation, as seen in other Gulf countries.

"Instead, we hope for the Ministry of Interior to simply enforce traffic laws on the reckless and inconsiderate individuals, who, regrettably, are plentiful on our roads. These individuals wreak havoc and show disdain for others because they perceive the streets as their personal domain.

"They continue this behavior with impunity, as they are rarely pursued by patrolling officers. Our overreliance on traffic cameras on highways and speed bumps on inner streets has proven wholly ineffective in curbing the audacious actions of these individuals.

"We dare not dream of radical solutions while our state institutions seem content with managing street wars and enduring traffic gridlocks.

"We cannot aspire to be like Singapore, which effectively tackled its traffic crisis by imposing substantial taxes on car sales and road usage while concurrently developing a robust public transportation system.

"Our legacy is one of complacency, not the legacy of determination embodied by figures like Lee Kuan Yew. It is disheartening to witness the plight of a country deteriorating by the day, with many seemingly indifferent to its fate. The path forward remains uncertain, and that is truly lamentable."



"We cannot forget brotherly Morocco's participation in the war to liberate Kuwait. His Majesty the late King Hassan II took a courageous stand regarding Iraq's invasion of Kuwait," columnist **Abdulmohsen Mohamad Al-Hussaini** wrote for **Al-Anba** daily.

"In a speech addressing Saddam: the late King asserted: "Do you want us to erase the State of Kuwait from the map with a stroke of a pen? The State is a member of the United Nations and has strong relations with most of the countries around the world."

"It was a courageous stance with a positive impact. Several Security Council resolutions denounced the Iraqi aggression against our homeland.

"Based on the courageous stances of brotherly Morocco on various Kuwaiti issues and in line with Kuwait's foreign policy on extend a helping hand to the brothers, Kuwait decided to provide support and assistance to the brotherly Moroccan people. His Highness the Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad immediately instructed the concerned authorities to provide relief to the Moroccans.

"The strong relations between the two brothers - Kuwait and Morocco - are witnessing development in different fields. Moroccan King Mohammed VI is following in the footsteps of his grandfather Mohammed V and his father King Hassan II in the development of fraternal relations.

"Morocco deserves all support and assistance to overcome the calamity and ordeal that befell its people. We call on all Arab countries to fully support our brother in this ordeal.

"Let us implore Almighty God to stop the earthquakes that hit our brothers in Morocco with His Divine Power."

— Compiled by Mai Elsoukary

MEW collects KD 700K from expats, Gulf citizens in week

Duo arrested for firing gunshots at fire station

By Munaif Naif
Al-Seyassah Staff and Agencies

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 12: Two citizens were arrested for accidentally firing a shotgun at the Shaqaya Fire Station while they were hunting birds.

According to a security source, the Shaqaya Fire Station in Salmi area was exposed to gunfire from a shotgun. Within a few hours, detectives identified the perpetrators, who admitted that they were hunting birds when they accidentally shot towards the fire station.

The two citizens were referred to the concerned authority for necessary legal action.

Meanwhile, security sources revealed that the Ministry of Interior is intensifying night security checkpoints on Salmi Road to arrest wanted outlaws, in addition to targeting people who resort to hunting birds during the so-called "crossing" season.



'Declare assets': The Anti-Corruption Authority "Nazaha" announced that it is still continuing the process of receiving financial disclosure statements for those covered by the law, reports **Al-Seyassah** daily.

The secretary-general of the authority stressed in a press statement yesterday the need for the categories mentioned in Article 2 of Law 2 of 2016 regarding the establishment of the authority and the provisions related to financial disclosure to the legally specified dates for submitting financial disclosure statements, which stipulates that those subject submit the first declaration within 60 days from the date of taking over the position.

This is in addition to updating the declaration within 60 days from the end of every three years for those remaining in office, and the final declaration within 90 days from the date of leaving the position or cessation of the position.

He explained the dates for submitting the declaration can be available on the "Sahel" platform or by calling 118 and the financial disclosure form can be downloaded via the Authority's website, noting that the official working hours for receiving declarations are from 8:30 am until 12:30 pm at the Authority's main headquarters in the Shamiya during official working days.



KD 700K collected: An informed source in the Ministry of Electricity and Water revealed said the ministry has collected debts from expatriates and Gulf nationals, estimated at about 700,000 dinars, in seven days following the issuance of a decision by the Ministry of Interior that non-Kuwaitis leaving the country for whatever reason must settle all their outstanding dues owed to government institutions, reports **Al-Qabas** daily.

The source said regarding the possibility of expatriates benefiting from the deduction system that has been applied to citizens for years, MEW has not excluded any expatriate - until now - from such a payment system and they are allowed to pay in installments when the bill amount is big.

The ministry added, "If there are cases that require applying the deduction, a committee will be formed to study the issue, with the requirement that a citizen sign the deduction decision so that the expatriate can benefit from this advantage that makes it easier for him to pay the amount in installments that are determined by the concerned authority."

Regarding whether there are large amounts that require the deduction to be applied to these categories, the source pointed out that, "Some citizens of the Gulf Cooperation Council countries have debts ranging between two thousand and four thousand dinars to the Ministry of Electricity and Water as dues for the services provided."

The source concluded saying that the ministry is currently planning to link bill payment systems with a number of other entities in the country, including banks, the Public Authority for Manpower, and the Ministry of Social Affairs, so that payment of dues will be a condition for completing transactions related to those entities."



KUNA photo
Deputy PM and Minister of Defense Sheikh Ahmed Fahad with the Chinese ambassador.

Kuwait, China discuss strategic co-op

Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defense Sheikh Ahmed Fahad Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah on Tuesday received the Chinese Ambassador to Kuwait Zhang Jianwei, discussing strategic cooperation between the two countries.

The Ministry of Defense said in a statement that Minister Sheikh Fahad hosted the Chinese envoy at Seif

Palace, adding that Foreign Minister Sheikh Salem Abdullah Al-Jaber Al-Sabah attended the session.

The two sides discussed progress that had been made in the cooperation between the two countries at various levels and prospects of expanding the coordination. They also touched on various other issues of common concern. (KUNA)



KUNA photo
Ambassador Dr Swaika during his meeting with KRCS' chief.

Dr Swaika meets with Dr Al-Sayer

Indian ambassador hails KRCS' role in humanitarian, relief efforts worldwide

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 12, (KUNA): India's Ambassador to Kuwait Dr. Adarsh Swaika praised Tuesday the Kuwait Red Crescent Society (KRCS) role in the humanitarian and relief work worldwide, as well for its constant support for those affected by natural and man-made disasters.

During his meeting with KRCS Chairman of Board of Directors Dr. Hilar Al Sayer, Dr. Swaika said in press remarks that his visit to the KRCS aims to boost the relationship between the two sides and discuss the cooperation and coordination in the humanitarian field.

For his part, Dr. Al Sayer welcomed the visit of the Indian ambassador to the KRCS headquarters to have a closer look on its activities and accomplishments.

He noted he looks forward to boost the partnership between the two sides to achieve the goals of the KRCS that aim to offer support for people affected globally by natural disasters, wars and disputes.

Dr. Al Sayer emphasized the KRCS keenness to take part in the humanitarian efforts through offering necessary support, such as medication and food.

'Kuwaiti population in Jleeb 1.5% male, 15% female'

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 12: The municipality's final report, submitted to the Council of Ministers, revealed that in Jleeb Al-Shuyoukh's plots (1, 2, 3, 4, 13 and 21), the population comprises approximately 1.5 percent Kuwaiti males and 15 percent Kuwaiti females. The region's valuation for expropriation purposes stands at 1.432 billion dinars, in accordance with Article 6 regarding expropriation, reports **Al-Seyassah** daily

The municipality's recommendations encompass two main proposals. Firstly, a comprehensive redevelopment plan through the aforementioned expropriation, and secondly, maintaining the current situation with a focus on specific actions.

These actions include utilizing plots 19 and 20, which were previously expropriated, to provide housing solutions and address demographic imbalances. Additionally, efforts are

directed towards enhancing traffic and security conditions, improving the healthcare system, rectifying existing violations, and upgrading road and infrastructure networks.

Minister of State for Municipal Affairs Fahd Al-Shula, in the report, highlighted that the majority of Arab households scattered across these plots have multiple owners. Some plots have up to 7 owners, and a single plot may contain 6 houses and 6 shops.

Biden waiver

Continued from Page 1

The fifth detainee had already been under house arrest. Due to numerous U.S. sanctions on foreign banks that engage in transactions aimed at benefiting Iran, several European countries had balked at participating in the transfer. Blinken's waiver is aimed at easing their concerns about any risk of U.S. sanctions.

People familiar with negotiations said they expect the detainees will be released as early as next week. In a statement to The Associated Press, Ali Karimi Magham, a spokesman for the Iranian mission, confirmed the list of prisoners that Tehran wants released.

The five sought by the Iranians are: ■ Kaveh Lotfolah Afrasiabi, an Iranian charged in 2021 with allegedly failing to register as a foreign agent on Iran's behalf while lobbying U.S. officials on issues like nuclear policy;

■ Mehrdad Ansari, an Iranian sentenced to 63 months in prison in 2021 for obtaining equipment that could be used in missiles, electronic warfare, nuclear weapons and other military gear;

■ Amin Hasanzadeh, an Iranian and permanent resident of the United

States whom prosecutors charged in 2019 with allegedly stealing engineering plans from his employer to send to Iran;

■ Reza Sarhangpour Kafrani, an Iranian charged in 2021 over allegedly unlawfully exporting laboratory equipment to Iran; and

■ Kambiz Attar Kashani, an Iranian-American sentenced in February to 30 months in prison for purchasing "sophisticated, top-tier U.S. electronic equipment and software" through front companies in the United Arab Emirates.

The U.S. State Department did not immediately respond to a request for comment about the list.

In other news, Israel accused Iran on Monday of building an airport in southern Lebanon to be used as a launchpad for attacks against Israelis across the border, signaling a possible escalation in tensions between the regional foes.

Speaking at a high-profile security conference hosted by Reichman University near Tel Aviv, Defense Minister Yoav Gallant claimed Iran has been building a runway that slices through forested mountains just 20 kilometers (12 miles) from Israel's northern border. Gallant displayed satellite photographs that he said showed the site, where the Iranian national flag and the

flag of Lebanon's militant Hezbollah group could be seen.

Gallant alleged that Iran "is planning to act against the citizens of Israel," using the runway as a base. Iran's mission to the United Nations did not immediately respond to a request for comment. A spokesperson for Hezbollah declined to comment on Israeli accusations. The defense minister did not specify when the satellite photos were taken.

The location he gave was near the hilly Lebanese city of Jezzine, across the border from the Israeli town of Metulla. Hezbollah earlier this year invited journalists to watch a military exercise in a nearby town in southern Lebanon.

Satellite images from Planet Labs PBC obtained by The Associated Press from July 28 showed work on a 1.2 kilometer (3,937-foot) runway with hangars constructed on a tarmac just east of the runway. Satellite images from January showed the runway largely unopened. Israel has said in recent years that it shot down Hezbollah or Iranian-linked drones launched from Lebanon and Syria.

Israel and Hezbollah, the Shiite group that controls much of southern Lebanon, fought a war in 2006. The border has remained tense but largely quiet since then, with both sides wary of another major confrontation.

وزارة التجارة والصناعة
Kuwait Trade and Industry Ministry

RECALL INFORMATION

Mercedes-Benz Cars
MODEL: EQE SUV (294 platform), EQE (295 platform), EQS SUV (296 platform) and EQS (297 platform)
Model year: 2022

Mercedes-Benz AG has determined that on certain EQE SUV (294 platform), EQE (295 platform), EQS SUV (296 platform) and EQS (297 platform) vehicles, the software of the electric drivetrain might not meet specifications. In this case, under specific conditions, inadequate reactions in the fault management and subsequently, a deactivation of the electric drivetrain might occur. In consequence, a loss of propulsion cannot be ruled out increasing the risk of an accident. Local legal requirements might not be met.

RECALL REASON

REMEDY

The software for the electric drivetrain will be updated in the affected vehicles as a precautionary measure. The required work certainly be carried out free of charge.

CONTACT

Please contact Al Mulla Automobiles Co.
Phone 1-887-888
Mercedes-Benz Service Centre - Al Shuwaikh Industrial Area - 9 Street
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This Recall is run pursuant to articles (42, 43, 44, 46 and 47) of no.27/2015 issuing the executive by laws of law no.39/2014 on Consumer Protection

UK wage growth, inflation meet 1st time in almost 2 yrs

Wage growth has caught up with rising prices for the first time in nearly two years, even as unemployment goes up, according to a statement released on Tuesday by the Office for National Statistics (ONS). Regular pay, excluding bonuses, rose by 7.8 percent in May to July compared with a year earlier - matching the pace of inflation over the same period. Not everyone's pay will be rising by that amount. The figure is an average across the economy. There are also signs the

jobs market is beginning to weaken, with fewer job vacancies and rising unemployment, said ONS. However, unemployment rate in the May-July period was up to 4.3 percent for the first time in nearly two years, with the number of out of work just below 1.5 million. The rate is low by historic standards, but has jumped from 3.8 percent in the previous three-month period. Darren Morgan, director of economic statistics at the ONS, said earnings continued to in-

crease at record rates, while inflation - the measure of how fast prices of goods and services are rising - has come down from its highs. "This means people's real pay is no longer falling. That means the state pension is likely to rise by 8.5%, which would be a weekly increase of £13.30," said Morgan. There will be an annual increase of 691.60 Pound Sterling on the basic state pension - taking the total for the year to 8,814 Pound Sterling. (KUNA)

EU lawmakers OK deal to raise renewable energy target

European Union lawmakers endorsed a deal Tuesday to raise the share of renewables in the bloc's energy mix, another step to accelerate its green transition away from fossil fuels. The bill, adopted by a large majority - 470 lawmakers voted in favor, 120 against and 40 abstained - foresees an updated renewable energy target of 42.5% of total consumption by 2030, with the aim of reaching 45%. The current goal is 32%.

"Today's vote in the European Parliament clears the way for a massive boost towards the energy transition, in a way that is affordable for citizens and reinforces the EU as an industrial bastion," said Green MEP Ville Niinistö. "The EU is saying goodbye to fossil fuels in our energy mix. The energy crisis has shown that we must be fully independent of oil and gas, especially from Russia." A review by global energy think tank Ember showed that wind and

solar generated a record 22% of the EU's electricity last year and for the first time overtook gas, which accounted for 20%. Coal power accounted for 16%. The Parliament said the legislation will also accelerate the deployment of solar panels and windmills since national governments will have to grant permits for new renewable installations within 12 months if they are located in "go-to areas" guaranteeing nature protection at the same time. (AP)

Market Movements

12-09-2023

	Change	Closing pts		Change	Closing pts
JAPAN - Nikkei	+0.95	32,776.37	UAE - DFM	-0.23	4,060.95
PAKISTAN - KSE 100	-0.88	45,485.54	PHILIPPINES - PSEi	-0.06	6,230.20
SAUDI - Tadawul	-0.70	11,156.26	EGYPT - EGX 30	-0.70	19,144.09

Business

Latest sign of slowing price increases

Federal's preferred inflation gauge shows modest rise

WASHINGTON, Sept 12, (AP) - An inflation gauge closely tracked by the Federal Reserve remained low last month, adding to signs of cooling price increases and raising the likelihood that the Fed will leave interest rates unchanged when it next meets in late September.

The report from the Commerce Department showed that prices rose just 0.2% from June to July, the third straight modest increase. Compared with a year earlier, prices rose 3.3% in July, up from a 3% annual increase in June. The year-over-year figure, though, is down sharply from the 7% peak it reached a year ago, though still above the Fed's 2% inflation target. It rose partly because of much smaller price increases a year ago.

Among individual items, the cost of groceries rose just 0.2% from June to July, though they're up 3.5% over the past year. Gas prices increased 0.3% in July but remain 22.3% lower than they were a year earlier.

Among autos, new-car prices edged down 0.1%; they're still up 3.6% from July of last year. Used car prices fell 1.4% from June to July and are down 5.5% compared with 12 months earlier.

The latest data follows other recent reports that suggest the economy and the job market may be slowing enough to cool inflation pressures. The number of advertised job openings, for example, tumbled in July, and fewer Americans are quitting their jobs to seek better opportunities. Both trends ease the pressure on companies to raise pay to find and keep workers - a move that tends to perpetuate inflation as employers raise prices to offset their higher labor costs.

Excluding volatile food and energy prices, "core" inflation ticked up just 0.2% from June to July, the same as from May to June. Compared with a year earlier, core prices rose 4.2%, up slightly from 4.1% the previous month. The Fed's policymakers closely monitor core prices as a telltale signal of where inflation might be headed.

"It is becoming harder to dismiss the improvement in the inflation numbers as mere noise," said Ian Shepherdson, chief economist at Pantheon Macroeconomics. Annualized core inflation in the past three months, compared with the previous three months, increased at the slowest pace since March 2021, Shepherdson said.

Economists and Wall Street traders increasingly believe the Fed will leave its benchmark interest rate unchanged when it next meets Sept. 19-20. If inflation and the economy continue to moderate, it might not raise rates at its subsequent meeting in November, either. If so, that would leave the central bank's July rate increase - the 11th since March 2022 - as the final one.

Some economists noted that the increase in year-over-year inflation rates underscored Fed Chair Jerome Powell's message in a high-profile speech last week at an annual conference of central bankers in Jackson Hole, Wyoming: That inflation remained too high and the central bank had to remain vigilant. Still, policymakers typically pay closer attention to monthly and quarterly inflation data than to yearly figures, which can be lagging indicators.

The inflation gauge that was issued Thursday, called the personal consumption expenditures price index, is separate from the better-known consumer price index. Earlier this month, the government reported that the CPI rose 3.2% in July from a year earlier, down from a peak of 9.1% in June 2022.

The report also showed that Americans spent more in July, with consumer spending rising a healthy 0.8% from June to July, up from a 0.5% gain from May to June. The increase suggests that the U.S. economy is growing at a solid pace in the current July-September quarter.

Though consumer spending drives most of the U.S. economy, the Fed is seeking to slow it down as a way to restrain inflation. Too fast an acceleration of spending could lead the central bank to raise rates even further. At the same time, the Fed is trying to avoid slowing the economy so much as to cause a deep recession.

Powell referred to the tricky dynamics surrounding the economy and inflation in his Jackson Hole speech. He stressed that the Fed would "proceed carefully" as it considers its next moves.

"Two months of good data," Powell said, "are only the beginning of what it will take to build confidence that inflation is moving down sustainably toward our goal. We can't yet know the extent to which these lower readings will continue."

In Europe, inflation largely held steady in July at a time when the European Central Bank, like the Fed, is grappling with whether to raise its key interest rate at its next meeting in September. The consumer price index for the 20 countries that use the euro currency rose 5.3% in July from a year earlier, the same as for June, the EU statistics agency Eurostat said. Core inflation eased from 5.5% to 5.3%.

In the United States, spending in July jumped around the July 4th holiday, according to data from the Bank of America Institute, which tracks consumer activity through its credit and debit cards. And a pickup in online spending occurred in mid-month, likely because of Amazon's "prime" shopping day, the institute said.

Later in the month, entertainment spending surged, probably reflecting the popularity of the "Barbie" and "Oppenheimer" movie releases, the Institute said.

Those trends might have pulled some spending away from major retailers, some of which reported sharp sales declines in the spring and early summer, including Macy's, Foot Locker and Kohl's. Yet many discount retailers, including Walmart, TJ Maxx and Dollar Tree, reported growing sales. That suggested that lower- and middle-income shoppers, feeling squeezed by inflation and higher borrowing costs, are seeking out bargains and focusing more on necessities.

Economists said last month's jump in consumer spending was driven mainly by one-time factors, that are unlikely to be repeated. Utility spending leapt as hot weather led many Americans to crank up air conditioning. Back-to-school shopping also likely fueled some spending.

