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Lt. Gen. Al-Muzain

Be prepared, army chief tells troops

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 24, (KUNA): Chief of Staff of the Kuwaiti Army Air Marshal Bandar Al-Muzain inspected on Friday a number of military units and sites. Al-Muzain emphasized during his inspection visits to military sites the necessity of maintaining the highest levels of combat readiness, said the army's general staff in a statement. In addition, he expressed his appreciation for the efforts made by members of various army sectors, stressing the importance of continuing hard work to preserve the security and safety of Kuwait.

Decree withdraws citizenship of one woman, eight men

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 24: The official gazette, Al-Kuwait Al-Youm, released Decree No. 130 of 2024, which ordered the withdrawal of citizenship from Fatima Zamel Ajil Awad and those who obtained it through their dependency on her, reports Al-Seyassah daily. Additionally, the newspaper published Cabinet Resolution No. 792 of 2024, which involved the revocation of Kuwaiti citizenship certificates from eight other individuals, along with those who acquired citizenship through them. The individuals affected by this decision are:
■ Hussein Mufrej Al-Ajmi; ■ Sultan Assaf Hussein Al-Ajmi; ■ Jaber Mohammad Thaib Al-Ajmi; ■ Hassan Saleh Hassan Al-Ajmi; ■ Mohammad Nayef Mohammad Hamid Al-Ajmi; ■ Jaber Nasser Mahdi Al-Ajmi; ■ Shamekh Fineis Mahdi Al-Ajmi; ■ Shuja'a Fineis Mahdi Al-Ajmi

Kuwait-funded campaign to send senior medical students to Gaza

GAZA, Aug 24, (KUNA): The University College of Applied Sciences in Gaza (UCAS) launched on Saturday, a program funded by Kuwait's International Islamic Charity Organization (IICO) that urgently sends senior medical students all over Palestine to hospitals in southern Gaza. UCAS's Vice Chancellor Mohammad Mush-taha said in remarks to KUNA that the program

aims to send 350 students who are expected to graduate this year to the war-ravaged Strip and is set to be active for five months. The program will provide a unique opportunity for the talented students to get real life experience on the field and will greatly improve their capabilities, in the midst of an urgent need for medical care in Gaza, Mushtaha added.

New pharmacists get future 'job guidance'

By Marwa Al-Bahrawi
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 24: The Kuwait Pharmaceutical Association, in collaboration with the Ministry of Health, the private medical sector, and Kuwait University, organized an 'Introduction Day' for newly graduated pharmacists under the title 'Discover Pharmacy'. The event aimed to support recent graduates by providing them with essential information and answering their questions as they begin their professional journey. Dr. Ahmed Taqi, Secretary of the Kuwait Pharmaceutical Association, emphasized that the orientation day is part of the Association's commitment to guiding pharmacists from the start of their careers to ensure they present the best professional image. He highlighted the collaborative effort with the Department of Pharmaceutical Services at the Ministry of Health, Kuwait University, and other entities to explore additional opportunities for pharmacists. Adel Al-Salem, Director of the Pharmaceutical Services Department, noted that the Ministry's participation was to engage with the new graduates, inform them about the future of their profession, and address their inquiries. He emphasized the importance of training, which the Department provides through specialized programs, including pharmaceutical services and laboratory preparations. Pharmacist Dr. Hassan Al-Rumaidh, head of the Scientific Committee of the Pharmaceutical Society, reported that around 200 pharmacy students attended the orientation. He stressed that the event's goal was to educate pharmacists about career opportunities beyond the Ministry of Health.

Mol blocks 392 fake websites engaged in fraud, deception

52 sites found impersonating 'Al-Durra' recruiting company



Kuwait City skyscrapers, growing in number, stand in grandeur.

Photo by Mohammad Morsi

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 24: The Electronic and Cyber Crime Combating Department at the Interior Ministry, in cooperation with the Communications and Information Technology Regulatory Authority (CITRA) and telecommunications companies, blocked 52 fake websites involved in fraud and deception by impersonating Al-Durra Company for Recruiting and Employing Domestic Workers.

On its official account on 'X' platform, the ministry has warned about fraudulent operations on wixsite and the suspicious links on social media sites. It affirmed this step is part of the ongoing efforts of the Criminal Security Sector to protect society from illegal activities, as well as the monitoring and accurate follow up operations carried out by the Electronic and Cyber Crime Combating Department, in coordination with the concerned authorities. This move resulted in blocking about 392 fake websites engaged in fraud and deception, including 52 that are impersonating Al-Durra Company for Recruiting and Employing Domestic Workers, in addition to the suspension of more than 662 fraudulent Kuwaiti WhatsApp numbers -- 65 percent of which claimed to be that of the company.

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NewsWatch

Kuwait plans to host Gulf wildlife day Dec. 30: EPA

DOHA, Aug 24, (KUNA): Abdullah Al-Zaidan, Deputy Director General of Environment Public Authority's (EPA) technical affairs sector, said on Saturday the 21st standing committee meeting on maintaining wildlife approved Kuwait's hosting of Gulf wildlife day. Speaking to KUNA in a statement, Al-Zaidan said the meeting discussed Kuwait's proposal on this day to be held on December 30. He noted that the gathering discussed several topics on means of enhancing biodiversity in the Gulf and sustainability to combat global climate. It also focused on updating the wildlife convention in GCC members to boost economic, social and environmental conditions to face challenges and variables in the world, he elaborated. The GCC standing committee on wildlife conservation discussed on Saturday the coordinated framework for wildlife protection in the GCC countries. The discussion was made during the 21st meeting of the GCC Secretariat hosted by Qatar and chaired by head of the wildlife department at Qatar's Ministry of Environment Mohammad al-Khanji, as part of preparations for the meeting of GCC ministers concerned with environment. The meeting dealt also with some topics, including the GCC Supreme Council's resolution regarding environment directives and updating the wildlife convention in GCC states, and the strategic plan for the committee of ministers responsible for environment affairs, Qatar News Agency (QNA) said.