Wall Street drifts as oil prices rise and Oracle weighs on tech stocks

Asian shares trade mixed after Big Tech rally on WS

NEW YORK, Sept 12, (AP) - U.S. stocks are drifting Tuesday as Wall Street waits for highly anticipated reports later this week about inflation and the economy.

The S&P 500 was 0.3% lower in afternoon trading. The Dow Jones Industrial Average was up 86 points, or 0.3%, at 34,750, as of 1 p.m. Eastern time, and the Nasdaq composite was 0.6% lower.

Software giant Oracle was weighing on tech stocks after reporting revenue for the latest quarter that fell just short of what analysts expected. Its stock tumbled 12.6%, even though its profit topped expectations.

Oracle's forecast for how much revenue it will make in the current quarter wasn't as strong as some analysts expected, even as it touts customers signing up for services because of the boom around artificial-intelligence technology.

Apple was 1.4% lower ahead of an event later in the day where it's expected to unveil its latest phone models. The stock soared through much of this year, which is crucial for many investors because it's the most valuable company on Wall Street and has more sway on the S&P 500 than others. But it's been struggling since the end of July and has reported three straight quarters where its revenue fell from year-earlier levels.

Alphabet, meanwhile, was 0.8% lower as an antitrust trial against Google opens in federal court. It's the biggest such trial since regulators took Microsoft to court in 1998. The U.S. government is accusing Google of abusing its position as the world's dominant search engine and forcing consumers to settle for inferior search results.

On the winning side of Wall Street, stocks of oil producers rose with the price of crude. Exxon Mobil rose 2.5% and was one of the strongest forces pushing upward on the S&P 500. Occidental Petroleum gained 3.3%.

Oil prices have been climbing since the end of June after mostly falling for a year. A barrel of U.S. crude rose 2% to \$89.07, while Brent crude, the international standard, added 1.7% to \$92.18 per barrel.

Stocks broadly have been seeing a rise in recent weeks amid uncertainty about whether the Federal Reserve is done with its avalanche of hikes to interest rates. The central bank has already pulled its main interest rate



People walk in front of an electronic stock board showing Japan's Nikkei 225 index and U.S. dollar/Japanese yen exchange rate at a securities firm in Tokyo. (AP)

to the highest level in more than two decades, as it tries to get inflation back down to its target of 2%.

High rates work to undercut inflation by slowing the entire economy and knocking down prices for stocks and other investments.

Several strong reports on the economy recently have allayed worries about a painful recession, defying long-held predictions for just that. But they also may be adding more fuel to pressures keeping inflation high, which could push the Fed to keep rates higher for longer.

Hopes for the economy to remain resilient mean professional fund managers are globally feeling less pessimistic about stocks. They're investing the most in stocks that they have in the past 17 months, according to a survey by Bank of America, though they're not going all-in and continue to keep a significant chunk of their portfolios in the safety of cash.

Sixty percent of fund managers say they think the Fed is done hiking rates, investment strategists led by Michael Harnett wrote in a BofA Global Research report. That's a sharp turnaround from July, when just 9% were saying that.

Several reports coming up this week could sway the Fed's thinking. On

Wednesday will come the latest monthly update on prices that U.S. consumers are paying across the country.

Economists expect it to show that prices were broadly 3.6% higher last month than a year earlier. Inflation has been mostly cooling since peaking above 9% last summer, but economists warn the last bit of improvement may be the most difficult to win.

On Thursday will come reports about inflation at the wholesale level and about sales at U.S. retailers. Strong spending by U.S. households has been a main driver keeping the U.S. economy humming, but it could also be encouraging companies to keep trying to raise their prices further.

Most traders expect next week's meeting by Federal Reserve to leave interest rates where they are. But stronger-than-expected reports this upcoming week could sway things for later this year, where traders see a higher risk of another hike to rates.

Traders have also been paring expectations for cuts to interest rates that could occur next year.

In the bond market, the yield on the 10-year Treasury slipped to 4.28% from 4.29% late Friday. The two-year Treasury yield, which moves more on expectations for the Fed, rose to 5.02% from 4.99%.

Europe

France's CAC 40 slid 0.1% in early trading to 7,270.28, while Germany's DAX shed 0.4% to 15,737.20. But Britain's FTSE 100 gained 0.4% to 7,528.80.

Asia

Asian shares were trading mixed Tuesday following a Big Tech rally on Wall Street, as investors awaited an update on U.S. consumer prices set for later in the week.

Japan's benchmark Nikkei 225 surged 1.0% to 32,776.37. Australia's S&P/ASX 200 added 0.2% to 7,206.90. South Korea's Kospi shed 0.8% to 2,536.80. Hong Kong's Hang Seng dropped 0.2% to 18,056.17, while the Shanghai Composite fell nearly 0.2% to 3,137.73.

Oil

In energy trading, benchmark U.S. crude gained 32 cents to \$87.61 a barrel in electronic trading on the New York Mercantile Exchange. Brent crude, the international standard, rose 24 cents to \$90.88 a barrel.

Currencies

In currency trading, the U.S. dollar edged up to 146.93 Japanese yen from 146.55 yen. The euro cost \$1.0737, down from \$1.0756.

'Most Financially Stable Insurance Company'

The Global Economics Magazine 'grants' Kuwait Insurance award

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 12: Kuwait Insurance Company won the "Most Financially Stable Insurance Company" award from The Global Economics magazine, the institution specialized in launching annual classifications in the fields of economics and business.

This came from The Global Economics magazine's selection of outstanding companies in the insurance sector category, joining an elite group of international companies selected in various sectors such as banking, finance, insurance, real estate, energy, transportation, hospitality, health care, telecommunications, and information technology.

Kuwait Insurance Company also won the title of "Most Financially Stable Insurance Company" in Kuwait in recognition of the company's performance and economic position in the local insurance market through several criteria audited by a specialized committee. The said criterion is not only based on financial capacity

and a promising future, but also on fulfilling obligations towards shareholders and customers, as well as amongst stakeholders and the business community.

On this occasion, Mr. Sami Sharif, CEO of Kuwait Insurance Company, said: "The title is a certificate of trust for Kuwait Insurance Company, and an affirmation of competence, professionalism, and work with the highest professional standards in the industry, and that it is the best in its field of work."

Mr. Sharif concluded: "We have worked hard to maintain our position as a leading insurance company in Kuwait for over 60 years, and have continuously developed the work environment and culture within the company, so that we can support all our clients to achieve their financial goals and insure them against risks. We are also committed to excellence in providing the best innovative insurance solutions to all our customers."

RAKBANK and UnionPay announce 'cooperation'

ABU DHABI, UAE, Sept 12, (PR Newswire): RAKBANK and UnionPay International have announced their cooperation to drive contactless mobile payments in UAE. RAKBANK has enabled all their terminals for accepting UnionPay contactless payments where card holders can use their mobile wallet, like ApplePay, and mobile banking APP or contactless cards. The partnership will significantly increase the acceptance touch points across the region and make United Arab Emirates as the first major market outside Mainland China which is completely contactless ready. The contactless payment solution is aimed at UnionPay cardholders visiting UAE as well as UnionPay cardholders living in the UAE. They can now enjoy cost effective, secure, and seamless payment experience at the point of acceptance.

RAKBANK, one of the leading acquirers in the UAE, through this partnership has integrated with UnionPay's robust network and advanced payment technology to provide UnionPay card payment acceptance to RAKBANK's merchants. This partnership will also contribute towards the vision of UAE to become the first cashless society in the region and enhance frictionless payment experience in the country. This tap and go payment experience will also empower the merchants of RAKBANK to accept cards not only issued from China, but also from a growing network of 75+ countries where UnionPay has established a strong card issuance business. UnionPay is the largest payment scheme in the world with its acceptance network spread across 180+ countries.

Shehzad Hameed, MD of Retail Banking at RAKBANK comment-

ed: "At RAKBANK, our customers are at the heart of everything we do. This partnership with UnionPay aligns perfectly with our mission to provide a seamless customer experience. We understand the importance of a secure and user-friendly payment option, and through this collaboration, we aim to offer our customers unrivaled convenience and peace of mind.

This strategic partnership represents a significant step forward in the financial services industry in the UAE, and we are thrilled to be at the forefront of this digital evolution. We look forward to the successful implementation of contactless payment services in collaboration with UnionPay and anticipate the positive impact it will have on our customers' daily lives."

James Yang, General Manager of UnionPay International Middle East commented: "UnionPay International is excited to partner with RAKBANK in revolutionizing the innovative payments in the UAE and we strongly believe that contactless payment experience will support the local businesses to scale up their business by opening their doors to cardholders from 75+ countries and the largest segment of customers traveling from China. The contactless payment experience for Chinese customers will give them a feel of making payments like they do in their home country using mobile banking app, ApplePay, Samsung Pay, Huawei Pay, Mi Pay and physical UnionPay contactless payment cards. We are confident that this new solution will open up some new categories of merchants who are willing to accept UnionPay cards in the country in a secure, faster and seamless payment experience."

Exness monthly trading volume reaches record-breaking \$4.5 trillion

LIMASSOL, Cyprus, Sept 12, (PR Newswire): Multi-asset broker Exness has reported a record-breaking \$4.521 trillion in monthly trading volume and 625,626 active clients for August.

These results follow July's record-breaking \$3.91 trillion trading volume and 571,380 active clients. The August results show a surge of 36% in monthly trading volume from July and

a 9.49% rise in active clients.

It is worth noting that this is the first time that a CFD broker has ever exceeded the \$4 trillion mark.

Exness has been consistently breaking trading volume records for over two years, being the first retail CFD broker to cross the \$1 trillion, \$2 trillion and \$3 trillion thresholds, prior to this new industry first. The company

attributes its continuous success to its global expansion and the trust instilled in its clients worldwide, evident in the continuous increase of active clients.

Exness COO Damian Bunce said "It has been an exceptional month for us with growth records coming from almost all our regions including both new and established markets. This is a sure sign of increased growth across

the entire industry. Our volume growth in assets was largely a commodities story which follows the macro themes underway in global markets. We had record volumes in both energies and precious metals but also, for the first time, record volumes in FX minors. Our crypto volumes were healthy but not breaking any records, with stocks and indices following regular trends."

Zain hosted ZGI Demo Day, the tech startup accelerator's most decisive phase

Developing the creative economy will be the focus of ZGI's next chapters, says Al Roudhan

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 12: Zain recently hosted its distinguished ZGI Demo Day ceremony, the most decisive phase of the company's award-winning Zain Great Idea tech startup accelerator program. During the event, startup owners from the program's 7th season showcased their regional expansion plans and strategic roadmaps in front of venture capital firms and potential business partners from local and regional companies.

The ceremony was attended by Zain Kuwait CEO Eaman Al Roudhan, Malek Hammoud, Zain Group's Chief Investment & Digital Officer, the company's executive management team, ambassadors and diplomats, ZGI alumni, representatives from the private and public sectors, and numerous guests from the local and regional business communities.

The event featured an insightful panel discussion titled Startup Funding Landscape in MENA: What Investors Are Looking For, joined by Malek Hammoud, Zain Group's Chief Investment & Digital Officer; Fajer Saleh Alpachachi, General Manager of Hope Ventures, the investment arm of Hope Fund, Bahrain; Dakhil Al Dakhil, CEO of Rasameel Investment Company; and Mohammed Al Munifi, Associate at Faith Capital Holding.

During her opening speech, Eaman Al Roudhan said: "I welcome our esteemed guests from the local and regional entrepreneurial communities and representatives of capital investment funds and business partners. Hosting such an exceptional gathering of inspirational minds from across the Arab world is clear evidence of ZGI's leadership and maturity: it has truly become a force of attraction in the space of entrepreneurship."

Al Roudhan added: "It gives me great pride that, for 13 years, our innovative program proved itself on the regional landscape as one of the top destinations that attract entrepreneurs to accelerate their startups and enter the highly competitive regional market."

"Earlier this year, ZGI was named Ecosystem Enabler of the Year in the Region by the prestigious Entrepreneur Middle East magazine. This award recognized the program's leadership in promoting a vibrant tech startup acceleration ecosystem. It also attested to Zain's endless efforts to empower Kuwaiti entrepreneurs, accelerate hundreds of startups, and embrace thousands of aspiring minds for 13 years." The CEO continued.

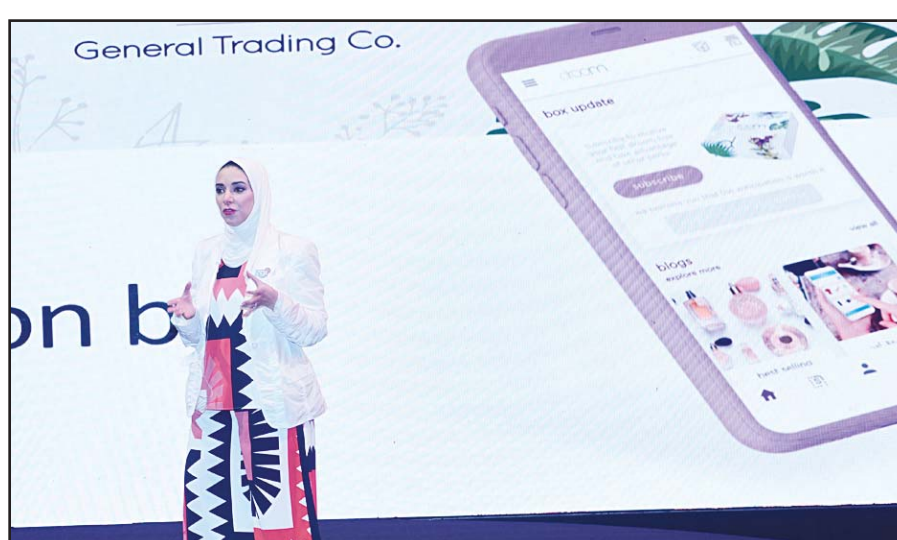
Al Roudhan further noted: "Today, Zain Great Idea is more than just a startup accelerator. It has become a comprehensive ecosystem for entrepreneurs, idea owners, and investors, regardless of the size of their business. This ecosystem embraces a large family of inspirational minds who work as individuals or owners of profitable, sustainable businesses that employ hundreds and even thousands, with millions of dollars in funds."

Al Roudhan shed light on the program's latest season: "With the 7th season that kicked-off in September 2022, ZGI continued on its core mission, but grew in its vision, and expanded its programs to new horizons. With it, we opened a bridge to connect aspiring entrepreneurs to the biggest destinations that target business owners in the region, which witnesses accelerating changes and maturity."

"Our members gained rich experiences in these destinations, which included three of the biggest incubating ecosystems and leaders of creativity and innovation in the Arab World: Dubai, Riyadh, and Cairo. I'm sure that this experience added a huge value to their businesses and to them as people, while giving them countless opportunities to connect with those who share the same passion." Al Roudhan added.

The CEO concluded by saying: "At the end of every ZGI season, we take great care to review our latest experience and reevaluate our goals. Continuous growth is behind every successful project, and our gathering today gives us a platform to listen to what you have to say and help us learn and grow the outcomes of this program. ZGI's next chapter will focus on developing the creative economy, and we're excited for the road ahead."

The ZGI Demo Day is the program's most decisive phase, as it culminates the hard work, effort, and passion of 28 Kuwaiti entrepreneurs whose businesses excelled in the market's most vibrant industries during the program's 7th season. The ZGI members showcased their regional expansion plans and strategic



roadmaps in front of venture capital firms and potential business partners from local and regional companies, giving

them an invaluable opportunity to grow and expand their businesses.

During their journey, the entrepreneurs

took part in three regional accelerator programs in Dubai, Riyadh, and Cairo, in which they were exposed to rich experiences that helped them expand their businesses and serve the needs of the market, not just locally, but regionally as well. At Demo Day, each entrepreneur had their own stall to showcase their business and outline their roadmap to potential partners.

Zain learned a lot from previous seasons and heard what ZGI alumni had to say about how to further refine the program year after year. And so, this season, the company offered greater flexibility and more freedom for every participant to take part in the sessions and programs that best suited their schedule and unique business needs.

In preparation for the new ZGI chapter, Zain and Sabah Al Ahmad Center for Giftedness and Creativity (a KFAS center) announced that they will be the official Kuwait Country Partners of Beban, the regional entrepreneur reality TV show, joining forces to include and enable Kuwaiti entrepreneurs' participation in the upcoming third season of the show which will air in January 2024.

Through Beban, Zain and SACGC will offer 40 Kuwaiti entrepreneurs the opportunity to undergo an intensive 2-week training bootcamp at the Zain Innovation Campus (ZINC). During the bootcamp, entrepreneurs will be provided with insights to enhance their business plans and ensure their readiness to pitch their businesses to a panel of investors for strategic business development and equity investment on the TV show, where only 5 shortlisted Kuwaiti entrepreneurs will be accepted from the 40 participants.

Beban is a reality TV show aired on Shahid, the leading regional online streaming platform, along with a number of regional television channels. Through the program, entrepreneurs pitch to investors for immediate investment offers and strategic business opportunities. The program is a production of Hope Ventures, the investment arm of Hope Fund, established by His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa of Bahrain.

The next chapter of ZGI is also set to feature a number of key regional destinations, featuring comprehensive acceleration programs for the participating startups. The destinations will give entrepreneurs an invaluable opportunity to take on the regional market experience, while also networking and exchanging ideas and expertise with other notable entrepreneurs and reaching out to investment funds and form relations with potential business partners.

Zain strongly believes in the crucial role played by private sector organizations in supporting social and economic sustainability projects. The company is committed to printing a positive impact through all its activities, and this has led it to embrace the most influential topics in the community, perhaps most importantly the support of youth, entrepreneurship, and innovation, not only in Kuwait, but across the entire region.

ZGI offers a refreshed opportunity



Some photos from the event.

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In preparation for the new ZGI chapter, Zain and Sabah Al Ahmad Center

for local talents and the region's entrepreneurial community. Throughout seven successful editions, the program has empowered, trained, and invested in hundreds of creative and driven Kuwaiti and Arab youth, of which many now own thriving and active SMEs to this day in local and regional markets.

Zain is well aware of the crucial role played by private sector organizations in supporting social and economic sustainability projects. Springing from its growing commitment towards practicing its social responsibility, the company is committed to printing a positive impact through all its activities. This has led Zain to embrace the most influential issues in the community, including the support of youth, entrepreneurship, and innovation.

BUSINESS

DIC launches new office in Paris

Dubai International Chamber, one of the three chambers operating under the umbrella of Dubai Chambers, has inaugurated a new representative office in Paris to boost trade and investment with France. The launch further strengthens the chamber's presence in Europe and brings its total number of international representative offices to 24 across five continents.

Ribbon-cutting ceremony at the opening of the new Dubai International Chamber representative of-

office in France yesterday. The opening ceremony was held with the participation of H.E. Hend Al Otaiba, the UAE Ambassador to France, and Salem Al Shamsi, Vice President of Global Markets at Dubai Chambers, in the presence of distinguished representatives of the French business community. The launch comes as part of the 'Dubai Global' initiative, which seeks to establish a powerful network of 50 representative offices around the

world by 2030. Mohammad Ali Rashed Lootah, President and CEO of Dubai Chambers, said: "France is a strategically important global market in which we are keen to establish our presence. Our network of international representative offices will play a key role in boosting Dubai's non-oil foreign trade to EUR 500 billion by 2026, in line with the goals of the emirate's five-year foreign trade plan." (BUSINESS WIRE)

Avaada Energy & Al Jomaih Energy and Water in alliance

Avaada Energy the renewable arm of Avaada Group (www.avaada.com), a global pioneer in the renewable energy landscape, is pleased to announce its strategic partnership with Al Jomaih Energy and Water (AEW) to pioneer renewable power generation in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and selected Middle Eastern regions. This significant stride is marked by the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the two esteemed entities.

The alliance is set to explore the vast potential of Solar, Wind, Hybrid, and Battery Energy Storage solutions. "Joining forces with AEW underscores our dedication to bringing sustainable energy innovations to the Middle East," expressed Mr. Vineet Mittal, Chairman of Avaada Group. The MoU paves the way for a collaborative approach, with a dedicated committee from both AEW and Avaada overseeing potential projects. AEW, with its deep-rooted

local expertise, will interface with stakeholders and provide essential resources. In contrast, Avaada will infuse the partnership with its extensive development experience and technical acumen. The collaboration extends to Engineering, Procurement, and Construction (EPC) and Operations & Maintenance (O&M) services. Avaada is poised to present its competitive EPC solutions and qualifications for collaborative O&M setups in Saudi Arabia. (PR Newswire)

Children taken on tour of bank

ABK hosts a successful and engaging 'Bring Your Children To Work Day'

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 12: Al Ahli Bank of Kuwait (ABK) recently organized a special 'Bring Your Children To Work Day' event, inviting employees to bring their kids to experience a day in the life of a banking professional. This unique initiative received an overwhelming response, with approximately 100 staff members' children participating in a range of activities designed to engage and educate them about the world of banking.

The event began with the children receiving their own individual ABK employee cards to provide them with a sense of belonging and instill a feeling of pride as members of the ABK family. The personalized cards were excitedly received, giving them a chance to step into their parents' shoes for the day.

They also received a welcome gift which included healthy snacks and colouring kits.

Afrah Al Arbash, General Manager of Human Resources at ABK, emphasized the significance of such initiatives stating, "At ABK, we believe in cultivating a sense of community and family among our employees. This event provided an invaluable opportunity for our staff to connect with their kids and introduce them to the exciting world of banking. By engaging them in these activities, we hope to inspire the next generation of banking professionals."

Throughout the day, children were taken on a tour of the Bank where they visited their parent's offices as well as various divisions. Not only was this event beneficial for them but also for the participating ABK employees. Witnessing their kids actively involved in their workplace allowed them to share their passion and pride in their profession. The event fostered a supportive environment by encouraging ABK staff to showcase their roles and responsibilities, thus building a stronger foundation of trust and collaboration within the organization.

Al Arbash concluded, "ABK is committed to creating a positive workplace culture that prioritizes work-life balance, inclusivity, and employee satisfaction. The 'Bring Your Children to Work Day' event is just one of the many endeavors undertaken by ABK to reinforce these values and further strengthen relationships between employees and their families."



Bring Your Children To Work Day



Ms. Afrah Al Arbash GM of Human Resources at ABK.



Bring Your Children to Work Day



Since its establishment in 1967, ABK has progressed to become one of the leading Kuwaiti banks in the region that offers a wide array of personal, corporate, and private banking products and services. ABK also provides a broad range of local, regional, and global investment solutions and services through

its subsidiary, ABK Capital.

Across the region, the Bank offers individuals and corporates the convenience of comprehensive banking and financial services in the Egyptian market through ABK-Egypt's network of 44 branches.

This is in addition to ABK's three

branches located in Dubai, Abu Dhabi, and Dubai International Financial Centre (DIFC) in the United Arab Emirates, servicing both Kuwaiti and Emirati individual and corporate clients.

ABK is a strong supporter of Central Bank of Kuwait and Kuwait Banking Association's 'Let's Be Aware' aware-

ness campaign. Through its various initiatives, the Bank aims to promote financial inclusion by educating Kuwaiti society about customer rights, responsibilities, and the different types of banking and special needs services. Additionally, ABK consistently provides strategic information on how

to avoid banking and financial fraud, loan application requirements, digital services, and more.

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

KIB 'reintroduces' customers to its diverse financial products, services

Bank has faith in the importance of customers' awareness of their rights

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 12: Kuwait International Bank (KIB) announced its continued support of the banking awareness campaign, 'Let's Be Aware' (Diraya), which was initiated by the Central Bank of Kuwait (CBK) in cooperation with Kuwait Banking Association (KBA). Since the launch of Diraya, KIB has contributed to the campaign's success by raising customers' awareness of the various personal funding services and products that the Bank offers, as well as the differences between the mandates of each service.

The Bank also focused its efforts on educating its audience about the benefits that add unique value to the customers' banking experience, as well as customers' rights and duties within this financial partnership that they share with KIB.

Reflecting on the Bank's renewed support of the campaign, Mohammed Al-Obaid, Deputy Head - Retail Credit at KIB, shed light on the importance of providing customers with all the necessary details about the different Shari'ah-compliant funds offered at KIB. Among the funds that KIB covers in its awareness campaign is Murabaha, the number and value of its installments, its percentage from the net salary, the payment due dates, as well as the repercussions of not committing to them. Furthermore, all customers who exhibit interest in the Murabaha fund must be given two days to thoroughly read the contract's articles in detail before proceeding to sign.

Al-Obaid stressed that all customers applying for personal funds, whether consumer financing or housing finance, should be informed of the funds' terms and conditions and who

KFH announces the winners of Al-Rabeh draw

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 12: Kuwait Finance House (KFH) announced the winners of the Al-Rabeh draw with 30 customers winning cash prizes worth KD1,500 each for the 33rd, 34th and 35th weeks of 2023. KFH announced Naser Al-Mutairi as the monthly winner of 1 Kilo Gram of KFH Gold for the month of August 2023.

The winners of KD 1,500 are: Sulaiman Al-Ruwaih, Abdelwahid Rouh Aldin, Asmaa Al-Jassim, Ali Al-Obaidly, Meshal Al-Rumaih, Naser Al-Abdulhadi, Muhammad Saleem, Dalal Al-Saddah, Moustafa Mohamed, Ma Evangelina Damazo, Dhari Al-Meshari, Mansour Al-Kandari, Mohammad Al-Khalidi, Rana Al-Bittar, Ali Arshad, Abdullah Al-Twaitan, Emad Al-Sabti, Mohammad Al-Failakawi, Athoub Al-Huraiti, Alghaliah Al-Rujaib, Nourah Al-Mekhyal, Nahed Al-Najjar, Mohammad Akram, Yaqoub Al-Mekaimi, Mohamad Abdelaziz, Tareq Hamdan, Abdulrahman Al-Dowaisan, Sadeq Al-Hadad, Sulaiman Al-Habeeb, Mostafa Shalaby.

The Al-Rabeh campaign provides prizes and draws that offer customers several chances of winning "weekly, monthly and quarterly". The campaign

qualifies for them, before filling out the fund application. In adherence to CBK's instructions, all customers should be informed of all governing responsibilities and duties that pertain to the funds' laws and policies.

Speaking of the retail consumer finance offered by KIB, Al-Obaid clarified that it includes Murabaha - intended for purchasing consumer goods as well as cars - and Mosawama, noting that applying for such funds requires a minimum monthly income of KD 400. In case a customer qualifies for either fund, they are granted a maximum fund of KD 25,000 and a minimum fund of KD 1,000, with a maximum of five years for paying off the fund. Adding to the funds' payment facilitation, KIB offers its customers a grace period of up to three months in the case of applying for funds to finance consumer goods, or

Not only a winner..

536 Winners

Weekly KD 1,500 (For each winner: 12 winners)

Monthly 1 kg Gold (One winner)

Quarterly KD 25,000 (One winner)

Your chance to win is bigger

kfh.com 180 3333

KFH Al-Rabeh Campaign visual

crowns 536 winners throughout the year.

The draw took place under the supervision of a representative from the Ministry of Commerce and Industry.

The campaign is part of KFH's ongoing efforts to offer exceptional prod-

ucts and services that meet customers' aspirations, enhance the Bank's leadership in the local and global markets, as well as reflect its excellence in offering innovative banking solutions as per the highest quality standards.



Mohammed Al-Obaid

six months if the funds are intended for financing a car.

In addition to consumer financing, Al-Obaid said that KIB also offers housing finance, which is a long-term

retail fund for customers looking to build, renovate, or restore their existing homes, as well as those seeking to buy new housing units. Unlike consumer finance funds, housing finance mandates a minimum monthly salary of KD 500, offering a maximum fund value of KD 70,000 that can be repaid over the maximum span of 15 years - including a 12-month grace period.

Al-Obaid went on to mention other services that KIB offers to guarantee a seamless banking experience for its customers. This includes PayTally - a recently introduced digital platform that KIB dedicates to requesting and following up on Mosawama Islamic funds. PayTally also offers KIB customers a wider range of benefits that they can easily request and acquire from the Bank's suite of partners who offer services and products.

Packages without down payment

Warba Bank launches the 'Rent Without Restrictions' campaign

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 12: Warba Bank announced the launch of a new car rental campaign, "Rent Without Restrictions," in addition to the services it provides to its clients, as it offers various promotions for renting selected cars, as part of its financing policy and promotional campaigns that it has recently launched.

Musaed Maziad Al-Maziad, Vice President of the Retail Banking Group, said that the campaign provides access to several exclusive services and benefits provided to the Bank's clients according to their needs, where the majority of car agencies in Kuwait participate.

He explained that this campaign is special as it offers flexible rental packages starting from 6 months and extending to 36 months, and no down payment is required. The client also gets comprehensive golden insurance, an open meter, a replacement car, the ability to travel abroad, road assistance and many more. Among other advantages, a group of cars will be added every season to suit the desires and requirements of the Bank's clients, including (back to school - camping season - travel ... etc.).

Al-Maziad pointed out that the campaign contributes to expanding the field of joint cooperation with agents and suppliers, while giving clients advantages that achieve their ambitions and meet their needs, as part of Warba's efforts to provide the best services to the client in a way that contributes to maintaining the broad customer base, as well as attracting new customers, increasing Warba's market share and highlighting its role as a contributor to advancing the economy.

He stated that the launch of this campaign comes within a group of distinctive offers targeting the automobile sector, as a continuation of the offers that the Bank has been offering from time to time to its clients and non-clients, which make the "Warba" Murabaha the best in the local market.

Al-Maziad praised the developments witnessed in the distinctive



Musaed Al Mazyad

and diverse products and services that suit the multiple needs of its clients from different segments of society introduced by the Bank recently, which was reflected in the Bank's increasing market share by a large percentage, making it one of the most prominent Islamic banks.

He concluded his statement by emphasizing that Warba Bank, through offering banking products and services, confirms its leadership by providing a set of services that serve all segments, whether inside Kuwait or residing abroad. In the past few years, the Bank has worked to keep pace with developments in customer service to achieve more comfort for them and make their lives easier.

Warba Bank is one of the banks that achieved great successes during a short period, as it occupied a leading position in the field of Islamic digital banking services for individuals, and it is one of the largest local banks in the number of its shareholders, and these are among the most important elements that make the bank close to all members of society, in addition to that, Warba Bank is considered among the 50 largest banks in the Middle East in terms of market value for the year 2023 - Forbes Middle East classification.

FPT announces US investment, workforce development for AI

On the occasion of US President Joe Biden's State Visit to Vietnam, FPT Corporation (FPT) Chairman Truong Gia Binh called for collaboration and state support from Vietnam and US governments in workforce development, artificial intelligence (AI), and semiconductor industry.

The statement was delivered at the Vietnam-US Innovation & Investment Summit held on Sept 11 in Hanoi, with the participation of Vietnam Minister of Planning and Investment Nguyen Chi

Dzung, US Secretary of State Antony Blinken, and both countries' delegations.

Participating in the panel discussion as one of Vietnam's representative businesses, FPT Chairman emphasized the company's steadfast commitment to advancing technology and strengthening bilateral ties between Vietnam and the US.

FPT's proposal to the US government includes two primary focuses. Firstly, FPT advocates for comprehensive poli-

cies from the US government to nurture Vietnam's growth as a semiconductor ecosystem. Vietnam's leading corporation also proposes that its government invest in the training of 30,000 to 50,000 semiconductor professionals to meet this sector's increasing demand.

Secondly, FPT seeks investment and support for FPT University's initiatives in training engineers specializing in both semiconductor chip design and AI, aiming to bolster the workforce's capabilities in these critical fields. (AP)



FPT Chairman joins US President Biden and Vietnam Prime Minister Pham Minh Chinh at the Vietnam-US Innovation & Investment Summit on September 11 in Hanoi.

We are approaching an era of radical abundance: Suleyman

Inflection.ai CEO explains how to catch a ride on 'coming wave' of tech

NEW YORK, Sept 12, (AP): If you have watched a telecast involving basketball superstar LeBron James during the past 20 years, you probably have heard an announcer declare: "You can't stop him, you can only hope to contain him." That sentiment sums up how Inflection.ai CEO Mustafa Suleyman feels about artificial intelligence - a technology that he helped advance as a co-founder of DeepMind, which Google acquired in 2014.

After leaving Google last year, Suleyman started Inflection with LinkedIn co-founder Reid Hoffman in an effort to create artificial intelligence, or AI, that won't veer into racist, sexist or violent behavior. Inflection's first proof point is an AI-powered assistant named "Pi" that's touted as a safer alternative to better known chatbots such as Open AI's ChatGPT and Google's Bard.

Now Suleyman has co-written a book, "The Coming Wave," focused on AI's promise and need to limit its potential perils. He expanded upon his ideas in a recent interview with The Associated Press.

Question: How should we be thinking of artificial intelligence at this juncture?

Answer: I honestly believe we are approaching an era of radical abundance. We are about to distill the essence of what makes us capable - our intelligence - into a piece of software, which can get cheaper, easier to use, more widely available to everybody. As a result, everyone on the planet is going to get broadly equal access to intelligence, which is going to make us all smarter and more productive.

Q: Isn't there also a risk that part of the human brain starts to atrophy and we collectively become dumber?

A: I think we are trending in the opposite direction. We are adding masses of new knowledge to the corpus of global knowledge. And that is making everyone, on average, way, way smarter and discerning. These AIs are going to catch and develop your weaknesses. They are going to lift up your strengths. We are going to evolve with these new augmentations. We are going to invent new culture, new habits and new styles to adapt. If you look at the average American today, it's actually pretty remarkable how different he or she would be to the average American a century ago.

Q: Your book talks a lot about the need to contain AI, but how do we do that?

A: We want to try to maximize the benefits while minimizing the harms. I think we have overcome this challenge many times before. Look at airline safety. It is unbelievably safe to get inside a tube at 1,000 miles an hour at 40,000 feet. We have made so much progress on every one of these new technologies. I think we should be far more inspired and encouraged by the progress we have made and fixate less on the anxiety that everything is going to go wrong. It isn't going to be easy, it is going to be strange and scary in many ways, but we have done it before and we can do it again.

Q: Should we be worried about the most popular forms of generative AI so far

being controlled by Big Tech companies pursuing ever higher profits?

A: The commercial pressure is always going to be there so we have to navigate around it. This is the first time in many years that we have seen governments move so quickly and be so proactive. I also think that the commercial prize is going to be enormous. We have to learn the lessons from the social media age and make sure we move quickly when we start to see signs of some potential harms.

Q: Have homo sapiens evolved into the so-called "homo technologicus"?

A: We were always that since we picked up a hand axe or a club or we invented a pair of glasses or burned down a tree. We are a special species because we use tools. We should think of these new AIs as a set of tools that we control, that are accountable to us that we can put boundaries around that we can fundamentally contain. That's the way they will remain safe and they will remain of service to us and the species.

Q: Should we be worried AI leads to the end of humans?

A: I worry about a lot of things, but the main things I am focused on are the near-term harms because we have a chance to really affect those and get those right. I think it's too easy to imagine what might happen in 50 years. I think a lot of people have gotten caught up in the superintelligence framing of things. They are really thinking about things that may or may not happen that are way beyond my time horizon for prediction, especially in an era of climate change.

Bank impersonations rising

How to protect your money from 'text message scams'

By Ruth Sarreal
NerdWallet

The Federal Trade Commission recently revealed the most reported text message scam: bank impersonations.

Reports of bank impersonations by text in 2022 jumped to 20 times the number reported in 2019. Consumers reported a loss of more than \$330 million to text message scams in 2022, the FTC said. And cash that's lost because of bank fraud or scams isn't covered by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corp. or National Credit Union Administration.

Banks are a safe place to keep your money, but there are still a few basic but important precautions you can take to ensure you don't fall for a bank-impersonation text scam. Here's how to protect your money from text message scams impersonating your financial institution.

Don't make money moves

Text message scammers will try to make you feel like action is required immediately — at the risk of losing your money. It may come as an urgent message warning you to call or click on a link because of alleged suspicious activity.

"Any type of pressure tactic is not legitimate — that is not your bank," said Paul Benda, senior vice president of operational risk and cybersecurity at the American Bankers Assn. As with any decision about your finances, avoid taking actions when you feel scared, stressed out or pressured.

Older adults have lost billions to scam artists who use phones and computers to break, enter and steal. Thefts targeting seniors are big business.

Don't click on any links

If you receive a text message you're not expecting, be wary — especially if it looks like it might be from your bank.

In a recent poll by security experts at Security.org, 66% of respondents said that they had received a suspicious text from someone they didn't know, and about 20% clicked on links texted from strangers, which is never advisable. "Look at any type of unsolicited communication very cautiously," Benda said.

Major banks were popular choices for scammers to impersonate in 2022, with FTC data showing the most common scam text messages claimed to be from Bank of America, Wells Fargo, Chase and Citibank.

Don't call that's texted to you

Just as you shouldn't click on a link texted to you from someone

you don't know, don't click on or dial a phone number you receive in a text. Instead, find the official phone number for your bank by going to its website or mobile app. Initiate contact with your financial institution at its official phone number to ensure you're talking to a legitimate representative, and verify whether there actually is an issue.

"Making that phone call can be the difference between getting scammed versus not getting scammed," said Tremaine Wills, a financial advisor and founder of Mind Over Money, a financial literacy company in Newport News, Va.

One particular kind of text scam resulted in a median loss of \$3,000 in 2022, according to the FTC: a text from someone impersonating your bank, instructing you to reply with a "Yes" or "No" to confirm or deny a suspicious transaction. Once you replied, the scammer would call you under the guise of helping you. Their ultimate goal was to fraudulently transfer money out of your account or obtain personal information such as a Social Security number.

Unable to avoid a scam

If you should happen to fall for a text scammer impersonating your bank, there are a few critical steps to take.

First, alert your bank to the incident and get its help in making sure no more money leaves your account fraudulently. Next, report the scam to local law enforcement. Those first two actions are key for trying to recover any cash that was wrongfully taken from your account.

Finally, file a complaint with the FTC at ReportFraud.ftc.gov and report the instance to the Federal Bureau of Investigation's Internet Crime Complaint Center. The FTC also recommends that you forward suspicious text messages to 7726, which helps wireless providers identify and intercept similar text messages. You can also report and block suspicious text messages within your messaging app.

Having a good idea of your account activity is a key part of protecting your money from scams.

"Have a regular practice of knowing what's going on with your account," says Wills. If you're not completely sure of what's happening in your account, then you might be more likely to be alarmed by a text message claiming to be from your bank, she says.

Google's 'search engine' dominance under legal attack from US regulators

NEW YORK, Sept 12, (AP): The US government is taking aim at what has been an indomitable empire: Google's ubiquitous search engine that has become the internet's main gateway.

The legal attack was to swing into full force Tuesday in a Washington D.C. federal courtroom that will serve as the battleground for the biggest US antitrust trial since regulators went after Microsoft and its dominance of personal computer software a quarter century ago.

The 10-week trial before US District Judge Amit Mehta is expected to include potentially revelatory testimony from top executives at Google and its corporate parent Alphabet, as well as other powerful technology companies. Alphabet CEO Sundar Pichai, who succeeded Google co-founder Larry Page in 2019, will be among the most prominent witnesses likely to testify. Court documents also indicate one of Apple's highest-ranking executives, Eddy Cue, might be called to the stand.

The case against Google mirrors the one brought against Microsoft in many ways, including the existential threat it poses to a renowned tech giant whose products are relied on by billions of people.