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The Malaysian minister talking to the press.

Malaysia set to finalize FTA with GCC nations

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 24: Malaysian Minister of Investment, Trade, and Industry Nengku Zafrul Abdul Aziz announced that Malaysia will continue discussions to finalize a free trade agreement (FTA) with the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), reports Al-Jarida daily. In a statement to the Malaysian News Agency, Abdul Aziz indicated that Malaysia aims to establish this agreement with all six GCC member states as a collective bloc, while also pursuing bilateral agreements in the Middle East to strengthen trade relations with the region. Abdul Aziz described the proposed FTA as Malaysia's first of its kind with Arab countries, highlighting it as a reflection of the "rapid growth" in trade relations between Malaysia and the Arab Gulf nations. He noted that Malaysia currently has seven bilateral free trade agreements and nine multilateral free trade agreements with various countries.

6 suspected mpox cases test negative; MoH on 'high alert'

By Marwa Al-Bahrawi
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff
KUWAIT CITY, Aug 24: The Ministry of Health is taking quick action to expand the procedures for vaccinating the medical staff and workers of the Infectious Diseases Hospital, after six suspected mpox cases in the

country turned out to be negative. According to sources from the health sector, preventive health teams across various governorates in Kuwait monitored about six suspected cases of the mpox virus, including one in Jahra Governorate, one in Capital, and

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KAC cuts staff count in new work plan

By Najeh Bilal
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff
KUWAIT CITY, Aug 24: The Kuwait Airways has appointed Abdulrahman Al-Gharib as the new Deputy Head of the Engineering Department, based on a decision issued by the company's Board of Directors, chaired by Abdul Mohsen Al-Faqan. This move comes as part of a broader strategy to enhance operational efficiency and fi-

nancial performance. The company has recently undertaken measures to streamline its workforce and reduce expenses, including laying off some employees. In line with its goals to achieve higher profitability and maintain operational competencies, Kuwait Airways is also focusing on internal promotions and restructuring.

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PACI deletes addresses of 1,197 more persons

By Mohammad Ghanem
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff
KUWAIT CITY, Aug 24: The Public Authority for Civil Information (PACI) has announced the deletion of residential addresses for 1,197 individuals, either due to the owners' requests or because the buildings have been demolished.

In a notice published in the official gazette "Kuwait Alyoum," PACI stressed the need for these individuals to visit the PACI headquarters to register their new addresses within 30 days from the announcement date, and provide the necessary supporting documents. Failure to do so will result in a fine of up to KD 100, which will be multiplied by the number of individuals, as stipulated in Article 33 of Law No. 32/1982. It is worth highlighting that PACI continues to publish such weekly updates in the official gazette, listing the addresses that have been deleted. This allows individuals to review and update their addresses within the specified period to avoid the aforementioned fine.

NCCAL ink MoU to enlist Failaka in UNESCO list

'Kuwait keen to protect cultural heritage'

NEW YORK, Aug 24, (KUNA): Kuwaiti Ambassador to the US Sheikha Al-Zain Al-Sabah has affirmed Kuwait's continuous efforts to protect its cultural heritage. The remarks came in a statement to KUNA late Thursday, after signing a memorandum of understanding between the National Council for Culture, Arts and Letters (NCCAL) and the World Monuments Fund on enlisting Failaka island in UNESCO's world heritage list. The process has economic, educational, cultural and environmental aspects to it, she noted. The memorandum was signed late Thursday by NCCAL Secretary General Mohammad Al-Jassar and the fund's President and CEO Benedicte de Montlaur, with the presence of Kuwaiti Ambassador to the US Sheikha Al-Zain Al-Sabah, at the fund's headquarters in Manhattan.

In a statement to KUNA, Al-Jassar underlined the importance of Failaka island to Kuwait, the Gulf and the world, dating back to 4,200 years. The island saw the era of five different civilizations and was last inhabited 34 years ago, when the Iraqi invasion happened, he said. The enlisting process includes scanning archeology sites in the island to determine the plan to turn them into a cultural tourism attraction in the future, Al-Jassar noted. On his part, NCCAL assistant secretary general for archeology and museums Mohammad bin Redha said the memorandum of understanding's signing was by recommendation from the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) in 2018.



Kuwaiti Ambassador to the US Sheikha Al-Zain Al-Sabah and the Council delegation, with representatives of the World Monuments Fund.

KUNA photo

Prayer Timings

Fajr 03:57 Asr 15:25
Sunrise .. 05:21 Maghrib .. 18:20
Zohr 11:50 Isha 19:40

Local

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

HH Crown Prince and Prime Minister send greetings

HH Amir congratulates Ukrainian president on National Day

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 24, (KUNA): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah sent a cable of congratulations to President of Ukraine Volodymyr Zelenskyy on his country's National Day on Saturday.