The trial is scheduled to continue into late November before its first phase wraps, after which another round of court filings and arguments are expected. Mehta isn't expected to issue a ruling until early next year. If he decides Google has been breaking the law, it will trigger another trial to determine what measures should be taken to rein in the Mountain View, California, company.

Invented

Although Google products such as the Chrome web browser, Gmail, YouTube and online maps all are hugely popular, none have become as indispensable - or as valuable - as the internet search engine invented by Page and a fellow Stanford University graduate student, Sergey Brin, during the late 1990s.

The trial is beginning just a couple weeks after the 25th anniversary of the first investment in the company - a \$100,000 check written by Sun Microsystems co-founder Andy Bechtolsheim that enabled Page and Brin to set up shop in a Silicon Valley garage.

Today, Google's corporate parent, Alphabet Inc., is worth \$1.7 trillion and employs 182,000 people, with most of the money coming from \$224 billion in annual ad sales flowing through a network of digital services anchored by a search engine that fields billions of queries a day.

Google could be hobbled if the antitrust trial culminates in concessions that undercut its power. One possibility is that the company could be forced to stop paying Apple and other companies to make Google the default search engine on smartphones and computers.

Or the legal battle could cause Google to lose focus. That's what hap-

Biggest US antitrust trial in decades

US military needs to be more explicit in future contracts

Musk's refusal to have Starlink support Ukraine raises questions for Pentagon

NATIONAL HARBOR, Md., Sept 12, (AP): SpaceX founder Elon Musk's refusal to allow Ukraine to use Starlink internet services to launch a surprise attack on Russian forces in Crimea last September has raised questions as to whether the US military needs to be more explicit in future contracts that services or products it purchases could be used in war, Air Force Secretary Frank Kendall said Monday.

Excerpts of a new biography of Musk published by The Washington Post last week revealed that the Ukrainians in September 2022 had asked for the Starlink support to attack Russian naval vessels based at the Crimean port of Sevastopol. Musk had refused due to concerns that Russia would launch a nuclear attack in response. Russia seized Crimea from Ukraine in 2014 and claims it as its territory.

Musk was not on a military contract when he refused the Crimea request; he'd been providing terminals to Ukraine for free in response to Russia's February 2022 invasion. However, in the months since, the US military has funded and officially contracted with Starlink for continued support. The Pentagon has not disclosed the terms or cost of that contract, citing

operational security.

But the Pentagon is reliant on SpaceX for far more than the Ukraine response, and the uncertainty that Musk or any other commercial vendor could refuse to provide services in a future conflict has led space systems military planners to reconsider what needs to be explicitly laid out in future agreements, Kendall said during a roundtable with reporters at the Air Force Association convention at National Harbor, Maryland, on Monday.

Systems

"If we're going to rely upon commercial architectures or commercial systems for operational use, then we have to have some assurances that they're going to be available," Kendall said. "We have to have that. Otherwise they are a convenience and maybe an economy in peacetime, but they're not something we can rely upon in wartime."

SpaceX also has the contract to help the Air Force's Air Mobility Command develop a rocket ship that would quickly move military cargo into a conflict zone or disaster zone, which could alleviate the military's reliance on slower aircraft or ships. While not

specifying SpaceX, Gen. Mike Minihan, head of Air Mobility Command, said, "American industry has to be clear-eyed on the full spectrum of what it could be used for."

As US military investment in space has increased in recent years, concerns have revolved around how to indemnify commercial vendors from liability in case something goes wrong in a launch and whether the US military has an obligation to defend those firms' assets, such as their satellites or ground stations, if they are providing military support in a conflict.

Until Musk's refusal in Ukraine, there had not been a focus on whether there needed to be language saying a firm providing military support in war had to agree that that support could be used in combat.

"We acquire technology, we acquire services, required platforms to serve the Air Force mission, or in this case, the Department of the Air Force," said Andrew Hunter, assistant secretary of the Air Force for acquisition, technology and logistics. "So that is an expectation, that it is going to be used for Air Force purposes, which will include, when necessary, to be used to support combat operations."

pened to Microsoft after its antitrust showdown with the Justice Department: Distracted, the software giant struggled to adapt to the impact of internet search and smartphones. Google capitalized on that distraction to leap from its startup roots into an imposing powerhouse.

Nearly three years after filing its antitrust lawsuit during the Trump administration, lawyers from the U.S. Justice Department will try to prove Google has been abusing the power of its search engine to stifle competition in ways that discouraged innovation. Critics say the quality of search results has deteriorated, too, as Google used its engine to sell ads and promote its own products, like Google restaurant reviews instead of those offered by Yelp.

Dozens of state attorneys general, led by Colorado, have waded into the battle and will have a chance to prove Google turned into an illegal monopoly that's harming consumers.

The crux of the Justice Department's argument will boil down to its contention that Google's search engine has become like digital air almost everyone breathes, and that it needs to be cleaned up because the company's tactics have polluted the atmosphere.

Google's vast legal team is expected

to counter that the company has never stopped improving its search engine, executing its original mission to organize the world's information and make it universally accessible to anyone with an internet connection. From Google's perspective, the perpetual improvements explain why most people almost reflexively gravitate to its search engine, a habit that long ago made "Googling" synonymous with looking things up.

Commanding

Despite commanding about 90% of the internet search market, Google argues it faces a wide range of competition ranging from other search engines such as Microsoft's Bing and DuckDuckGo to websites such as Amazon and Yelp, where people research questions about what product to buy or where to eat.

The Justice Department contends Google's claim that it dominates the market by supplying the best search engine is a canard. They allege Google protects its franchise through a form of payola, shelling out billions of dollars annually to be the default search engine on the iPhone and web browser such as Apple's Safari and Mozilla's Firefox.

Regulators also allege Google has illegally rigged the market in its favor

From premium to lower-priced, an array of iPhone 15 choices

Apple hopes to reverse sales slump with its next gen of iPhones

NEW YORK, Sept 12, (AP): Apple is expected to take the wraps off its next iPhone on Tuesday during what has become an annual late summer rite aimed at giving more people more reasons to buy the technology trendsetter's marquee product.

The showcase at Apple's Cupertino California, headquarters comes as the company is mired in a mild slump that has seen its sales drop from last year in three consecutive quarters - with management signaling another downturn is likely during the current quarter that will be capped with the release of its iPhone 15 lineup. The malaise is a key reason Apple's stock price has dipped by nearly 10% since mid-July, dropping the company's market value below the \$3 trillion threshold it reached for the first time earlier this summer.

As has been case with Apple and other smartphone mak-

ers, the next model isn't expected to make any major leaps in technology. The array of iPhone 15 choices, likely to range from lower-priced basic models to more expensive premium versions, are expected to consist of mostly incremental advances to the device's chips, battery and cameras.

The basic iPhone 15 models also may be redesigned to include a shape-shifting cutout on the display screen that Apple calls its "Dynamic Island" for app notifications - a look that was introduced with last year's Pro and Pro Max devices.

If the rumor mill pans out, this year's iPhone 15 Pro and Pro Max may feature a periscope-style telephoto lens that will improve the quality of photos taken from far distances. The telephoto lens could boast a 6x optical zoom, which would still lag the 10x optical zoom on Samsung's premium

Galaxy S22 Ultra, but would be a significant upgrade from the 3x optical zoom on the iPhone 14 Pro and Pro Max.

The improved camera is one of the reasons Apple is also expected to raise the prices of the Pro and Pro Max. The iPhone 14 Pro starts at \$1,000 while the Pro Max starts at \$1,100. Analysts think the iPhone 15 versions of those models may cost an additional \$100 to \$200, testing how much consumers are willing to pay for the devices at a time when post-pandemic inflation has been squeezing more household budgets.

One of the biggest anticipated changes that Apple is expected to announce is a new way to charge the iPhone 15 models and future generations. The company is expected to switch to the USB-C cable standard that is already widely used on many devices, including its Mac computers and many of its iPads.

Apple is being forced to start phasing out the Lightning port cables that it rolled out in 2012 with the release of the iPhone 5 because of a mandate that European regulators are imposing in 2024. It's unclear whether Apple will initially limit the switchover to USB-C ports to models made specifically for the European market or make the change worldwide.

If Apple decides it's time to move away from Lightning port cables throughout the world, the transition may not be too inconvenient for most consumers. That's because USB-C cables already are so widely used on a range of computers, smartphones and other devices that many people may already own them. The shift to USB-C cables may even be a popular move since that standard typically charges devices more quickly and also offers faster speeds for data transfers.

'Study signifies a milestone in healthcare'

Lunit AI poised to replace 1 human reader in breast cancer screening

SEOUL, South Korea, Sept 12: Lunit (KRX:328130.KQ), a leading provider of AI-powered solutions for cancer diagnostics and therapeutics, is spearheading a transformative change in breast cancer screening, bolstered by groundbreaking findings from a prospective study led by Dr. Fredrik Strand at the Karolinska Institutet, Sweden, involving over 50,000 women.

Utilizing Lunit INSIGHT MMG, an FDA-cleared and CE-marked AI solution for mammography analysis, this research backs AI's potential to replace one human reader under Europe's double reading guideline and underscores its capacity to alleviate the strain on radiologists.

"While double readings by two radiologists have been established as the common practice across Europe and Australia, many countries are experiencing great difficulties due to the shortage of radiologists," explained Dr. Strand, breast radiologist and associate professor at Karolinska Institutet. "This prospective study lays the groundwork for the widespread adoption of AI in breast cancer screening by filling the role of one radiologist, which in turn can reduce medical costs and lead to healthcare reimbursement."

Analysis

Conducted from April 1, 2021, to June 9, 2022, this study meticulously analyzed 55,581 breast cancer screening cases in real-world clinical settings. The analysis introduced three independent readers: Radiologist 1, Radiologist 2, and Lunit INSIGHT MMG, enabling meticulous comparisons.

The outcomes were transformative: Lunit INSIGHT MMG, collaborating with a single radiologist, exhibited a superior Cancer Detection Rate (CDR) of 4.3 per 1000, surpassing the traditional two-radiologist approach with a CDR of 4.1 per 1000. The study also showed a significant decline in recall rates (RR) with AI, both in collaboration with one radiologist (RR 2.8, 4.44% decrease) and when operating independently (RR 1.55, 47.1% decrease), compared to the double reading system (RR 2.93).

Building upon these findings, Lunit forged a pioneering partnership with Capio S:t Görän Hospital, Sweden's largest private hospital and a part of the Ramsay Santé group, earlier this year. Based on the contract, Lunit has integrated Lunit INSIGHT MMG, marking the first-ever actual implementation where AI replaces one of the two human readers in breast cancer screening. The hospital currently employs Lunit INSIGHT MMG to analyze more than 180,000 mammograms annually, significantly contributing to Sweden's national breast screening program.

"This innovative step to becoming the world's first breast center using AI as an independent reader, allows radiologists to be less burdened from the excessive amount of reading, enabling them to focus on more advanced diagnostics and ensuring shorter waiting times for patients," said Dr. Karin

Dembrower, Senior Physician at Capio S:t Görän Hospital Mammography Clinic. "In the short term, we anticipate detecting more cancers; in the long term, we envision a decrease in interval cancers and the detection of smaller tumors. We are excited to conduct further studies to explore these possibilities."

Recently published in The Lancet Digital Health, study results and the implementation story will also be presented at the forthcoming EUSOBI 2023 (European Society of Breast Imaging 2023) conference in Valencia, Spain, from September 28 to September 30.

"This study signifies a milestone in healthcare, ushering in an era where AI seamlessly complements and elevates the standards of breast cancer screening. AI is redefining cancer screening standards," said Brandon Suh, CEO of Lunit. "Our collaboration with Capio S:t Görän Hospital is pivotal in addressing the radiologist shortage and revolutionizing mammography analysis. It reinforces Lunit's dedication to forming similar alliances with European medical institutions to enhance patient experiences and optimize operational efficiency."

Lunit is a deep learning-based medical AI company on a mission to conquer cancer. Our focus is on developing AI solutions for precision diagnostics and therapeutics, ensuring the right diagnosis, and treatment, at the right cost for each patient. Lunit is devoted to developing advanced medical image analytics and AI-based biomarkers via cutting-edge technology.

Also:

SAN DIEGO: According to an analysis of over 90,000 urine drug test results, use of the potent fentanyl analogue, parafluorofentanyl, has increased dramatically in the Western US.

This analysis shows geographical trends in parafluorofentanyl detection in fentanyl-positive urine specimens from September 2022 through August 2023 and determined the percent change between the first and last 3-month periods (September - November 2022 vs. June - August 2023).

Parafluorofentanyl dramatically increased in the Pacific and Mountain divisions from March to August of 2023 but generally declined in all other Census divisions.

Significant increases were observed in the Pacific (+61%) and Mountain (+170%) divisions between the first and last 3-month periods; significant decreases occurred in the West South Central, East North Central, East South Central, and South Atlantic divisions.

According to Millennium Health Chief Clinical Officer **Angela G. Huskey**, PharmD, CPE, "We are concerned about this recent Western surge, as parafluorofentanyl-involved overdose deaths increased substantially from 2020-2021, especially in Eastern portions of the US, where it's been more prevalent. We must all remain extra vigilant and continue to monitor the situation closely."

SEOUL, South Korea, Sept 12: Through continuous research, the secrets of ginseng, a representative medicinal herb of Korea, are being revealed, showcasing its efficacy. Recently, studies demonstrating the effects of consistent consumption of red ginseng on improving dementia and cognitive function have been announced one after another, attracting attention.

The Korean Society of Ginseng's spring academic conference in 2023 witnessed Konyang University's Institute for Alzheimer's & Dementia Research and Korea Ginseng Corporation's Natural Products Research Institute revealing the mechanism by which ginsenoside compounds in ginseng reduce cognitive impairment in Alzheimer's disease.

The research team divided a total of 18 rats into three groups (normal group, Alzheimer's disease-induced rats, and Alzheimer's disease-induced rats administered with ginsenoside compound) to analyze changes in brain proteins and metabolites. The results indicated that the protein changes inducing damage to brain synapses (the junction between nerve cells) and mitochondria in the Alzheimer's disease-induced group were restored to the levels of the normal group through the administration of the ginsenoside compound.

Helps

Furthermore, a research team in the Department of Psychiatry from Hallym University's Sacred Heart Hospital Dongtan confirmed that regular consumption of ginseng helps in preventing cognitive decline caused by Alzheimer's disease. The team conducted an observational study on the relationship between ginseng and cognitive function, targeting 160 individuals aged 65 to 90 who did not have dementia. The research results showed that the group consuming ginseng exhibited higher episodic memory scores (EMS). Among individuals without the Apolipoprotein E4 gene mutation, which increases the risk of late-onset Alzheimer's disease, consuming Korean ginseng was found to be effective in improving EMS. Especially, those who had consumed ginseng for more than 5 years showed even more pronounced effects in preventing the decline of initial Alzheimer's disease-associated cognitive functions.

These research results demonstrate the potential utility of ginseng as a candidate for preventing and improving conditions like dementia and mild cognitive impairment. In addition, these findings shed light on why ginseng has been cherished as a top health supplement for centuries, gaining the love of many people and securing its place as a valuable national export item and a premium gift representing Korea.

AVM Biotechnology, a clinical stage company enrolling Phase 2 adaptive design/expansion cohorts for immunomodulatory AVM0703 in relapsed/refractory Non-Hodgkin Lymphoma/Leukemia patients, will present at the Bio Investor Forum, held in San Francisco, CA October 17-18, 2023. AVM Biotechnology's

'Top health supplement for centuries'

Red ginseng consumption prevents, improves dementia: Korean Society

Digital avatars in metaverse

NTT demonstrates technologies to aid people living with ALS disease

TOKYO, Sept 12: NTT Corporation (NTT), WITH ALS and Dentsu Lab Tokyo (DLT) demonstrated technologies from Project Humanity, an NTT-led initiative designed to enhance the quality of life for those living with disease and disability through the development of advanced communication technologies.

The demonstration occurred at the 2023 Ars Electronica Festival, an event celebrating art, advanced technology and culture held in Linz, Austria from Sept 6 to Sept 10, 2023. It featured a live, virtual performance by WITH ALS founder and DJ Masatane Muto, who lives with ALS (amyotrophic lateral sclerosis).

NTT enables individuals to operate avatars in a digital space by equipping their bodies with myoelectric sensors that track muscular activity, which is then converted into operational information and reflected in the free operation of the avatar.

In laboratory tests, NTT installed myoelectric sensors on the body (in two places on each of the neck, arms and legs) and confirmed the reception of data on body parts responsive to the will of the individual. Additionally, when viewed in real space, movements from subjects living with ALS were detected in distinct waveforms when viewed as myoelectric data.

NTT converts the sensed data into

information for avatar operation and uses that information to implement the free operation of the avatars generated in the metaverse.

NTT is developing the capability to reproduce an individual's voice from recorded audio by using speech synthesis technology. This technology enables communication in multiple languages while maintaining an individual's unique voice.

Additionally, NTT is developing a non-verbal communication solution based on proprietary biometric transcription technology that enables speech through small movements.

Interact

In 2024, NTT aims to further develop its communications technologies to enable those living with ALS to interact without limitations more freely both in the metaverse as well as the real world, through robots. NTT ultimately aims to realize a future in which all people can interact with each other regardless of barriers caused by disease or disability.

NTT contributes to a sustainable society through the power of innovation. We are a leading global technology company providing services to consumers and business as a mobile operator, infrastructure, networks, applications, and consulting provider. Our offerings include digital business

consulting, managed application services, workplace and cloud solutions, data center and edge computing, all supported by our deep global industry expertise. We are over \$95B in revenue and 330,000 employees, with \$3.6B in annual R&D investments. Our operations span across 80+ countries and regions, allowing us to serve clients in over 190 of them. We serve over 75% of Fortune Global 100 companies, thousands of other enterprise and government clients and millions of consumers. <https://group.ntt/en/>

Founded in 2016 by Masatane Muto, who is facing amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS), also known as Lou Gehrig's disease. The mission of WITH ALS General Incorporated Association is to raise awareness of the disease and promote advocacy in search of new treatments and support systems. It also develops action plans and provides information to build hope and enhance the quality of life of those with the disease and their families. <https://withals.com/>

Dentsu Lab Tokyo is a creative R&D organization that combines research, planning and development. Under the philosophy of "PLAYFUL SOLUTION" and "Be Irregular," we use digital technology and ideas to develop expressions that move people's minds and solve social issues that the world demands today.

pipeline includes the small molecule AVM0703 with applications to solid tumors as well as blood cancers, small molecule AVM0704 to induce blood cell formation to reduce need for transfusions and granulocyte-colony stimulating factor treatments, and an allogeneic 'off-the shelf' bi-specific Natural Killer T-like cell that expresses both the gamma delta TCR and the invariant TCR.

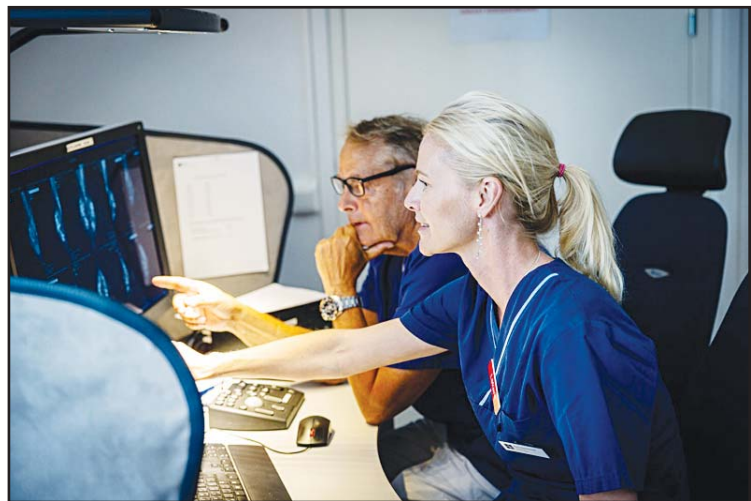
In June 2023, AVM Biotechnology was selected as a 2023-2024 National Cancer Institute (NCI) Showcase Company for their Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) Investor Initiatives. AVM Biotechnology has previously been awarded five (5) highly competitive National Institute of Health SBIR grants; three (3) of these from the National Cancer Institute.

AVM Biotechnology is a clinical stage company headquartered in Seattle, WA developing immunomodulatory therapies for hematological cancer, infectious and autoimmune diseases. AVM's lead drug, immunomodulatory AVM0703, has demonstrated relatively broad anti-cancer activity against a variety of solid tumors and blood cancers. Over 57 patients have been treated to date. AVM0703's relatively broad anti-cancer activity is hypothesized to be due to mobilization of a highly ac-

tive gamma/delta T-cell receptor expressing immune cell, which is programmed to recognize special stress signals produced by most cancer cells but not normal cells. Requests for additional information about immunomodulatory AVM0703 and its relatively broad activity against solid tumors and blood cancers can be made by contacting compassionate@avmbiotech.com and for information about our enrolling clinical trial for relapsed/refractory Non-Hodgkin's Lymphoma/Leukemia patients please contact V.Radosevic@Medpace.com or tdesher@avmbiotech.com. AVM's pipeline also includes a small molecule that triggers blood cell formation to replace transfusions, and an allogeneic TCR+invTCR+ NKT-like cell therapy.

AVM0703 is small molecule immunomodulatory drug enrolling Phase 2 trials in US in relapsed/refractory Non-Hodgkin's Lymphoma (NHL) which began enrollment H1 2023 (partially funded by NCI Ph II FastTrak grant 1R44CA272096). AVM0703 mobilizes a novel endogenous bispecific gamma delta TCR+ invariant TCR+ Natural Killer T-like cell with profound anti-tumor activity. AVM0703 has shown an absence of safety concerns with side-effects limited to grades 1-3.

Clinical responses in the enrolling NHL trial and in FDA-approved expanded access/compassionate use include multiple NHL sub-types and diverse solid tumor types. Responses to AVM0703 are quite rapid, reported from 30 minutes to 14 days after infusion. Preclinical data also demonstrates a significant response against autoreactive lymphocytes in the NOD Type 1 diabetes model (Funded by NIDDK SBIR Ph I grant 1R43DK121634 and NIDDK SBIR Ph II grant 2R44DK121634). Gamma delta TCR+ lymphocytes recognize phosphoantigens expressed by stressed, cancer and infected cells and autoreactive lymphocytes, but not normal cells. Adoptive transfer of AVM0703 induced gamma delta TCR+ immune cells has potent activity against preclinical melanoma (funded by NCI SBIR Ph I grant 1R43CA246896). Additionally, AVM0703 has been shown to have potent neo-adjuvant activity before chemotherapy against immune-resistant, aggressive mouse A20 lymphoma (Funded by NCI SBIR Ph I 1R43 CA271951). Based on its ability to penetrate collagen-encased desmoplastic tumors, AVM0703 has promise as a neoadjuvant prior to chemotherapy to improve outcomes for metastatic advanced pancreatic cancer patients.



Dr. Karin Dembrower, Senior Physician at Capio S:t Görän Hospital Mammography Clinic, utilizing Lunit INSIGHT MMG to meticulously analyze mammography images for precise diagnoses.

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Samira Boudargham



Samira Boudargham

Nuances of the sublime

A WEAVER OF PASSIONS IN EVERY MESMERISING STEP

By Paul Francis X. Fernandes
Arab Times Staff

Samira Boudargham who was born in Esquel Chubut Argentina, and lived in this beautiful city until she was 17 with her mother Yanina, and sister Nayla and brother Farid says she studied in Buenos Aires, Argentina where she lived for about 7 years, where she was fortunate to study dance, psychology and worked as a dance teacher and belly dancer.

In an exclusive interview, she told the Arab Times, her dream was to travel to Lebanon to see her family town and Egypt to study dance with Egyptian teachers and pay a visit to all the tourist attractions.

“When I arrived in Egypt to supposedly spend two weeks,” she says, “thanks to a friend who put me in contact with the Nile Maxim Boat located in Cairo, where working for two weeks I signed a work contract that we have renewed and I have now been here for 4 years.”

“I am very happy with my profession and I am very grateful to this beautiful country Egypt that has opened its doors to

me and gives me so much love every day,” she says.

With rhythms and graceful movements Samira has captivated or rather mastered the enchanting art of Belly Dance. With a deep passion for cultural expression and an undeniable talent, Samira seamlessly weaves together tradition and innovation, mesmerizing audiences with every movement and every intricate step she takes.

Arab Times: How did you first become interested in belly dancing, and what inspired you to pursue it as a career?

Samira: I started dancing in a small city in southern Argentina called Esquel. My mother worked in a Lebanese association and my family also has Lebanese ancestry, so we were all very related to this association. When I was only 4 years old, my mother took me to classes and I spent my entire childhood and adolescence there. When I was 17 years old I went on vacation to Buenos Aires, where there the Arabian Dance

Continued on Page 12

editor's choice



People & Places

The sublime

Continued from Page 11

School (ADS), the biggest in town. After my audition I got admission directly to fourth year. Filled with enthusiasm, I was going to live alone in Buenos Aires with the help of my grandparents and my mother.

AT: Could you share a bit about your training and background in belly dancing? How did you develop your skills?

Samira: Until I was 17, dance had been the protagonist in my life, but when I moved to another city to continue studying dance at the ADS of my teacher Amir Thaleb, dance was the beginning of the project of my life.

I graduated as a performer and teacher. I was part of the ballet company of this school. I also created my own school where I taught young girls and women. We had our own year-end show and events. I traveled within my country teaching dance and being part of different events; that greatly enriched my dance.

AT: What aspects of belly dancing do you find most captivating or fulfilling? Is there a specific style or element that resonates with you the most?

Samira: I love the connection that is generated between the belly dance technique and Arabic musical pieces, Arabic instruments and their nuances. I feel it sublime, especially the interpretation of Tarab music and classical music. They are my favorites to interpret. Connecting with the voice of the great singers of this genre is something that I couldn't explain in words, that's why I dance to it.

AT: Belly dancing encompasses various styles and traditions. Can you tell us about the styles you specialize in and how they differ from one another?

Samira: Throughout my life I studied dance and I think it is infinite, the Arab world is very large, each country has its folklores and I had the opportunity to study many of them. But I specialized in belly dance, I could say that the Egyptian style, so earthly and passionate, is the one I always connect with but I love seeing the Lebanese style, with its unique dynamics.

AT: How do you approach choreography and performance creation? What goes into crafting a captivating belly dance routine?

Samira: Today, in general I do not have complete choreographies, but rather planned choreographies, in certain musical moments I know what I am going to do but I like to dance and do what I feel at the moment. My performance is not always the same. I change according to the event, weddings, restaurant shows, henna parties, clubs and more. But they are all characterized by having a dynamic energy since during my performance there are songs about love, heartbreak, traditional songs and new ones.

AT: Belly dancing is often seen as an expressive art form. How do you convey emotions and tell stories through your performances?

Samira: The wonderful thing about belly dancing is that feeling that is created between the piece of music and the dancer. I don't speak Arabic but I know what all the songs say so I can connect with the music and all the emotions can be generated.

AT: Costume and attire are essential parts of belly dancing. How do you choose your costumes, and do they play a role in conveying your artistic message?

Samira: I am my own designer, I love creating costumes, I am inspired by haute couture, fashion, etc. I work with designers who also contribute their ideas to my designs and we have created wonderful costumes. And my costumes also play a role during my performance, because I design and choose them depending on the occasion and the type of event.

AT: Performing in front of an audience requires confidence and stage presence. How do you prepare mentally and emotionally for a performance?

Samira: Preparation to go on stage is a beautiful ritual. It starts with makeup and hair, which I sometimes do or have my team of professionals do as well, but the most important thing is seconds before the show begins, I sometimes need a few minutes with myself to connect with the situation.

AT: Can you describe a memorable or unique performance experience that stands out in your career?

Samira: I have many, the ones that stay in my heart are when people get excited when they see me dance and listen to a classical song, but if I have to choose it will be two. In 2018 I produced and performed with my aunt in a show called "On Stage". I decided to dance to a Wael Kfoury song because he reminded me of my grandfather who had passed away.

I finished dancing and a woman came up to me to tell me that I had made her cry and she thanked me for what she had felt. I must say that the Egyptian audience is something inexplicable sometimes, the energy and love they give me when I am doing my performance is something unique, sometimes I finish dancing and I need to reflect on the beautiful madness that I experienced minutes before, I love them too much.

AT: Collaboration can be a significant aspect of dance. Have you worked with musicians, choreographers, or other artists to create interdisciplinary performances?

Samira: Thank God I have had much collaboration with different artists throughout my life and especially in Argentina. Here in Egypt I work with an orchestra although not always since lately the events do not hire dancers and orchestras like they used to do before, so I go to many events alone with my tabla player.

AT: Belly dancing has cultural roots in various regions. How do you approach cultural sensitivity and authenticity when performing different styles?

Samira: I love innovations and fusions but I always stay with the original essence. Today modern music requires us to innovate in relation to dance and movement. Personally, the adaptation that I had to make of my dance to modern music is with one rule: never stop dancing and demand myself technically. Since it is easy in many modern songs to dance a little and interact with the audience, but it is not my choice. I love interacting with people but always through dance.

AT: How do you stay physically fit and maintain the stamina required for dancing? Do you engage in specific fitness routines or practices?

Samira: I don't have a demanding diet, I try to eat healthy, my diet is based on chicken and fruits I think. I go to the gym and do yoga but seasonally since when my work is in season my body is usually too tired to do activities other than dance.

AT: What is your advice to aspiring belly dancers who are looking to pursue a career in this field?

Samira: I would tell them to dream a lot and work hard to achieve their goals because it is not easy, it is very difficult to stay in the world of work and mainly when it comes to this art.

AT: As an artist, how do you continue to evolve and grow in your craft? Are there any goals or aspirations you're currently working towards?

Samira: I honestly feel that every week I learn something new, I am constantly evolving. I take classes with teachers I admire, I watch videos of dancers from the golden age, contemporary ones, and I rehearse a lot, mainly when I have new ideas. I have many goals to achieve in the future, today I am very focused on my present because it really demands my 24 hours but I would love to enter the world of acting, I think I have potential and one day I know I will do it.

AT: In what ways do you engage with your audience and fans outside of your performances? Do you use social media or other platforms to connect?

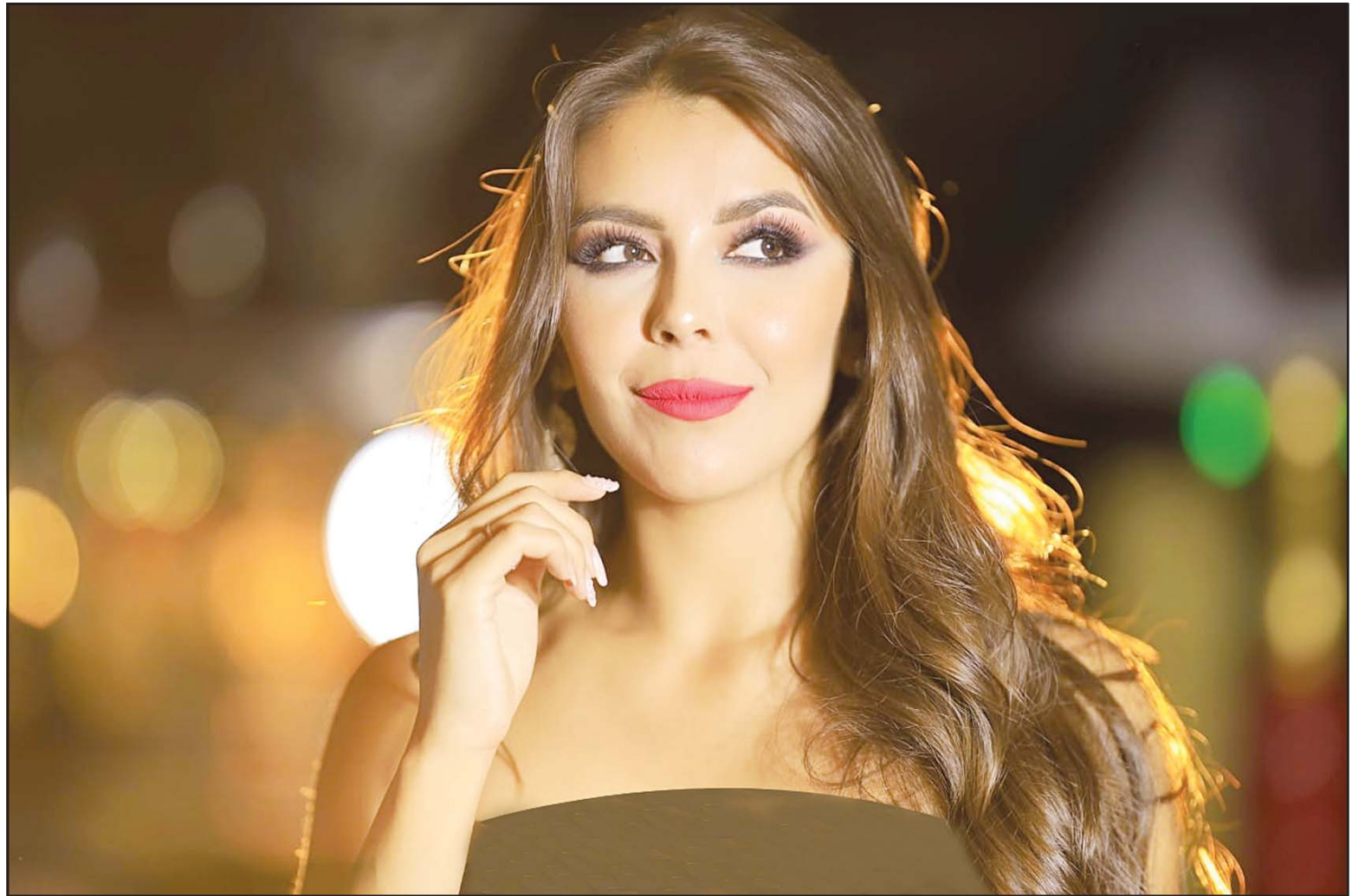
Samira: I feel very grateful for social networks, because it generates a very beautiful closeness with fans. I try to look at all the messages they send me and I always thank God for the love that comes to me through social networks.

AT: Are there any misconceptions about belly dancing that you'd like to address or clarify?

Samira: I would just like to tell you that my entire life I have danced, at least since I can remember. Thank God my family always accompanied me on this path and they know how much I love and respect dance. I think we should all take care of artists, in a profession that does good for our world.

AT: One final question -- How do you hope audiences take away from your performances? What do you want your dancing to impact those who watch you?

Samira: It is a very difficult question. I can only tell you that I go on stage with an open heart. I may be sick, heartbroken, sad, among other things, but when I'm on stage I try to give them my best, I just want the audience to be left with the emotions that are generated in that back and forth between the artist and the audience.



Samira Boudargham

Film

'We're here to bear witness to these horrors'

'20 Days in Mariupol' screened at UN

UNITED NATIONS, Sept. 12, (AP) — More than a hundred ambassadors, journalists and representatives of a broad spectrum of society watched a UN screening Monday evening of the award-winning documentary "20 Days in Mariupol," which follows a trio of Associated Press journalists during Russia's relentless siege of the Ukrainian port city in the early days of the war.

UK Ambassador Barbara Woodward, who co-hosted the screening, said the film is important because "Russia's invasion of Ukraine threatens what the UN stands for: an international order where the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all countries is fundamental."

"We want to reaffirm our commitment to UN values, and that's why we've chosen to show this very important documentary," she said in welcoming the audience at UN headquarters in New York.

The screening comes at the start of the 78th session of the UN General Assembly and a week before world leaders arrive for their annual meeting, where the more than 18-month war in Ukraine is expected to be in the spotlight — especially with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy scheduled to speak in person for the first time.

Aggression

The harrowing documentary, which was produced by the AP and the PBS series "Frontline," is culled from 30 hours of footage AP journalist Mstyslav Chernov and his colleagues shot in Mariupol following Russia's Feb. 24, 2022, invasion of Ukraine and its siege of the city.

It documents fighting in the streets, the crushing strain on Mariupol's residents and medical teams, and attacks that killed pregnant women, children and others. The siege, which ended on May 20, 2022, with the surrender of a small group of outgunned and outmanned Ukrainian fighters at the Azovstal steel plant, left the city in ruins and an estimated 25,000 people dead, though the toll is likely higher.

The US ambassador to the UN, Linda Thomas-Greenfield, the other co-host, said "20 Days in Mariupol" documents "the horrors of (Russian President Vladimir) Putin's war of aggression."

"We're here tonight to bear witness, to bear witness to these horrors and to reaffirm our commitment to justice and peace," she said. "We must continue to hold Russia to account for its atrocities. We must continue to support the Ukrainian people in their time of need."

The AP's reporting from Mariupol drew the Kremlin's ire, with its UN ambassador, Vasily Nebenzia, falsely claiming during a Security Council meeting in the siege's

early days that photos showing the aftermath of a missile strike on a maternity hospital were staged.

"I wish the entire Russian mission were here to watch this film," said Ukraine's UN Ambassador Sergiy Kyslytsya, who attended Monday's screening.

Kyslytsya said he believes the documentary is so powerful and important that it will still be shown 50 years from now.

Impact

AP Senior Vice President and Executive Editor Julie Pace called the documentary "a testament to the power and impact of eyewitness journalism," stressing that without it, "the world would not have known the atrocities that took place."

"To have the film screened at the United Nations as the UN General Assembly gets underway underscores the importance of fact-based journalism on a global scale," she said. "It's crucial that we safeguard both the ability of a free press to cover the world's most important stories and the public's ability to view this type of fact-based reporting."

"20 Days in Mariupol" won the Sundance Global Audience Award for Best Documentary and

He was living in Kyiv when the war started last year, then three months later moved to Leipzig, Germany, where he had a project and decided to stay.

Gelb said discussions began last fall with Ukraine first lady Olena Zelenska when she visited New York and Kolomiets was picked from among 72 applications after vetting by Met dramaturg Paul Cremonese, Gelb and the Met's artistic staff.

A story framework has been created. A piano-vocal score and libretto will be written in the next year or two and a workshop prepared.

"I felt it was important to have an English-language librettist working with the composer so that story would have the broadest possible audience," Gelb said.

Gelb has been an advocate of support for Ukraine, banning Russian star soprano Anna Netrebko from house and assisting Ukrainian Freedom Orchestra tours led by his wife, Canadian-Ukrainian conductor Keri-Lynn Wilson.

Works in the joint commissioning program can appear at either house.

"It's my hope it will end up as a full-blown opera and hopefully on our stage," Gelb said.

several other prizes. Chernov was awarded the Pulitzer Prize for Public Service along with photographer Evgeniy Maloletka, producer Vasilisa Stepanenko and Paris-based correspondent Lori Hinnant for their "courageous reporting" on Mariupol.

Chernov delivered a video welcome from the field in Ukraine, wearing a helmet and telling the audience that he sometimes feels powerless as a journalist because he can't change things.

"I can only make sure that as many people as possible will see what I saw ... know about what happened in Mariupol and will never forget about it," he said. "What was happening in Mariupol is happening right now to other Ukrainian cities, in this moment, and it unfortunately will be happening tomorrow, and the day after tomorrow, until the war is stopped."

Raney Aronson-Rath, editor-in-chief and executive producer of "Frontline," called it "deeply meaningful" to have the opportunity to screen the documentary at the United Nations. She said the producers continue to share the film around the world to give audiences the opportunity to "bear witness to the atrocities that Ukrainians have endured."