His Highness the Amir wished Zelenskyy a long healthy life and more development and prosperity for Ukraine and its people.

Meanwhile, His Highness the Crown

Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah sent a cable of congratulations to President Zelenskyy on his country's National Day on Saturday, wishing him a long healthy life.

Also, His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah sent a cable of congratulations to President Zelenskyy on his country's National Day on Saturday.

'Gov't agencies draft laws denials undermine ministers' credibility'

Ministers must defend their proposals: Boushehri

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 24: Former MP Jenan Boushehri criticized the recent trend of government agencies that are distancing themselves from the draft laws proposed by their ministers, reports Al-Jarida daily.

She urged ministers to take a firm stance and publicly defend their legislative initiatives, stressing that issuing denial statements undermines their credibility.

In a post on her X account, Boushehri said, "For the second time in 24 hours, a government agency has disavowed a draft law proposed by its minister. Today, the Public Institution of Social Security denied any amendments to its law concerning an increase in the retirement age. However, the reality is that the Minister of Finance Dr. Anwar Al-Mudhaf had already submitted this draft law, which includes proposals to raise both the retirement age and the deduction rate, to the Fatwa and Legislation Department. Similarly, yesterday the Public Authority for Sports denied any amendments to the Sports Law, even though Minister Dr. Amthal Al-Huwailah had submitted the draft law for review.

"We are faced with two troubling possibilities: either the ministers are drafting laws independently of their respective agencies, which would be disastrous, or these agencies are intentionally trying to embarrass the ministers, which is equally concerning.

"Regardless of the situation, ministers should take the initiative to publicly defend their draft laws and legislative amendments, rather than relying on denial statements that can negatively affect their credibility."



Boushehri

GTD issues 44,000 citations in 7 days

By Munif Nayef
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 24: In the past seven days, the General Traffic Department issued 44,000 citations for various traffic violations, referred 24 juveniles to the Juvenile Prosecution for driving without a license, and impounded 299 vehicles.

The weekly statistics from the General Traffic Department revealed the impoundment of ten motorcycles and the referral of 48 individuals to police stations for serious violations, such as reckless driving and driving without a license. Also, 70 vehicles wanted by the judiciary were impounded, and 36 individuals wanted by law enforcement were apprehended.

In addition, traffic patrols dealt with 897 traffic accidents over the past seven days, including 164 that resulted in injuries.

Drunk driver held: A Kuwaiti citizen has been arrested in Sulaybiya for driving under the influence of alcohol and for possessing four bottles of locally manufactured liquor.

According to security sources, Jahra securitymen were patrolling Sulaybiya when they saw a motorist violating the traffic laws. They pulled him over, and then noticed his inebriated state. They searched his vehicle and found four bottles of locally manufactured liquor.

He was arrested and referred with the liquor bottles to the concerned authorities for necessary legal action.

Expected weather for next 24 hrs:

By Day: Hot and relatively humid especially over coastal areas with light variable wind to light to moderate southeasterly wind, with speeds of 10-32 km/h and some high clouds will appear.

By Night: Hot to rather hot

Weather

and humid with light to moderate southeasterly wind to light variable wind, with speeds of 08-28 km/h with a chance for light fog forming over some areas.

Station	Max Exp	Min Rec
Kuwait City	44	35
Kuwait Airport	45	32

Abdaly	46	31
Bubyan	36	29
Jahra	46	32
Failaka Island	37	30
Salmiyah	37	34
Ahmadi	44	31
Jal Aliyah	45	31
Nuwaisib	42	31



Al-Seyassah photo
Sheikh Abdullah Al-Ali during his visit to Sharq Police Station.

Capital governor visits 'Sharq' police station

Governor of the Capital, Sheikh Abdullah Salem Al-Ali, accompanied by security officials, paid a visit to the Sharq Police Station to evaluate the readiness of the security personnel, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

During the inspection, Governor Al-Ali was briefed on the security situation in the area, the challenges faced by the station and was briefed on the statistics of societal issues and the procedures adopted to handle reports and look into complaints from citizens.

He commended the dedication and efforts of the security forces in safe-

guarding the country and its citizens, noting their sincere commitment to carrying out their duties.

In a separate engagement, Al-Ali also met with the Expo 965 team, known for organizing heritage craft exhibitions featuring Kuwaiti artisans.

The discussion focused on potential collaboration and coordination to support the governorate's initiatives in promoting events that celebrate traditional crafts practiced by previous generations.

The governor praised the team's efforts in preserving these important cultural practices.



Photo by Mohammad Morsi
Suleiman Al-Jarallah receives Brigadier-General Ragab in his office.

Al-Jarallah bids farewell to Egyptian Military Attaché Brig-Gen Ragab

Deputy Editor-in-Chief of Al-Seyassah and the Arab Times newspapers, Suleiman Al-Jarallah on Thursday received in his office the outgoing Egyptian Military Attaché to Kuwait, Brigadier General Mohamed Ragab.

During the visit Ragab was accompanied by the newly ap-

pointed Military Attaché, Colonel Mustafa Al-Dallal. The meeting was also attended by colleague Bassam Al-Qassas.

During the meeting, the conversation touched on the longstanding, strong ties between Egypt and Kuwait, as well as on local and regional issues.

Al-Jarallah expressed his ap-

preciation for Egypt's significant role in the region, describing the country as a "safety valve."