Director Ethan Hawke and his daughter Maya Hawke attend the premiere of "Wildcat," at the Royal Alexandra Theatre during the Toronto International Film Festival, Monday, Sept. 11, in Toronto. (AP)

Variety

MANILA, Philippines: Nobel Peace Prize winner **Maria Ressa** was acquitted of a final tax evasion charge Tuesday though she still faces two remaining legal cases she believes the former **Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte** used to muzzle her critical reporting.

Ressa and her online news organization Rappler had faced five tax evasion charges but a court acquitted her of four of the charges in January. A different court heard the fifth charge and acquitted her Tuesday.

"Facts wins, truth wins, justice wins," she told reporters outside the courthouse.

Ressa and Russian journalist **Dmitry Muratov** were awarded the 2021 Nobel for their efforts to safeguard freedom of expression by fighting for the survival of their news organizations and defying government efforts to shut them.

She had said the charges against her were politically motivated as Rappler was critical of Duterte's brutal crackdown on illegal drugs that left thousands of mostly petty drug suspects dead. The International Criminal Court is investigating the crackdown as a possible crime against humanity.

Rappler also criticized Duterte's handling of the coronavirus pandemic including prolonged lockdowns that deepened poverty, caused one of the country's worst recessions and sparked allegations of corruption in government medical purchases.

Ressa also said there appeared to be a "lifting of fear" under the Philippines' new leader - Ferdinand Marcos Jr., who is the namesake son of the dictator overthrown in the army-backed "people power" uprising in 1986.

Ressa is still appealing to the Supreme Court against an online libel conviction, while Rappler is challenging a closure order issued by the Securities and Exchange Commission.

"You've got to have faith," Ressa said. "The acquittal now strengthens our resolve to continue with the justice system, to submit ourselves to the court despite the political harassment, despite the attacks on press freedom. It shows that the court system works and we hope to see the remaining charges dismissed." (AP)

PHILADELPHIA: Aerosmith has postponed a half-dozen dates on their farewell tour because frontman **Steven Tyler** injured his vocal cords during a performance, Tyler announced Monday.

"I'm heartbroken to say I have received strict doctor's orders not to sing for the next thirty days," Tyler, 75, posted on Instagram. "I sustained vocal cord damage during Saturday's show that led to subsequent bleeding. We'll need to postpone a few dates so

that we can come back and give you the performance you deserve."

The band known for "Dream On," "Walk This Way" and "Sweet Emotion" began its "Peace Out" farewell tour on Sept. 2 with a four-hour set in Philadelphia. Last Saturday's show was held on **New York's Long Island**.

The 40-date run was to include a stop in the band's hometown of Boston



Tyler



Ressa

on New Year's Eve with the final show originally scheduled for Jan. 26 in **Montreal**.

The new dates are Jan. 29 in **Detroit**; Feb. 14 in **Chicago**; Feb. 17 in **Washington D.C.**; Feb. 21 in **Toronto**; Feb. 26 in **Raleigh, North Carolina** and Feb. 29 in **Cleveland**, according to the Instagram announcement. (AP)

Science

Mosquitoes thriving

Volunteers let skeeters feed on them for study

SALT LAKE CITY, Sept 12, (AP): It's lunchtime at the Salt Lake City Mosquito Abatement District and a colony of sabethes cyaneus - also known as the paddle-legged beauty for its feathery appendages and iridescent coloring - find their way to Ella Branham.

"They're not very aggressive and they're kind of picky eaters," said Branham, a technician, as she exhaled into a glass tank to attract the insects to the carbon dioxide in her breath. "So I'll be feeding them with my arm."

Branham had volunteered to let the South American mosquitoes feed on her blood so they can produce eggs and maintain the colony for education and research at the lab in the Salt Lake City district. It's one of the many mosquito control districts around the United States that seek to hold in check one of the world's deadliest animals - one well-positioned to thrive as climate change fosters a warmer and wetter environment.

Mosquitoes can carry viruses including dengue, yellow fever, chikungunya and Zika. They are especially threatening to public health in Asia and Africa but are also closely monitored in the United States. Local agencies reported more than 1,100 cases of West Nile virus in 2022, according to the US Centers for Disease Control.

Most humans who contract West Nile show no symptoms. But for some, it can cause vomiting, fever and in rare cases seizures or meningitis. Over roughly the last 25 years, nearly 3,000 deaths and more than 25,000 hospitalizations linked to West Nile were reported throughout the United States - most of them in August.

West Nile deaths have been reported this year in states including Texas and Colorado, and mosquitoes are thought to be the source of "locally acquired" malaria infections of people in Maryland, Florida and Texas.

Monitor

Ary Faraji, an entomologist and the executive director of the Salt Lake City mosquito abatement district, said monitoring shows the mosquito season starting earlier and lasting longer as the climate has warmed. The district used to historically shut down each year in mid-September, but that has gotten later and later. Last year, district workers were still setting and checking traps until Thanksgiving.

And this year - where an abnormally snowy winter and a very rainy spring left more water across the landscape for mosquitoes to breed in - his staff estimated that there were five times as many mosquitos in May compared to the average year.

That's where the health threat comes in. While both males and females feed on sugar or nectar throughout their lives, females require blood meals to nourish and develop their eggs.

"They are the true vixens," Faraji said. "Some can be so beautiful and yet some can be so deadly."

Faraji's staff - made up of scientists and college and doctoral students - traps, sorts and tests mosquitos for viruses using drones, boats and ATVs. Their work takes into account how trends ranging from weather patterns to population growth will affect disease transmission.

"The more people you put in a closer vicinity of where the mosquitos are, the higher chance of pathogen transmission," he said, noting the challenges of the wetland areas surrounding Utah's Great Salt Lake.

Though dangerous, mosquitos are also critical to ecosystems throughout the world, with various species serving as pollinators or food sources to fish, birds and frogs.

"We try to maintain a balance and suppress them to the point that they're not negatively affecting communities," Faraji said. "Taking them away would definitely negatively impact our ecosystem overall."



European Union officials have warned recently that there is a growing risk of mosquito-borne viral diseases such as dengue and chikungunya in Europe due to climate change.

The European Center for Disease Prevention and Control said that because Europe is experiencing a warming trend, with heat waves and flooding becoming more frequent and severe, and summers getting longer and warmer, the conditions are more favorable "for invasive mosquito species such as Aedes albopictus and Aedes aegypti."

The Stockholm-based agency said in a report the species Aedes albopictus is a known vector of chikungunya and dengue viruses and has been establishing itself farther northwards and westwards in Europe. The other mosquito, Aedes aegypti, known to transmit dengue, yellow fever, chikungunya, Zika and West Nile viruses, has been established in Cyprus since 2022 and may continue to spread to other European countries.

A decade ago, the Aedes albopictus mosquito was established in eight European countries, with 114 regions affected. In 2023, the mosquito is established in 13 countries and 337 regions, the ECDC said.

"If this continues, we can expect to see more cases and possibly deaths from diseases such as dengue, chikungunya and West Nile fever," ECDC director Andrea Ammon said. "Efforts need to focus on ways to control mosquito populations, enhancing surveillance and enforcing personal protective measures."

The agency said that sustainable ways to control mosquito populations include eliminating standing water sources where mosquitos breed, using eco-friendly larvicides and promoting community awareness about mosquito control.

To protect themselves, people should use mosquito bed nets, sleep or rest in screened or air-conditioned rooms, wear clothes that cover most of the body and use mosquito repellent, ECDC said.

It also said that raising awareness about diseases transmitted by mosquitos is essential.

There is no specific treatment for dengue. While about 80% of infections are mild, severe cases of the mosquito-spread disease can lead to internal bleeding, organ damage and death.

Chikungunya fever, a debilitating, mosquito-borne virus that is suspected of afflicting tens of thousands, was first identified in Africa in 1953. It causes severe pain in the joints but is rarely fatal. There is no vaccine, and it is mainly treated with pain medication.

West Nile fever symptoms can include headache, fever, muscle and joint aches, nausea and fatigue. People with West Nile fever typically recover on their own, although symptoms may last for weeks to months.

Also:

PHOENIX: A historic heat wave continues to stifle Phoenix - but the end may finally be in sight for residents of Arizona's largest city.

The high temperature in Phoenix on Sunday was expected to hit 111 degrees Fahrenheit (43.8 degrees Celsius), tying the record for that date set in 1990. It also would be the 55th day this year that the official reading at Phoenix Sky Harbor Airport reached at least 110 F (43.3 C).

However, an excessive heat warning was expected to expire at 8 p.m. Sunday, and meteorologists were forecasting a high of 106 F (41.1 C) on Monday and 102 F (38.8 C) on Tuesday.

"I hate to say, 'Yes, this will be the last,' but it's more than likely that will be the case - this will be our last stretch of 110s this summer," said Chris Kuhlman of the National Weather Service in Phoenix.

The city eclipsed the previous record of 53 days - set in 2020 - when it hit 113 F (45 C) Saturday.

Phoenix experienced the hottest three months since record-keeping began in 1895, including the hottest July and the second-hottest August. The daily average temperature of 97 F (36.1 C) in June, July and August passed the previous record of 96.7 F (35.9 C) set three years ago.



This photo provided by Pfizer in September 2023 shows single-dose vials of the company's updated COVID vaccine for adults. U.S. regulators have approved updated COVID-19 vaccines from Pfizer and Moderna, shots aimed at revving up protection this fall and winter. (AP)

US approves updated COVID vaccines to rev up protection this fall

The US approved updated COVID-19 vaccines Monday, hoping to rev up protection against the latest coronavirus strains and blunt any surge this fall and winter.

The Food and Drug Administration decision opens the newest shots from Moderna and Pfizer and its partner BioNTech to most Americans even if they've never had a coronavirus vaccination. It's part of a shift to treat fall updates of the COVID-19 vaccine much like getting a yearly flu shot.

There's still another step: The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention must sign off. A CDC advisory panel is set to issue recommendations Tuesday on who most needs the updated shots. Vaccinations could begin later this week, and both the COVID-19 and flu shot can be given at the same visit.

A third vaccine maker, Novavax, said its updated shot is still being reviewed by the FDA.

COVID-19 hospitalizations have been rising since late summer although -- thanks to lasting immunity from prior vaccinations and infections -- not

nearly as much as this time last year.

But protection wanes over time and the coronavirus continually churns out new variants that can dodge prior immunity. It's been a year since the last time the vaccines were tweaked, and only about 20% of adults ever received that earlier update.

"Vaccination remains critical to public health and continued protection against serious consequences of COVID-19, including hospitalization and death," FDA vaccine chief Dr. Peter Marks said in a statement. "We very much encourage those who are eligible to consider getting vaccinated."

Just like earlier vaccinations, the fall round is cleared for adults and children as young as age 6 months. FDA said starting at age 5, most people can get a single dose even if they've never had a prior COVID-19 shot. Younger children might need additional doses depending on their history of COVID-19 infections and vaccinations.

The FDA pointedly isn't calling this latest round

a "booster" but instead a vaccine updated to better match the currently circulating virus. The new recipe targets an omicron variant named XBB.1.5 - replacing outdated combination vaccines that mixed protection against the original coronavirus strain and an older version of omicron.

And while even the XBB.1.5 variant is no longer dominant, FDA determined that it's close enough to coronavirus strains causing most COVID-19 illnesses today to offer good cross-protection. Like earlier versions, they're expected to be most protective against COVID-19's worst consequences rather than mild infection.

But while the FDA's decision allows for wide use of the updated shots, the CDC will decide how strongly different groups are urged to get them.

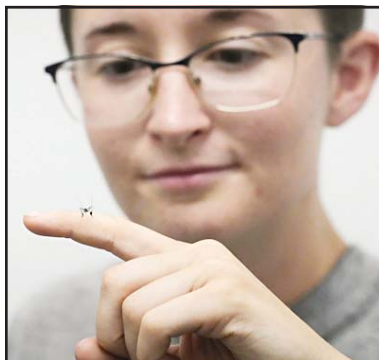
Federal officials have said the shots still will be free to most Americans through private insurance or Medicare. But for the uninsured or underinsured, the CDC is working with health departments, clinics and certain pharmacies to temporarily provide free shots. (AP)

The Conversation

There's more to it than even some scientists realize

How does fever help fight infections?

By Edmund K. LeGrand, University of Tennessee and Joe Alcock, University of New Mexico



A mosquito from a colony of sabethes cyaneus, also known as the paddle-legged beauty for its feathery appendages and iridescent coloring, blood feeds on Ella Branham, a seasonal vector control technician at the Salt Lake City Mosquito Abatement District on Monday, Aug. 28, 2023, in Salt Lake City. Branham had volunteered to let the mosquitos feed on her blood so they can produce eggs and maintain the colony for education and research at the lab in the Salt Lake City district. (AP)

Discovery

British scientist Wilmut dies: Ian Wilmut, the cloning pioneer whose work was critical to the creation of Dolly the Sheep in 1996, has died at age 79.

The University of Edinburgh in Scotland said Wilmut died Sunday after a long illness with Parkinson's disease.

Wilmut set off a global discussion about the ethics of cloning when he announced that his team at the university's Roslin Institute for animal biosciences had cloned a lamb using the nucleus of a cell from an adult sheep.

Initially referred to as "6LL3" in the academic paper describing the work, the lamb was later named Dolly, after the singer Dolly Parton. The lamb's cloning was the first time scientists were able to coax a mature adult cell into behaving like a cell from a newly fertilized embryo in order to create a genetically identical animal.

While Dolly's creation was heralded as a revolution by some scientists, it unnerved many, with critics calling such experiments unethical.

The year after Dolly's creation, US President Bill Clinton imposed a ban on the use of federal funds for human cloning but stopped short of banning all cloning research. (AP)

Hawaii's Kilauea erupts: Kilauea, one of the most active volcanoes in the world, began erupting after a two-month pause, displaying glowing lava that is a safe distance from people and structures in a national park on the Big Island.

The Hawaii Volcano Observatory said the eruption was observed Sunday afternoon at the summit of Kilauea.

The observatory said gases released by the eruption will cause volcanic smog downwind of Kilauea. People living near the park should try to avoid volcanic particles spewed into the air by the eruption, the observatory said.

The volcano's alert level was raised to warning status and the aviation color code went to red as scientists evaluate the eruption and associated hazards.

In June, Kilauea erupted for several weeks, displaying fountains of red lava without threatening any communities or structures. Crowds of people flocked to the Big Island's Hawaii Volcanoes National Park, which offered safe views of the lava.

Kilauea, Hawaii's second-largest volcano, erupted from September 2021 until last December. A 2018 Kilauea eruption destroyed more than 700 homes. (AP)

Evolution study gets awards: An

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

When you're sick with a fever, your doctor will likely tell you it's a sign that your immune system is defending you against an infection. Fever typically results from immune cells at infected sites sending chemical signals to the brain to raise the set point of your body's thermostat. So, you feel chills when the fever starts and feel hot when the fever breaks.

However, if you were to ask your doctor exactly how fever protects you, don't expect a completely satisfactory answer.

Despite scientific consensus that fever is beneficial in fighting infections, exactly how is contentious. We are a veterinary pathologist and an emergency physician interested in applying evolutionary principles to medical problems. The evolution of fever is a classic conundrum because fever's effects seem so harmful. Besides making you feel uncomfortable, you may also worry you'll dangerously overheat. It is also metabolically costly to generate that much heat.

In our research and review, we propose that since fever occurs throughout much of the animal kingdom, this costly response must have benefits or it never would have evolved or been retained across species over time. We highlight several important but rarely considered points that help explain how the heat of fever helps your body fight infections.

Infections are caused by pathogens. Pathogens can be microbes such as certain species of bacteria, fungi or protozoans. If microbes or viruses have infected your cells and are using them to replicate, your own cells can also be considered pathogens and are treated that way by your immune system.

The main explanation for how fever helps control infections is that higher temperatures put heat-induced stress on pathogens, killing them or at least inhibiting their growth. But why would the somewhat higher body temperatures of fever - an increase of about 1.8 to 5.4

degrees Fahrenheit (1 to 4 degrees Celsius) - which can't even kill your own healthy cells, harm such a wide variety of pathogens?

Immunologists have noted that slight heat makes immune cells work better. The implication is that fever is needed to enhance their defensive function. However, from an evolutionary perspective, it seems strange to require the massive energy cost of generating a fever just to get more activity from immune cells, especially since there are already plentiful and faster molecular signals available to activate them.

In addition to heat, slightly low oxygen levels and slight acidity also boost immune cell function. Since these stressful conditions also occur at infected sites, it makes sense that immune cells evolved to have their maximum functionality match their stressful working conditions. In fact, since anything in a state of growth is inherently vulnerable to stress - and pathogens are typically growing - researchers, including one of us, have proposed that a function of immune cells is to actively make local conditions stressful to preferentially harm the growing pathogens.

Inflammation

Inflammation is a local defensive response to infection. It typically involves heat, pain, redness and swelling in the areas where the immune system is most active. While some scientists are aware that infected sites generate heat, many believe that the feeling of warmth from inflammation is only from dilated blood vessels bringing in warmer blood from core body tissues.

However, researchers have found that inflamed tissues, even in core body tissues, are up to 1.8 to 3.6 F (1 to 2 C) warmer than adjacent normal tissues, so warmth is not just a byproduct of more blood flow. Much of that extra heat is coming from the immune cells themselves. When they generate reactive oxygen species to kill pathogens in a process known as the respiratory burst, substantial heat is also produced. To date, however, the temperatures involved have not been measured.

While cells can tolerate a wide range of temperatures, all cells experience a sharp decline in their abil-

ity to grow and survive at higher temperatures. For mammalian cells, and presumably the pathogens that infect them, even a single degree or two above temperatures around 113 F (45 C) is almost always deadly. So the heat of fever adds to already warmer local temperatures.

There is evidence that pathogens are exposed to temperatures that are much higher than the body temperature routinely measured with a thermometer in the emergency department. A 2018 study finding that local temperatures can be as high as 122 F (50 C) in mitochondria - the powerhouse of the cell - came as a surprise to researchers. The heat mitochondria generate is put to good use in warming the body and for fever. Likewise, we suggest that the local heat the respiratory burst produces at the surface of immune cells helps kill pathogens.

Immune cells target pathogens with a variety of stressors meant to kill or inhibit them. These include reactive oxygen species, toxic peptides, digestive enzymes, high acidity and nutrient deprivation. Most chemical reactions are sped up by increased temperatures, so it isn't surprising that heat enhances these defenses.

Researchers have shown heat to be synergistic with low oxygen and acidity in killing pathogens. Notably, neither febrile temperatures nor iron restriction on their own were able to inhibit the growth of the infectious bacteria *Pasteurella multocida*, but they could when combined. The stress of heat doesn't act alone when controlling infections.

The standard view that the heat of fever kills pathogens and enhances immune responses is correct but incomplete. Fever's ability to control infections comes from the few extra, but critical, degrees it adds to enhance existing locally generated heat to harm vulnerable growing pathogens. And fever also always acts with other defenses, never alone.

At over 600 million years old, fever is an ancient feature of life on this planet that deserves respect. In fact, you owe it to infection-fighting heat that you are still here - alive - to read this. Something to think about the next time you're sick. (AP)



Clinton



Wilmut

American literary historian, a French paleoanthropologist, a Danish evolutionary geneticist and a German-Dutch astrophysicist have been named the winners of this year's Balzan Prize. Their work in the humanities and natural sciences advances the study of comparative literature, human evolution and black holes.

David Damrosch, chair of Harvard University's comparative literature department, was recognized for "his creative approach to world literature as a translational

circulation of works that remain alive because they are embraced and changed," the Balzan Foundation said in its citation.

Frenchman Jean-Jacques Hublin of the Max-Planck-Institute for evolutionary anthropology in Leipzig was cited for his discoveries of the oldest Homo sapiens in Africa, contributing to the study of human evolution. The citation also praised his ability to synthesize data, organize scientific teams and his qualities as a teacher "and popularizer." (AP)

South Africa's Etzebeth out for 10 days at Rugby World Cup, doubtful for Ireland

France, Ireland live up to the hype, high tackles already an issue

PARIS, Sept 12, (AP): The two biggest takeaways from the first block of games at the Rugby World Cup reinforced a couple of pre-tournament predictions.

France and Ireland both appear to be the real deal and ready to challenge the southern hemisphere's vice-like grip on the trophy.

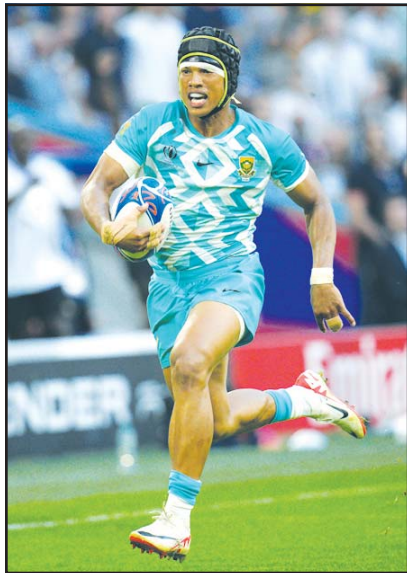
Rugby's newish rules on head contact and player safety that have been brought in since the last World Cup also threaten to be an overriding theme, with some players still getting used to the big changes in the way they are allowed to tackle. Officials are already under scrutiny for apparent inconsistency.

There was one red card for a head clash in the opening set of eight games and there might easily have been at least two more. Scotland felt especially aggrieved that South Africa center Jesse Kriel's seemingly illegal tackle was missed completely by the ref and TV officials in the opening minutes of their game.

France quite simply lived up to all the hype with an opening-game victory over three-time champion New Zealand outside Paris. It set the tone for the tournament in front of nearly 79,000 fans at Stade de France and boosted the host team's hopes of being back there for the final on Oct. 28.

France came through its big test 27-13 after going behind very early. It now likely faces a smooth run to the quarterfinals, with pool games to come against Uruguay and Namibia before Italy, the last real challenge before the knockout rounds.

New Zealand was left licking plenty of



South Africa's Kurt-Lee Arendse runs in to score a try during the Rugby World Cup Pool B match between South Africa and Scotland at the Stade de Marseille in Marseille, France. (AP)

England flanker Tom Curry received the first red card of this year's Rugby World Cup. It likely won't be the last amid a clampdown on hits to the head and an expansion of the match officials' ability to review game footage and foul play and make a delayed decision on if a player should be sent off.

Curry forever has the dubious distinction of being the World Cup's first sending off through the new "bunker review system," which saw his yellow card upgraded to red by the television match official. He faces a ban.

Chile captain Martin Sigren was guilty of a very similar tackle to Curry's but only got a yellow card. Kriel's tackle early in the South Africa-Scotland game also resulted in a clear head clash, but didn't result in any action at all from the officials.

No one opposes rules that make the game safer - especially in the wake of a group of former players claiming they are now suffering from brain injuries because of constant head hits during their careers - but different sanctions for similar acts irritates teams and coaches.

"There are still inconsistencies in seeing these things," Scotland coach Gregor Townsend said. "We are frustrated by that."

Lock Eben Etzebeth will likely be out for 10 days at the Rugby World Cup with a shoulder injury. South Africa director of rugby Rassie Erasmus said on Monday, making him doubtful for the big Pool B game against top-ranked Ireland.

Etzebeth went off in the first half of South Africa's 18-3 win over Scotland and Erasmus said he would go for scans.

"We might find out it's much more serious, but at this stage it looks like a 10-day injury," Erasmus said.

Etzebeth is the most experienced player in the South Africa squad with more than 100 test caps, and is a pivotal figure in the forward pack.

On Erasmus' timeframe, he's set to be ready again around three days before the highly-anticipated match between the defending champion Springboks and No. 1 Ireland on Sept. 23.

But that doesn't guarantee he will be able to play, Erasmus said, given he may miss some training in the week before the game.

"We'll have to make the right call because we can't have players who are 70% or 80%," Erasmus said.

Etzebeth did not appear to be in too much discomfort and watched the rest of the Scotland game from the bench, and even joined in on a lap of honor after.

Olson 'hits' 50th homer for Braves, but Phillies win nightcap to split DH

Athletics shut out Astros

PHILADELPHIA, Sept 12, (AP): Brandon Marsh homered, Jake Cave hit an RBI triple and the Philadelphia Phillies spoiled Matt Olson's 50th homer and salvaged a doubleheader split with a 7-5 win over the Atlanta Braves on Monday night.

Michael Harris II and Ronald Acuña Jr. went deep for the Braves in a 10-8, 10-inning win in the opener. Harris also homered in the nightcap.

Olson hit a three-run homer off the second deck in the third and added a solo shot for his MLB-best 50th in the sixth, both off Phillies starter Michael Lorenzen (9-9). Lorenzen gave up four runs in five innings. Craig Kimbrel worked the ninth for his 23rd save.

Right-hander Kyle Wright (0-2) made his first start since May 3 after being on the 60-day injured list with a strained right shoulder. He faced eight batters and allowed four runs in the first inning, with Edmundo Sosa doing the most damage on a two-RBI double off the left-field wall.

Kevin Pillar and Orlando Arcia each had run-scoring hits in the 10th off José Alvarado (0-2) in the first game. The Braves needed extras after Bryce Harper tied the game with a two-out, two-run homer in the ninth.

The Phillies came up empty in the 10th against Kirby Yates, who earned his fourth save.

Orioles 11, Cardinals 5

In Baltimore, Cedric Mullins hit a grand slam in the fifth inning, and Baltimore won the opener of a crucial homestand.

The Orioles entered the day with a three-game lead over Tampa Bay atop the AL East, and they host the Rays for a four-game series after St. Louis leaves. Baltimore trailed 5-4 when Mullins hit a drive to right off reliever Andre Pallante, who had just replaced starter Dakota Hudson (6-2).

The Orioles withstood a shaky outing from Dean Kremer, who allowed five runs in 4 1/3 innings. D.L. Hall (1-0) won in relief.

Gunnar Henderson also homered for Baltimore. He and Aaron Hicks each had three hits.

Rays 7, Twins 4

In Minneapolis, Yandy Díaz connected for his 20th homer and finished with four hits, helping Tampa Bay win for the sixth time in seven games.

After Tyler Glasnow (9-5) departed, Kevin Kelly, Jake Diekmann and Pete Fairbanks each pitched a hitless inning. Fairbanks worked the ninth for his 23rd save. Glasnow was charged with four runs in six innings. He struck out eight and walked two.

Max Kepler and Royce Lewis homered for the AL Central-leading Twins, who finished with six hits. Sonny Gray (7-7) was charged with two runs, one earned, and six hits in four innings.

Taylor Walls lifted the Rays to a 5-1 lead in the fifth, hitting a three-run homer on an 0-2 pitch from Dylan Floro. It was his first homer since May 14 and No. 8 on the season.

Athletics 4, Astros 0

In Houston, Ken Waldichuk pitched six hitless innings in relief and Brent Rooker hit the first of three home runs by Oakland in their victory over Houston.

Houston, which entered with a 2 1/2-game lead in the AL West over Seattle, fell to 9-2 against the last-place A's this season. Oakland improved to 45-99, delaying the team's 100th loss for at least another day.

Shea Langeliers and Ryan Noda also had solo homers for the A's.

Oakland opener Mason Miller pitched two innings and allowed one hit. Waldichuk (3-7) entered in the third and gave up just two baserunners, on a walk and a hit by pitch.

Framber Valdez (11-10) allowed three runs on four hits and one walk while striking out 10 in seven innings.

Rangers 10, Blue Jays 4

In Toronto, Jonah Heim hit his third career grand slam. Evan Carter launched his first major league homer and Texas beat Toronto in the opener of a four-game series that could help decide the AL wild-card race.

Texas (79-64) closed within a half-game of Toronto (80-64) in the wild-card standings. The Blue Jays entered one game ahead of Seattle for the second American League wild card.

Dane Dunning (10-6) allowed



San Diego Padres relief pitcher Ray Kerr throws during the fourth inning of a baseball game against the Los Angeles Dodgers in Los Angeles. (AP)

three runs and six hits in six-plus innings, becoming the first Rangers starting pitcher to win since Jordan Montgomery beat the Angels on Aug. 15.

Chris Stratton, Martín Pérez and Ian Kennedy all worked one inning of relief.

Blue Jays right-hander Chris Bassitt (14-8) allowed five runs and nine hits in 5 1/3 innings. He walked three and struck out three.

Angels 8, Mariners 5, 11 Innings

In Seattle, Randal Grichuk singled home the tiebreaking run in the 11th inning and Los Angeles handed skidding Seattle a costly defeat.

Brandon Drury gave the Angels a 5-3 lead with a two-run homer in the 10th before Julio Rodríguez tied it again with a two-run shot in the bottom half. That gave Rodríguez 30 homers to go with 36 stolen bases, making him the second-youngest player in franchise history to join the 30-30 club behind Alex Rodríguez.

Julio Rodríguez is also just the fourth player in major league history to join the 30-30 club at age 22 or younger.

Nolan Schanuel also had an RBI single for the Angels in a three-run 11th. José Marte (1-0) gave up Rodríguez's tying homer but got the win. Jimmy Herget got three outs for his first save of the year.

Trent Thornton (0-2) took the loss, which dropped the Mariners a half-game out of playoff position. Seattle has lost four straight.

Brewers 12, Marlins 0

In Milwaukee, Brandon Woodruff pitched a six-hitter and Willy Adames had four RBIs, helping Milwaukee blank the Marlins.

Adames delivered a triple and two doubles. Tyrone Taylor went 3 for 5 with two runs and two RBIs.

Woodruff (5-1) struck out seven and threw 106 pitches in his first nine-inning complete game.

Jesús Lizardo (9-9) lasted just five innings and was charged with six runs and 10 hits.

The Brewers added five runs - four earned - off Daniel Castano in the seventh. Miami fell so far behind that catcher Jacob Stallings pitched the eighth for the Marlins. Joey Wiener hit an RBI double off him.

Cubs 5, Rockies 4

In Denver, Yan Gomes hit a two-run single in the ninth inning and Michael Fulmer stepped up at the very end, helping Chicago top Colorado.

Gomes finished with three hits and three RBIs. Christopher Morel homered and Dansby Swanson had two hits for Chicago in the opener of a six-game trip.

Drew Smyly (11-9) got four outs for the win, and Fulmer earned his second save of the season in his first big league appearance since Aug. 24.

Colorado left-hander Kyle Freeland was charged with three runs and eight hits over six innings.

The Cubs rallied against Tyler Kinley (0-2) in the ninth. Swanson led off with a double and Ian Happ walked. Following a double steal, Gomes drove in both runners with a liner to center.

Diamondbacks 4, Mets 3

In New York, Tommy Pham hit a tying home run in the eighth inning to finish a triple short of the cycle in his return to Citi Field. Ketel Marte had a go-ahead double in the ninth and Arizona rallied for just its fourth win in 20 games against New York.

Pham, dealt by the Mets in their trade-deadline purge of veterans, doubled to start a two-run fourth

against José Quintana and singled in the fifth. He greeted Trevor Gott by driving a slider to the opposite field in right-center for his 16th home run this season, sixth with the Diamondbacks.

Pinch-hitter Alek Thomas singled with one out in the ninth off Drew Smith (4-6), and Marte fisted an opposite-field double down the left-field line.

Kevin Ginkel (8-0) struck out two in a perfect eighth, and former Mets reliever Paul Sewald got his 33rd save in 38 chances this season - his 12th in 14 opportunities since the Diamondbacks acquired him from Seattle.

On the 22nd anniversary of the 9/11 terrorists attacks, the Mets wore caps of the New York Police Department, the Fire Department of New York, the Port Authority Police Department, Department of Sanitation and Department of Correction.

Giants 5, Guardians 4, 10 Innings

In San Francisco, LaMonte Wade Jr. lined a single in front of sliding center fielder Myles Straw

BASEBALL

in the 10th inning to drive in the winning run as San Francisco rallied past Cleveland.

The comeback victory kept the Giants just 1 1/2 games behind Arizona for the third NL wild card. San Francisco has won four straight following a six-game slide.

Cleveland dropped its third in a row and remained 7 1/2 games back of first-place Minnesota in the AL Central.

After the Guardians went ahead 4-3 in the 10th on Andrés Giménez's RBI single, San Francisco answered with two runs to win.

Blake Sabol singled off All-Star closer Emmanuel Clase (2-9) to knock in the tying run, then stole second and moved to third on a balk before scoring on Wade's hit.

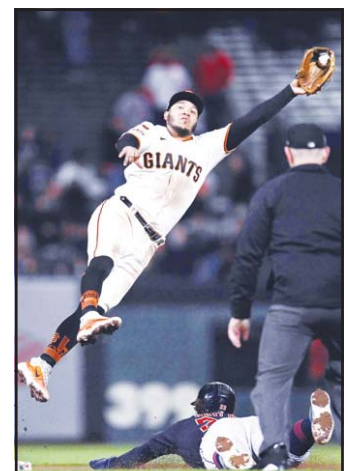
Mike Yastrzemski homered for the Giants. Luke Jackson (2-2) won in relief.

Josh Naylor homered into McCovey Cove and had two RBIs for the Guardians.

Padres 11, Dodgers 8

In Los Angeles, Juan Soto hit a tiebreaking three-run homer in the ninth inning, and San Diego rallied from an early five-run deficit to beat Los Angeles.

Manny Machado homered twice for the Padres, who beat their NL West rivals for only the third time in 11 meetings this season. San Diego still had to withstand a perilous bottom of the ninth for closer Josh Hader, who got Chris Taylor on a weak liner to shortstop with



San Francisco Giants' Thairo Estrada, (top left), leaps to catch a throw from catcher Joey Bart as Cleveland Guardians' Bo Naylor, (bottom), steals second base in the seventh inning of a baseball game in San Francisco. (AP)

MLB Results/Standings

WASHINGTON, Sept 12, (AP): Results and standings from MLB games on Monday.

Team	Opponent	Score
Baltimore	St. Louis	5
Texas	Toronto	4
Oakland	Houston	0
Tampa Bay	Minnesota	4
LA Angels	Seattle 11th	5
San Francisco	Cleveland 10th	4
Atlanta	Philadelphia 10th 1st game	8
Washington	Pittsburgh	2
Philadelphia	Atlanta 2nd game	5
Baltimore	St. Louis	5
Arizona	NY Mets	3
Milwaukee	Miami	0
Chicago Cubs	Colorado	4
San Diego	LA Dodgers	8

American League East Division

Team	W	L	Pct	GB
Baltimore	91	52	.636	-
Tampa Bay	89	56	.614	3
Toronto	80	64	.556	11-1/2
Boston	73	70	.510	18
New York	71	72	.497	20

Central Division

Team	W	L	Pct	GB
Minnesota	75	69	.521	-
Cleveland	68	77	.469	7-1/2
Detroit	66	77	.462	8-1/2
Chicago	55	88	.385	19-1/2
Kansas City	44	100	.306	31

West Division

Team	W	L	Pct	GB
Houston	82	63	.566	-
Texas	79	64	.552	2
Seattle	79	65	.549	2-1/2
LA Angels	68	77	.469	14
Oakland	45	99	.313	36-1/2

National League

Team	W	L	Pct	GB
z-Atlanta	94	50	.653	-
Philadelphia	79	65	.549	15
Miami	74	70	.514	20
New York	65	78	.451	28-1/2
Washington	65	79	.451	29

Central Division

Team	W	L	Pct	GB
Milwaukee	80	63	.560	-
Chicago	78	67	.538	3
Cincinnati	74	71	.510	7
Pittsburgh	66	78	.458	14-1/2
St. Louis	63	81	.438	17-1/2

West Division

Team	W	L	Pct	GB
Los Angeles	87	56	.608	-
Arizona	76	69	.520	12
San Francisco	74	70	.514	13-1/2
San Diego	68	77	.469	20
Colorado	51	92	.357	36

the bases loaded to end it. Xander Bogaerts capped San Diego's four-run ninth with a solo homer.

Mookie Betts hit another leadoff homer and added a three-run double while burnishing his NL MVP credentials for the division-leading Dodgers, who have lost seven of 11. Max Muncy launched his 35th home run, but Los Angeles' patchwork pitching staff squandered a 7-2 lead.

Robert Suárez (3-2) won in relief, his first appearance since serving a 10-game suspension for having a foreign substance on his wrist.

Evan Phillips (1-4) took the loss.

Nationals 6, Pirates 2

In Pittsburgh, CJ Abrams homered twice, Patrick Corbin pitched into the seventh inning and Washington beat Pittsburgh.

Abrams hit a two-run shot to right-center against Andre Jackson (1-3) in the third inning. He drove a fastball from Cody Bolton over the 21-foot-high Clemente Wall in right in the seventh for his first career multihomer game.

Corbin allowed two runs and five hits in 6 2/3 innings to reach 10 wins for the first time since 2019. The 34-year-old Corbin (10-13) struck out eight and walked one.

Dominic Smith had two hits, including his eighth homer of the season. Keibert Ruiz and Ildemaro Vargas added two hits apiece for the Nationals, who won for just the third time in 11 games.

Bryan Reynolds had an RBI single for Pittsburgh, which lost for the third time in four games. Ji Hwan Bae added an RBI double. Jared Triolo had a hit and made a couple of solid plays defensively in his first major league start at first base.

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NZ in no 'rush' to clear list of injured players

LYON, France, Sept 12, (AP): New Zealand is in no rush to clear its list of injured players even though it must win its remaining pool games to reach the Rugby World Cup quarterfinals.

Forwards coach Jason Ryan's update on Monday had none of the injured in contention to play against Namibia on Friday in Toulouse.

Neither will back-rower Ethan Blackadder, who has arrived in France as an emergency call-up. He will be given time to settle in.

Injured captain Sam Cane (back), fellow back-rower Shannon Frizell (hamstring), prop Tyrel Lomax (gashed knee) and

RUGBY

inside center Jordie Barrett (inflamed knee) were all first picks.

The All Blacks were taking the long view to get them healthy. After Namibia, they have a weekend off then a crucial match with Italy on Sept. 29.

Cane ran some but didn't train on Monday. He's treating the back he tweaked on Thursday, and which forced him to withdraw from the tournament opener against France last Friday. France won 27-13 convincingly.

"We've got to get him right and now's the chance to do that," Ryan said. "We won't be taking any risks with skip because he's important to us."

Cane's injury was the main reason the All Blacks chose to replace injured winger Emoni Narawa, who has gone home, with Blackadder, who has nine caps in an injury-plagued career.

Kohli hits 47th ODI century

India cruise to record 228-run win over Pakistan at Asia Cup

COLOMBO, Sri Lanka, Sept 12, (AP): India cruised to a record 228-run win over rival Pakistan and collected crucial points in the Super Four stage of the Asia Cup.

Having set a target of 357, India bowled out Pakistan for 128 runs, its third-lowest total against India. It was India's biggest margin of victory - by runs - over its neighbor.

After bad weather halted play on Sunday, when Pakistan won the toss, the game extended to the reserve day and threatened to end in no result after several more rain interruptions but India's bowlers did well to bowl out the opposition in 32 overs. Two injured bowlers did not bat for Pakistan.

Kuldeep Yadav finished with a five-wicket haul as Pakistan struggled against the left-arm wrist spinner. As well as taking five wickets, his eight overs cost only 25 runs.

CRICKET

Earlier, Virat Kohli and K.L. Rahul posted unbeaten hundreds as India amassed 356-2.

Kohli and Rahul put on an unbroken 233 for the third wicket off 194 balls, India's highest partnership for any wicket in the Asia Cup.

It is also the fourth highest total at the R. Premadasa Stadium, with no ODI team having successfully chased 357 at the venue, and India's joint highest ODI total against Pakistan, equalling the 356 scored in Visakhapatnam in 2005.