Brigadier General Ragab, in turn, praised the newspapers for the informative content and expressed his intention to maintain connections with his colleagues in Kuwait even after his return to Egypt.

Other Voices

Waste surveys ... or vice versa!

By Ahmed alsarraf

Recently, a private consulting firm, hired by the municipality, distributed a survey to gauge citizen satisfaction with the cleaning services in our country. The feedback was quite varied, but a common thread emerged: widespread dissatisfaction, particularly in heavily trafficked areas.

Despite half a century passing, the state of cleanliness remains abysmal -- from residents disposing of trash in grimy barrels outside their homes to filthy contractor vehicles carting it off to landfills or incinerators that fail to meet basic standards.

The state invests around a billion dollars annually in garbage collection, yet there has been no attempt to impose standards on either contractors or citizens. For instance, contractors have not been required to provide color-coded bins for different types of waste, nor have citizens been encouraged to sort their trash to facilitate recycling rather than merely burying it.

The survey's focus on residents' satisfaction with cleanliness is largely predictable, with a notable disparity between different areas. Effective environmental cleanliness demands a uniform commitment to public health, free from such discrimination.

The questionnaire also featured somewhat simplistic questions, with answers that were often obvious. For example, it inquired about the adequacy of garbage bins provided at residences, the process for reporting and replacing bins, and whether these bins are cleaned and sanitized -- questions that seemed out of touch with actual practices.



alsarraf

Few are aware of whom to contact for these services, and the notion of containers being regularly washed is almost laughable.

Additionally, there were questions about street sweepers and their pollution, with the answer being a resounding yes -- the sweepers are indeed large and notorious for their dust.

The survey also asked about the frequency of using municipal services for sewage pumping, clearing manholes, or handling small quantities of construction waste, yet many are unaware of these "free" services and how to access them.

Questions regarding the noise made by garbage trucks were also included. The trucks, known for their poor maintenance and considerable noise, are a nuisance to residents, particularly late at night.

The survey touched on the satisfaction with cleaners' attire and performance. Given that cleaning contracts are awarded based on the lowest bids, it's unsurprising that contractors cut corners. Monitoring their work during late hours or peak heat times is impractical for residents.

Is there any accountability on the part of citizens regarding waste management, considering the enormous sums spent on modern disposal methods? One question broached the idea of citizens paying fees to enhance cleanliness in their areas, suggesting that such fees could also involve citizens in overseeing the work of cleaning contractors.

The issue of waste management is intricate and multifaceted, requiring thorough study and thoughtful solutions. Despite previous claims of obstruction by the National Assembly, the departure of the Assembly has not resolved the problem, indicating possible unseen forces at play.

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Shaddadiya Industrial City

PAI confirms completion of 97pct of project

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 24: The Public Authority for Industry (PAI) has confirmed completion of 97 percent of the design, implementation and maintenance of infrastructure at Shaddadiya Industrial City; which will help drive industrial development and increase the contribution of the non-oil manufacturing industry to the gross domestic product (GDP) of the country and generate job opportunities for citizens, reports Al-Shahed daily.

Shaddadiya Industrial City is the largest industrial project in the country with a total area estimated at more than five square kilometers; consisting of about 1,036 industrial plots.

The project aims to fulfill all the requirements for economic and industrial growth by providing the basis for developing the first integrated industrial city with the latest

technologies.

This is considered an impetus to industrial development that will increase the contribution of non-oil manufacturing industry to the GDP, generate productive and suitable job opportunities for nationals through the localization of small and medium enterprises (SMEs), achieve a qualitative shift in the Kuwaiti industry in terms of the product and its global characteristics, diversify sources of national income, and increase non-oil revenues in the general budget of the State.

Industrial clusters are being launched in Shaddadiya Industrial City; particularly in the fields of petrochemicals, plastics, biochemicals and food industries. It is considered a model for industrial clusters and one of the most important models stimulating industrial growth.

diwaniya

A DIGEST OF PUBLIC OPINION

'Summer heat uncovers failures of government'

"THE summer season brings with it not only high temperatures but also heightened tensions, reflecting both the weather and the unresolved issues facing society. As the heat rises, so too does the frustration of those witnessing the continued suffering of the Palestinian and Sudanese peoples amid war and international neglect," columnist **Dr. Mohammed Hussein Al-Dallal** wrote for **Al-Qabas** daily.



Dr. Al-Dallal

"As the summer heat intensifies in Kuwait, residents find themselves caught between rising global temperatures and local frustrations. Those who remain in the country endure the sweltering heat while constantly hearing about worsening global warming. Those who travel abroad often face similar discomfort, yet they are thankful for Kuwait's widespread air conditioning -- a privilege that not everyone in the world enjoys."

"However, the increasing severity of summer demands more than just gratitude. It calls for urgent action, particularly from the government. The persistent warming trend necessitates a proactive approach, one that prioritizes environmental projects like greening the country and implementing other long-term solutions to shield against the damaging effects of future heatwaves."

"This summer's blistering temperatures have exposed the inadequacies of the government's preparedness. Power outages continue to plague residents, and despite the absence of the National Assembly, there has been little progress in addressing key developmental priorities. One glaring example is the ongoing issue of road paving, which remains unresolved despite repeated promises of improvement."

"Ironically, the oppressive summer conditions have shifted public attention towards the Environment Public Authority (EPA). Recently, social media has been abuzz with allegations from an activist who accused the EPA of multiple violations and transgressions."