"We wanted to walk out to the park and have some game time. Many of the guys didn't have game time," India captain Rohit Sharma said. "Virat and Rahul batted so well when we had to score big runs and then the bowlers were superb when it was our time to bowl. We have back-to-back games (playing Sri Lanka on Tuesday) and it's tough on the players, but we are looking forward for the challenge."

India resumed Monday on 147-2

and soon took complete control.

Rahul, back in the side after injury, scored a run-a-ball century. It was his sixth ODI hundred and the first since March 2021. He finished 111 not out off 106 balls with 12 fours and two sixes.

Only former captain Kohli could do better than that as he became the quickest batter to get to 13,000 ODI runs. The previous record holder, Sachin Tendulkar, needed 321 innings to reach the milestone but Kohli got there in 267.

Kohli's 47th ODI hundred came off 84 balls - after reaching his fifty in 55 deliveries - and it was his fourth consecutive century at the ground. Only Hashim Amla of South Africa has scored four successive tons at the same venue, at Centurion.

Kohli finished unbeaten on 122 off 94 deliveries with nine fours and three sixes.

"India's batters had a plan for our bowlers. And then Rahul and Kohli followed up and finished very well," Pakistan captain Babar Azam said. "It was disappointing as we were never in the hunt during the run chase."

Pakistan's bowling looked strong when the teams met in a first-round game in Kandy but this time India went on the attack.

Pakistan's bowling was weakened without Haris Rauf. The paceman sent down five overs on Sunday but wasn't available to bowl on Monday as he felt "discomfort in his right flank," the Pakistan Cricket Board said. Naseem Shah also walked off midway through his final over with a shoulder niggle. Both bowlers didn't bat.

India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka all have one win apiece in the Super Four round. India is top on net run rate.

Bangladesh is the fourth team in the group and has lost two matches.

India made two changes for the match from the lineup that beat Nepal in its previous game. Rahul, who missed the group stage, returned in



India's Virat Kohli plays a shot during the Asia Cup cricket match between India and Pakistan in Colombo, Sri Lanka. (AP)

place of Shreyas Iyer and Jasprit Bumrah, who had flown back to India and missed the Nepal game due to personal reasons, replaced Mohammad Shami.

Pakistan opted to play an unchanged lineup, sticking to the same XI that had beaten Bangladesh in their first Super Four game in Lahore.

The first-round day-nighter between India and Pakistan was washed out after India was bowled out for 266 in the 49th over.

Messi skips Argentina last practice before WC qualifier

LA PAZ, Bolivia, Sept 12, (AP): Lionel Messi skipped Argentina's last practice session on the eve of a World Cup qualifying match in Bolivia.

The 36-year-old Inter Miami striker left Argentina's match against Ecuador late last week complaining of fatigue, which could impact coach Lionel Scaloni's selections for Tuesday's match in challenging conditions at La

Paz' altitude of 3,000 meters.

Scaloni told a news conference Sunday that he could leave a decision on Messi until a few hours before the match.

During Monday's training, Messi sat on a chair close to Scaloni and watched his teammates practice. He spoke to the coach as other players tried to adapt to the altitude and the quicker speed of the ball, which is a characteristic that

Messi scored from a free kick to give Argentina a 1-0 home win against Ecuador in its first official international since winning the World Cup last December.

The 2026 edition of the World Cup in the United States, Mexico and Canada is expanding to a 48-team format. The leading six teams in South America will secure a direct spot. The seventh-place team will contest an intercontinental playoff for another spot at the finals.

If Messi doesn't play on Tuesday it will disappoint many Bolivians, including hundreds of local fans who turned out to welcome him to the country Sunday evening.

La Paz' city hall sponsored a sign close to the venue of the match with the Spanish inscription "Sos grande Messi" (You're great, Messi). The decision brought criticism to mayor Iván Arias.

SOCCER

makes it so hard for visitors to win at Bolivia.

Scaloni gave no hints at the practice session on what he will do if Messi doesn't play at the Hernando Siles Stadium against a team that was battered 5-1 by Brazil last week in its opening game of South American qualifying.

Jets rally to stun Bills in OT

New York loses Rodgers Achilles tendon injury

EAST RUTHERFORD, N.J., Sept 12, (AP): The New York Jets pulled off one of their most exciting and unlikely victories in years - and still couldn't completely enjoy it.

Not with knowing they might have to go the rest of the way without their leader.

Aaron Rodgers was knocked out of the Jets' 22-16 overtime win over the Buffalo Bills just four snaps into his debut on Monday night with what coach Robert Saleh said is believed to be an injured left Achilles tendon.

"It caught us off guard," cornerback Sauce Gardner said. "But we dedicated winning the game to him."

Rodgers was sacked by Buffalo's Leonard Floyd and fell awkwardly on the leg. Saleh said the 39-year-old Rodgers would have the MRI on Tuesday after X-rays during the game were negative.

"Concerned with his Achilles," a somber Saleh said. "MRI is probably going to confirm what we think is going to happen, so prayers tonight. But it's not good."

It cast a pall over the game - won when rookie Xavier Gipson returned a punt 65 yards for a touchdown - and perhaps the Jets' season.

"It has been a roller coaster of emotions," Gardner said.

New York's aggressive defense forced four turnovers from Buffalo's Josh Allen, who was picked off three times by Jordan Whitehead in a wild and often ugly season opener.

With the game tied, Micheal Clemons forced a fumble by Allen that was recovered by Quinnen Williams, setting up Greg Zuerlein's third field goal - a 30-yarder - with 1:48 remaining to put the Jets ahead for the first time.

But Allen and the Bills had just enough time to get in scoring position again, and Tyler Bass' 50-yard kick hit the left upright before going over the crossbar to tie it at 16 with 2 seconds left in regulation.

After Buffalo went three-and-out to start overtime, Sam Martin punted 42

yards and Gipson fielded it, made a few moves early and then scampered down the left sideline, made a couple more cuts and zipped into the end zone to set off a huge celebration by his teammates.

Saleh was there to swarm Gipson, an undrafted rookie from Stephen F. Austin who made the team out of training camp.

It was the third punt return for a TD in overtime in NFL history, with Gipson joining Arizona's Patrick Peterson (2011) and Kansas City's Tamarick Vanover (1995).

Meanwhile, Allen tied a career high with his four turnovers and fell to 0-5 in overtime, including playoff games.

The Jets had tied it at 13 with 4:55 left on an acrobatic catch by Garrett Wilson, who tipped Zach Wilson's pass to himself with his right hand - and Tre'Davious White draped all over him - and corralled the ball as he fell on his back in the end zone.

A night that began with optimism

FOOTBALL

for the Jets turned disappointing before the game was even four minutes old.

After a 26-yard run by Breece Hall on the Jets' opening play, Rodgers threw his first pass away after getting heavy pressure from Greg Rousseau. Rodgers threw incomplete on the next play, but Terrel Bernard was called for defensive holding.

Then, Rodgers tried to avoid a rushing Floyd, who wrapped up the quarterback and took him down to the MetLife Stadium turf. Rodgers appeared to reach down at his leg before trainers attended to him. He stood up after a few moments, but needed help getting to New York's sideline.

Rodgers was taken to the blue medical tent to be examined - and then sat on a cart. Halfway to the locker room, he hopped off the cart and limped inside.

Zach Wilson replaced him just 3:45 into the game. Wilson, who finished 14 of 21 for 140 yards, including the TD pass, and an interception, is expected to start next Sunday at

NFL Standings

WASHINGTON, Sept 12, (AP) - NFL standings on Monday.

American Football Conference						
AFC East						
W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA	
Miami	1	0	0	1.000	36	34
NY Jets	1	0	0	1.000	22	16
Buffalo	0	1	0	.000	16	22
New England	0	1	0	.000	20	25
AFC South						
W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA	
Jacksonville	1	0	0	1.000	31	21
Houston	0	1	0	.000	9	25
Indianapolis	0	1	0	.000	21	31
Tennessee	0	1	0	.000	15	16
AFC North						
W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA	
Baltimore	1	0	0	1.000	25	9
Cleveland	1	0	0	1.000	24	3
Cincinnati	0	1	0	.000	3	24
Pittsburgh	0	1	0	.000	7	30
AFC West						
W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA	
Las Vegas	1	0	0	1.000	17	16
Denver	0	1	0	.000	16	17
Kansas City	0	1	0	.000	20	21
LA Chargers	0	1	0	.000	34	36
National Football Conference						
NFC East						
W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA	
Dallas	1	0	0	1.000	40	0
Philadelphia	1	0	0	1.000	25	3
Washington	1	0	0	1.000	20	16
NY Giants	0	1	0	.000	0	40
NFC South						
W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA	
Atlanta	1	0	0	1.000	24	10
New Orleans	1	0	0	1.000	16	15
Tampa Bay	1	0	0	1.000	20	17
Carolina	0	1	0	.000	10	24
NFC North						
W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA	
Detroit	1	0	0	1.000	21	20
Green Bay	1	0	0	1.000	38	20
Chicago	0	1	0	.000	20	38
Minnesota	0	1	0	.000	17	20
NFC West						
W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA	
LA Rams	1	0	0	1.000	30	13
San Francisco	1	0	0	1.000	30	7
Arizona	0	1	0	.000	16	20
Seattle	0	1	0	.000	13	30

Dallas.

"My job as a quarterback is I've got to step up," Wilson said. "I've got to be as efficient as I can in that offense. Just a lot of emotions."

After Bass' 40-yard field goal on Buffalo's second offensive series put the Bills up 3-0, Zuerlein tied it with a 26-yarder to cap a drive jump-started by an 83-yard run by Hall. The second-year running back had his rookie season cut short last year in Week 7 when he tore the ACL in his left knee.

He spent the offseason working toward a comeback and made it to the opening game - and showed he's healthy just 11 months after a major knee injury.

He finished with 127 yards on 10 carries.

Dalvin Cook made his Jets debut, rushing for 33 yards on 13 carries and catching three passes for 26 yards. He also got bragging rights again on his brother James, a Bills running back.

James Cook, who's five years younger, had 46 yards on 12 carries and four receptions for 17 yards.

Dalvin's Vikings beat the Bills 33-30 in overtime last season in the brothers' first meeting.

Bills host the Las Vegas Raiders in their home opener next Sunday.

Jets travel to Dallas to take on the Cowboys next Sunday.



New York Jets safety Jordan Whitehead (3) intercepts a pass against the Buffalo Bills during the second quarter of an NFL football game in East Rutherford, N.J. (AP)

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Portugal's Bruno Fernandes, (on the ground), tries to tackle Luxembourg's Danel Sinani during the Euro 2024 Group J qualifying soccer match between Portugal and Luxembourg at the Algarve stadium outside Faro, Portugal. (AP)

Sports

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Portugal rout Luxembourg in record 9-0 win

Croatia go top

FARO, Portugal, Sept 12, (AP): Portugal didn't need Cristiano Ronaldo to rack up its biggest-ever win in a competitive game.

A 9-0 rout of Luxembourg in European Championship qualifying was achieved without Ronaldo, who was suspended because of an accumulation of yellow cards in earlier Group J games.

In the absence of the five-time world player of the year and record scorer in men's internationals, Goncalo Ramos, Goncalo Inacio and Diogo Jota all scored twice along with goals for Ricardo Horta, Bruno Fernandes and Joao Felix in the Algarve.

"It was a satisfactory aspect that, being 4-0 or 5-0 up, the team kept playing the same way as if it was 0-0," Portugal coach Roberto Martinez said. "When you get that, it shows you the values of the players and that the respect toward the team is essential - that was really good to see."

The 38-year-old Ronaldo missed a great chance to add to his haul of

123 international goals but there'll be four more opportunities in a group that Portugal is dominating with six straight wins. No other team has that many victories in qualifying.

Martinez's team stayed five points ahead of Slovakia and moved eight ahead of Luxembourg. The top two in each group qualify automatically.

Ramos scored two of the team's first three goals as Ronaldo's replacement, a role he seems to thrive in.

He did it notably at last year's World Cup in Qatar when - in a huge call by then-coach Fernando Santos -- Ronaldo was dropped to the bench for the match against Switzerland in the round of 16.

Ramos scored a hat trick in that game, announcing himself to the soccer world. He has since completed a move from Benfica to Paris Saint-Germain and might be the long-term replacement for Ronaldo, who now plays in Saudi Arabia, for Portugal's national team that is surely heading to Euro 2024.

Germany's 13-0 thrashing of San Marino in 2006 remains the biggest-ever win in European Championship qualifying.

In other matches in the group, Slovakia beat Liechtenstein 3-0 and Iceland defeated Bosnia-Herzegovina 1-0.

SOCCER

In Group D, Croatia's 1-0 win over Armenia in Yerevan was delayed for about 70 seconds in the first half when a drone carrying the flag of Nagorno-Karabakh, a breakaway Armenian-populated region of Azerbaijan, flew over the field - to cheers and applause from many home fans, according to footage on social media.

The incident comes amid soaring tensions between Armenia and Azerbaijan, with lawmakers in the region - which the Armenians call Artsakh - voting to elect a new separatist president on Saturday in a move that was strongly condemned by the Azerbaijani authorities.

It is set to lead to a UEFA disciplinary case on the grounds of it being a political statement at a game.

In 2014, a drone with a political banner was flown into the stadium where Albania and Serbia were playing a European Championship qualifier in Belgrade, prompting clashes among players. Serbian fans also attacked Albania team members and threw flares onto the field.

That game was abandoned and Serbia initially awarded a default 3-0 victory by UEFA. The sanction was reversed by the Court of Arbitration for Sport.

Andrej Kramaric's early goal sealed the victory for Croatia that lifted the World Cup semifinalists into first place in the group.

The striker tapped in at the far post after a 13th-minute corner from



Winners of medals from the Kuwaiti taekwondo team in the junior category.

KUNA photo

Kuwait win 5 medals in Beirut Taekwondo tourney

BIERUT, Sept 12, (KUNA): Kuwait's Taekwondo team won five different medals in the fifth annual Beirut Taekwondo Qualifying Tournament.

In remarks to KUNA, Kuwait's team coach, Waleed Al-Marshad said that the Kuwaiti Taekwondo team won one gold, two silvers, and two bronzes,

adding that the Kuwaiti athletes performed very well.

The Beirut Championship is a "qualifying tournament" that allows

players to collect the largest possible number of points, he added. Yesterday, the Kuwaiti taekwondo team won four medals, two silver and two bronze.

Sport authority lauds Kuwaiti Karateka's 'victory' in Ireland

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 12, (KUNA): The Public Authority for Sport lauded Kuwaiti Karateka Abdullah Shaaban for winning of bronze medal in the Karate 1-Premier League, concluded recently in Dublin, Ireland.

In a statement on Tuesday, the authority's Director General Yousef Al-Baidan said that Shaaban's achievement of reaching the final four stage for the under 60 kg category was great

for the Kuwaiti sports, especially for Karate.

His performance in the tournament allowed him to raise his international ranking to second for his weight category, Al-Baidan noted.

Shaaban defeated his Japanese opponent in the match to determine the winner of the third and fourth place, in the league where only the best 32 Karatekas in the world compete and receive generous prizes.

Luka Modric deflected off an Armenian player and went straight to Kramaric, who stuck out a foot and diverted the ball in. The goal was checked for offside as it appeared Croatia defender Josko Gvardiol got a touch, too.

After starting Group D with a disappointing 1-1 home draw with Wales, Croatia has won three straight matches and gone above

Turkey on goal difference, having played one game fewer.

Wales won 2-0 in Latvia thanks to goals by Aaron Ramsey and David Brooks and joined Armenia on seven points, three behind Croatia and Turkey. It was a relieving win for Wales coach Robert Page, who has faced growing pressure after back-to-back defeats against Armenia and Turkey in the group.

Al-Saif wins bronze at FOX's Para-Badminton Tournament

KUALA LUMPUR, Sept 12, (KUNA): Kuwait's Abdullah Al-Saif won the bronze medal at FOX's Indonesia Para Badminton Tourney in the SH6 men's singles.

In remarks to KUNA, Head of the Kuwaiti delegation, Khaled Sultan, said that the tournament was success-

ful especially with Al-Saif's achievement.

Sultan also praised the tournament organization and the reception of the delegations and participants by the organizers, adding that the Kuwaiti team benefited a lot from the partici-



Kuwaiti Para-Badminton team pose for a group photo.

KUNA photos

Ousted Luis Rubiales thanked for service

UEFA hosts women soccer stars for expert advice

NYON, Switzerland, Sept 12, (AP): One day after Spanish official Luis Rubiales finally resigned from his leadership jobs, European soccer body UEFA hosted a storied group of women players and coaches for a conference Monday to help shape a brighter future for their game.

And when it was over, UEFA thanked its now-former vice president "for his many years of service" in its first major statement since Rubiales' conduct at the Women's World Cup final three weeks ago that is now under criminal investigation in Spain.

Three Ballon d'Or winners joined the UEFA meeting in person or online. They included Alexia Putellas, one of Spain's World Cup-winning team whose triumph has been tarnished by the furor since Rubiales' behavior towards Jenni Hermoso during the trophy ceremony. Hermoso said it was without her consent.

At UEFA's headquarters was Veró Boquete, who as Spain captain eight years ago joined a player revolt that removed the long-time and unpopular male coach of the national team.

"Today, this subject obviously came up," Boquete told The Associated Press when asked if the Rubiales controversy was on the agenda. "A little bit (of) specifics but also in general,

what we can do to protect players or to give them a safe space."

UEFA launched its Football Board for women's soccer this year to create "an institutional yet independent voice of experience and expertise" on subjects including player welfare.

Its first meeting Monday afternoon in Switzerland opened less than 24 hours after Rubiales resigned. He accepted the inevitable end of his soccer

presidency in Spain after three weeks of defiance and hostility toward his critics and at times Hermoso.

Rubiales, who said the kiss was consensual, is suspended by world soccer body FIFA during its disciplinary case against him and also accused of sexual assault by Spanish prosecutors. He has denied any wrongdoing.

His resignation late Sunday - which appeared coordinated with an inter-

view on a British cable news channel - offered no apology to Hermoso. He did stress not wanting to distract from Spain's bid to host the men's 2030 World Cup in a UEFA-backed project with Portugal, Morocco and possibly Ukraine.

UEFA was silent on Rubiales, one of its six vice presidents each paid 250,000 euros (\$270,000) annually, for 10 days after the final in Australia. UEFA president Aleksander Ceferin then told French sports daily L'Equipe the conduct was "inappropriate."

In the statement Monday noting Rubiales' resignation, after Ceferin had lunched with the women delegates, there was praise but not words of solidarity toward the Spanish players or women's soccer in general.

Speaking before UEFA's comments were published, Boquete described the situation as "a mess" though was optimistic.

"What happened in the last three weeks is a mess, but at the same time it can be the right push," the 36-year-old player told the AP. "How you use a bad situation, bad actions, to change something for good?"

"We have the opportunity here," said Boquete, whose 38 goals for Spain is second on its all-time women's list behind Hermoso.



Japan's Kyogo Furuhashi, (right), fights for the ball against Turkey's Ozan Kabak during the international friendly soccer match between Japan and Turkey at Luminus Arena in Genk, Belgium. Japan won 4-2. (AP)



Kuwait's Abdullah Al-Saif displays his bronze medal.

Pogba tests positive for testosterone

ROME, Sept 12, (AP): Once considered among the top midfielders in world soccer, Paul Pogba's career risks a premature ending after the Juventus player and France international tested positive for testosterone.

Italy's anti-doping agency announced the failed drug test.

The exam was carried out after Juventus' game at Udinese on Aug. 20. Pogba did not play in the Serie A match but was

on Juve's bench.

Nado Italia, the anti-doping agency, said that Pogba was suspended provisionally with immediate effect. Pending a trial and testing of a backup "B" sample, he risks a suspension of up to four years.

If the backup sample confirms the positive test, the 30-year-old Pogba could get a lesser ban if he cooperates with authorities.