"If these claims hold any water, they raise serious concerns about the agency's performance. What's more troubling is the apparent inaction from regulatory authorities, whose silence only fuels suspicion. Why are these concerns not being addressed? And what justifies this strange indifference?"

"The hot summer also brings with it controversial government decisions. The handling of citizenship, naturalization, and the status of the "Bedoun" community remains opaque. The public is left wondering about the government's strategy -- or lack thereof -- in managing these sensitive issues."

"Decisions seem temporary and reactive, lacking a coherent vision or strategic plan with clear objectives and outcomes. As writer Hassan Al-Essa highlighted, the withdrawal of citizenship, even if legally justified, leaves those affected without the right to appeal, stripping them of basic human rights."

"The consequences are dire. Al-Essa poignantly asks: How do those who lose their citizenship survive? What will they eat, drink, or how will they find shelter? They are left in limbo, questioning their very existence -- are they recognized human beings, or mere shadows of nothingness?"

"Further fueling public frustration is the Ministry of Education's delay in appointing a university president. Despite the law requiring a committee to select the candidate, there are rumors that some officials are bypassing this process to appoint their preferred choice, undermining the rule of law. Such practices only deepen mistrust in the government."

"In an attempt to improve workplace efficiency, the government has introduced a third fingerprint system to monitor employee attendance. While the intention is positive, it fails to address the root cause of poor government performance."

"The issue is not the number of employees but their effectiveness. Without rigorous oversight and a commitment to achieving set goals, government administration will continue to fall short."

"Summer is traditionally seen as a time to relax and spend time with family, whether at home or abroad. However, it should also be a period for reflection -- an opportunity to assess past performance and plan for the future."

"If this "warm energy" is channeled into creating serious, practical plans, it can lead to meaningful solutions and address longstanding issues. With the right approach, we can work towards building a better future for all, God willing."

Also:

"Popular proverbs often hold timeless truths, reflecting the accumulat-

ed wisdom of generations. One such proverb is "The third is a constant", which implies that after two failed attempts, the third effort will likely bring success," Prof. **Dr. Bahija Behebani** wrote for **Al-Qabas** daily.

"This saying finds relevance today as the Civil Service Commission announced the implementation of a flexible 'third fingerprint' system, effective from August 18, to ensure employee attendance during official working hours."

"The CSC circular outlines the new fingerprint schedule, urging institutions to update smartphone attendance apps and integrate the face print feature."

"While this initiative aims to improve public service by ensuring consistent employee presence, it may also burden those who already adhere to work hours and perform their duties diligently."

"In recent years, many citizens have experienced the frustration of incomplete transactions due to absent employees, often causing delays in interconnected processes across government agencies."

"Some employees have even resorted to unethical practices like having colleagues' clock in for them or tampering with fingerprint devices using tricks such as applying chlorine or creams."

"With the introduction of this third fingerprint, the question arises: Will violators find new ways to evade detection, necessitating a potential fourth fingerprint?"

"As long as some employees remain indifferent to discipline, such challenges are likely to persist."

"We are suffering in the country due to the government sector's inefficiency, weak productivity and inability to compete with the private sector, such that it has become subordinate to the private sector and a tool used by it to make profits," columnist **Hamad Salem Al-Marri** wrote for **Al-Seyassah** daily.

"Despite being aware of these issues, the government has unfortunately failed to diagnose and deal with the root causes. It instead tightened control over secondary matters while neglecting the fundamental problems."

"Among its efforts to exert strict control over secondary matters is the implementation of a third fingerprint attendance scan during work hours, besides the arrival and departure fingerprints, under the pretext of addressing employee negligence."

"While it is important to ensure employees are present at work and not being negligent, the fundamental goal should be to enhance service and productivity to the best level. This will be challenging given the current circumstances within the government sector, which suffers from inefficiency and overcrowding due to disguised unemployment."

"The government sector also struggles with weak job motivation, such as a low annual bonus that does not exceed KD 10, and an overtime bonus capped at KD 4 per day. Also, many employees are unable to receive performance bonuses due to some leaders reserving these rewards for their favored staff. Furthermore, many ministries face inadequate working conditions, with some departments having dozens of employees cramped into small rooms measuring just five by four meters, and with only two or three desks that are shared on a rotating basis."

"The introduction of a third fingerprint scan will not address the underlying issues of weak productivity and poor public service. Instead, it will only increase employee dissatisfaction and frustration. Employees are already burdened by stagnant salaries that have remained unchanged for about 15 years, despite rising prices. They also feel a lack of genuine concern from the government to improve their working conditions and the resolution of fundamental problems that contribute to the sector's inefficiency and corruption."

"To address the issue of job slackness, several solutions have been proposed, including merging similar sectors into a single ministry, abolishing assistant undersecretaries, and retaining only the undersecretary who oversees department directors."

"To combat disguised unemployment and boost productivity, work periods could be divided into three shifts throughout the day, with each shift lasting at least four and a half hours. Employees would rotate through these shifts on a monthly basis."

"Additionally, officials must serve as a role model for employees in terms of punctual arrival and departure, job commitment, productivity, and professional conduct. When employees observe their leaders demonstrating dedication to improving services and enhancing productivity, they are more likely to mirror these behaviors."

— Compiled by **PFX Fernandes** and **Mahmoud Ateyieh**



Maj-Gen Walid Al-Shahab chairs the meeting.

Maj-Gen Al-Shahab chairs police officers club meeting

The Board of Directors of the Police Officers Club held a meeting chaired by Major General (Legal) Walid Al-Shahab, with the Vice Chairman, Brigadier General (Navy) Sheikh Mubarak Ali Al-Sabah, and other board members in attendance, reports **Al-Seyassah** daily.

topics on the agenda, focusing on initiatives to further develop the club's activities and services.

At the conclusion of the meeting, Al-Shahab expressed gratitude for the continuous support provided by the Ministry of Interior, emphasizing the need for ongoing efforts to enhance the club's role in fostering social and family relationships.

He stressed the importance of preparing entertainment programs and activities that cater to police officers and their families.

In a related development, a self-defense (karate) course was launched at the Police Officers Club in Abu Al-Hasaniya.

The course is open to boys aged 8 to 13 years and girls aged 8 to 12 years and will run until September 11, on Saturdays, Mondays, and Wednesdays from 5:30 pm to 7:00 pm. The program aims to equip trainees with self-defense skills, boost self-confidence, and improve physical fitness, under the guidance of certified and experienced trainers.

Appeals rules in favour of 'Arabi'

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 24: Arabi Holding Group has announced a favourable appeal ruling for its subsidiary, Arabi Energy and Technology, in a legal dispute involving the appointment of an expert and settlement of accounts, including a challenge to the validity of a subcontracting contract, reports **Al-Seyassah** daily.

According to a statement issued by the Boursa Kuwait, the appeal court upheld the initial ruling, rejecting the two appeals both in form and substance.

The court also ordered the appellants to cover the costs of their appeal and the actual attorney fees.

The case papers show on April 30, the Arabi Holding had reported a first-degree ruling that included accepting the Kuwait Investment Authority's intervention in the lawsuit.

The court had declared the subcontract, dated Jan 1, 2017, null and void. Moreover, the court obligated the first defendant to pay Arabi Energy and Technology 2.70 million dinars, along with appropriate expenses and 1,000 Kuwaiti dinars in actual attorney fees.

Public Prosecution opens case on former MP's brother killing

Attempt to shoot Bedoun; 8 people injured in accidents

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 24: Former MP **Mutab Al-Jalal** is mourning the death of his brother **Ahmed**, who passed away recently and was buried at **Subhan Cemetery**, reports **Al-Rai** daily.

Al-Jalal posted on his account on the 'X' platform: "My dear and beloved brother **Ahmed Nasser Al-Jalal** has passed on to the mercy of Allah Almighty."

Ahmed Al-Jalal was stabbed to death in Hadiya by a fellow citizen who is now under police custody.

The Public Prosecution announced that it has started investigating the case, stating that it received a report about a citizen who stabbed another citizen to death in Hadiya. The prosecution affirmed that it has initiated the procedures; starting with a thorough inspection of the crime scene, while the victim's body was referred to the Forensic Medicine Department at the Interior Ministry.

A case was registered against the suspect who is now in detention and investigations are underway.

Attempt to murder case: A Bedoun has informed police that another Bedoun allegedly broke into his house in Taima and tried to kill him, reports **Al-Rai** daily.

A security source told the daily that detectives rushed to the location after the Operations Unit at the Interior Ministry received a call from the victim who stated that the suspect forcefully entered his house in Taima, Jahra Governorate and tried to shoot him. When the officers arrived at the location, the complainant told them that the accused fled before their arrival, the source added.

The source quoted the victim as saying that he became friends with the accused recently when they played card games, indicating the new friend got upset because he was not paying attention while they were playing cards in his diwaniya. This has prompted the suspect to utter obscene words at him, and then he left the place. After some time, the suspect returned carrying a firearm. When he did not find him at the diwaniya, he went to his house and tried to shoot him, the source disclosed.

A forced entry and attempted murder case was registered against the accused and investigations are ongoing.

One person dies in run over accident: An unidentified person died in a run over accident on the Fourth Ring Road, reports **Al-Anba** daily.

The victim's body was referred to the Forensic Medicine Department at the Interior Ministry after an expatriate's vehicle hit him on the Fourth Ring Road.

A case of run over accident leading to death was registered and investigations are ongoing to identify the victim, while the expatriate who caused the accident has been detained.

Citizen tries to attack family with machete: Detectives are tracking down a citizen who was armed with a machete and tried to attack his family inside their home in Al-Waha, Jahra Governorate, reports **Al-Rai** daily.

According to a security source, the Operations Unit at the Ministry of Interior received a call from a family member of the citizen. Security forces rushed to the house and found the terrified family members, but they did not find the accused. They were informed that he had escaped moments before their arrival; indicating that he was in an abnormal condition, held a machete and threatened to kill them due to disagreements.

The source added that the security forces gathered information about the accused and circulated it to other security units to expedite his arrest.

DGFD closes 20 shops: The Public Relations and Media Department of the Directorate-General of Fire Department (DGFD) Thursday morning administratively closed 20 shops and facilities across several governorates, reports **Al-Seyassah** daily.

The closures were ordered because the business owners had failed to proper fire licenses and due to the continued non-compliance with essential safety and fire prevention requirements.

These establishments had failed to address the issues despite repeated warnings.

The swift action by the fire department underscores the importance of adhering to safety regulations to protect the public and ensure a secure environment.

8 people injured in traffic accidents: The Public Relations and Media Department of the Directorate-General of Fire Department (DGFD) reported two separate accidents on the Sixth Ring Road early Friday morning, resulting in eight injuries, reports **Al-Seyassah** daily.

In the first accident the vehicle overturned after colliding with another vehicle trapping seven people inside the vehicle. Firefighters promptly responded to the call, rescued the people from the overturned vehicle and handed them over to the emergency medical services personnel for treatment.

In another collision between two vehicles on the same road one more person was injured. The cause of the accidents is not known.



Drug substances and money seized from the suspects.

Securitymen nab 114 persons with drugs

By **Munaif Naif**

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

The Interior Ministry has carried out an extensive security campaign in Saad Al-Abdullah; resulting in the arrest of eight absconders, 17 persons wanted by law for committing various crimes and one individual who appeared intoxicated, while 48 vehicles were impounded.

In addition, the ministry confirmed that the ongoing campaigns of the security directorates in different governorates led to the arrest of 114 persons with an undisclosed quantity of narcotics, psychotropic substances and alcohol in their possession.

The Public Relations and Security Media General Department at the ministry said the security officers dealt with 2,771 reports and set up 565 checkpoints during these campaigns.

It added that the recent intensive security campaigns resulted in the issuance

of 12,219 traffic violation citations; arrest of 404 persons, including 192 violators of the Residency Law; impounding of 41 vehicles; 947 assistance operations and 1,152 traffic accidents were dealt with.

Inmate damages public property: An unidentified expatriate, born in 2000, awaiting administrative deportation, has been referred to the relevant authorities for smuggling contraband and damaging public property, reports **Al-Anba** daily.

According to a security source, the incident occurred at the Sulabiya deportation facility, where damage was discovered in the water pipes of a bathroom.

Investigations revealed that the expatriate had intentionally damaged the pipes to conceal a phone.

The case involves charges of both contraband smuggling and vandalism. He has been referred to the police station for further action.

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LOCAL

Municipality stresses zero tolerance, issues warnings

Owners urged to comply

26 firms get approval to supply school cafeterias

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 24: The Public Authority for Food and Nutrition has approved 26 out of 50 companies that applied to supply and invest in school cafeterias, in collaboration with the Activities Department at the Ministry of Education, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

Dr. Shaima Al-Asfour, Deputy Director General of the Community Nutrition Affairs Sector, noted that the application period was extended from mid-April to July.

Nawal Al-Jazzaf, nutrition specialist and head of the Cafeteria Development Program team, confirmed that the approved food items comply with regulations set by the Fatwa and Legislation Department.

The regulations are divided into two main parts -- adherence to health requirements and nutritional standards.

The approved food items meet these standards, offering a balanced diet with essential food groups, fortified with vitamins and minerals, and low in sugar and salt.

This initiative aims to ensure that school cafeterias provide nutritious and healthy food options for students.

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 24: The Safety Department of the Farwaniya Governorate Municipality during a field campaign inspected safety compliance at demolition, restoration, and construction sites in the governorate, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The campaign focused on ensuring that sites provide containers to collect construction rubble and adhere to safety regulations.

According to the Public Relations Department of the Municipality, the fourth inspection campaign led to the issuance of 33 warnings and 3 citations because the property owners had not adhered to proper safety regulations and posed risks to the public.

The Municipality emphasized that property owners must comply with all safety and security measures, including regularly providing containers for solid construction waste and ensuring timely removal of rubble by contractors.

Failure to adhere to these regulations will lead to legal consequences. The Safety Department reaffirmed its commitment to enforcing the law and taking strict action against violators.



Al-Seyassah photo

Acting Director General of the Public Authority for Manpower Marzouq Al-Otaibi met with Mohammed Al-Obaidli, Director General of the Council of Ministers of Labor and Social Affairs in the GCC countries.

Authority for Manpower lauds GCC labor coordination efforts

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 24: The Acting Director General of the Public Authority for Manpower, Marzouq Al-Otaibi, commended the efforts of the members of the Executive Office of the Council of Ministers of Labor and Social Affairs in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries for their significant role in coordinating and fostering cooperation across various labor sectors among member states, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

Al-Otaibi's remarks came during his meeting with the Executive Office, where he discussed ways to

Kuwait's educational system praised

Egyptian envoy Shaltout honors top HS students' academic achievement

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 24: At a ceremony, Ambassador Osama Shaltout of the Arab Republic of Egypt honored the top Egyptian high school students.

During the event, he praised the significant contributions of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad and His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled in advancing Kuwait's educational system.

Ambassador Shaltout highlighted the deep and enduring fraternal and historical relations between Egypt and Kuwait, emphasizing the robust cooperation between the two nations, particularly in the cultural and educational spheres.

He noted that these relations have strong roots dating back to the early twentieth century.

He commended the role of Egyptian educators in contributing to the achievements of both Kuwaiti and Egyptian students.

Moreover, he acknowledged the progress of Egyptian universities on the international stage and ex-



Al-Seyassah photo

Ambassador Osama Shaltout poses with the top Egyptian high school students for a group photo.

pressed appreciation for the dedicated Egyptian teachers in Kuwait.

Consul General of Egypt in Kuwait, Ambassador Heba Zaki, also extended her congratulations to the

students and their families. She assured that the consulate is fully committed to supporting the students and facilitating their procedures.



Photo by Mohammad Morsi

A reflection of a tree by the skyline of Kuwait City.

KRCS calls for global support

Kuwait delivers 14th shipment of aid to Yemen amid ongoing crisis

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 24, (KUNA): The Kuwait Red Crescent Society (KRCS) announced on Friday that the 14th shipment of food and aid arrived in Yemen through Saudi Arabia's territories, as part of the society's efforts aiming to offer relief aid to brothers there.

A KRCS field team will head to Yemen to supervise distributing aid, in addition to inspecting development projects carried out by the society that include schools, health centers, orphanage houses and water, KRCS head Abdulrahman Al-Oun told KUNA in a statement.

The society has carried out distributing food parcels, hot meals, shelter suits and hygiene bags in Marib and Hodeida governorates over the past days, he added.

This aid will contribute to alleviating the sufferings of needy families and creating dignified life for them, he said.

The move is part of humanitarian initiatives implemented by the society to offer food support to those affected by floods, he elaborated.

The needs of Yemenis are bigger than current potential of humanitarian organizations, he pointed out.

Al-Oun appealed to humanitarian partners to exert further efforts and mobilize support to respond to the needs of Yemenis who have been suffering from the largest humanitarian crisis in the world.



KUNA photo

The Kuwait Red Crescent Society delivers 14 trucks loaded with food and relief supplies to Yemen via Saudi territory.

'ACP-ITE' test for internal medicine board kicks off

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 24: The Assessment and Measurement Center at Kuwait University has announced the commencement of the "ACP-ITE" test for the internal medicine board, reports Al-Jarida daily.

This test is being conducted in the assessment and measurement laboratories at Sabah Al-Salem University City and will continue until next Monday.

Dr. Ahmed Al-Hashemi, Assistant Professor in the Department of Internal Medicine at the College of Medicine, explained that this American test for internal medicine trainees is held annually to evaluate the performance of trainees. He noted that the test includes some Kuwait University graduates currently employed at Ministry of Health hospitals and expressed gratitude to the university for providing the necessary equipment for the test.

Dr. Maryam Al-Saraji, a trainer in the internal medicine board at the Kuwait Institute for Medical Specialties, highlighted that the Evaluation and Measurement Center had prepared the laboratories and the program "NBME PCSecureBorwser.exe" for the test.

She also noted that technical support would be provided throughout the testing period.

The test will span four consecutive days to ensure that there is no shortage of medical staff in hospitals. Dr. Al-Saraji commended the exemplary organization by Kuwait University.

Teacher licensing project faces delays

By Abdulrahman Al-Shammari
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 24: The teacher licensing project, with a total budget of KD 2,335,000, faces implementation challenges despite its great importance.

According to a report, efforts are ongoing to amend the project plan to benefit from the agreement signed with the National Center for Measurement in Saudi Arabia.

The teacher licensing project, which began in 2016 and is set to end in 2026, is crucial for enhancing the efficiency of teachers and assessing specific competencies required for successful teaching.

The report highlighted several issues with the project, including the lack of necessary legislation and regulations for its implementation, frequent changes in the directors of the National Center for Education Development within a short period, the failure to update pro-

ject data since March 1, 2018, slow processing of contractual procedures, delays in review and approval, and delays in financial linkage.

The report stressed the need for solutions, such as appointing a new Director General for the National Center for Education Development.

In the context, educational sources have indicated that the slow progress of the project may impact its ability to achieve the intended goals of improving education quality and ensuring teacher effectiveness.

The project's feasibility study outlines the testing of 500 teachers annually before they enter the teaching profession.

It also includes objectives to establish objective measurement standards for teacher testing and promotions, evaluate their professional and scientific development, and raise the professional efficiency of the teachers through continuous professional development.



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YEAR 13 | GCE A LEVEL

Luaidh Williams
University of Warwick, UK

Mathematics
- Mathematics A*
- Further Mathematics A*
- Physics A*
- Computer Science A*
- AS Biology A

Omar Badr
Durham University, UK

Computer Science
- Mathematics A*
- Chemistry A*
- Computer Science A*
- Physics A
- AS Further Mathematics A
- AS Biology A

Navika Tewari
University of Illinois

Engineering
- Biology A*
- Computer Science A*
- Mathematics A
- Physics A
- Extended Project C

Harshini Kamalakannan
University College Cork, Ireland

Medicine
- Biology A*
- Fine Art A*
- Chemistry A
- Mathematics B
- Extended Project B

Anas Mohammed
Royal College of Surgeons, Bahrain

Medicine
- Mathematics A*
- Biology A*
- Chemistry B
- AS Physics C

Youssef Ezzeldin
University of Southampton, UK

Computer Science
- Biology A*
- Mathematics A
- Chemistry A
- Physics A

Karam Allaham
University of Nottingham, Malaysia

Computer Science
- Arabic A*
- Mathematics A
- Computer Science A
- Physics C
- AS Further Mathematics C

Abdullah Qaseer
University of Glasgow, UK

Medicine
- Biology A*
- Mathematics A
- Chemistry A
- AS Computer Science A

Mark Issa
Medical University of Warsaw, Poland

Medicine
- Biology A*
- Mathematics A
- Chemistry A
- AS Computer Science A

Alifa Iqbal
University of Manchester, UK

Business Management
- Economics A*
- Mathematics A
- Business A

Abdulwahab Al-Mutawa
Royal Holloway, University of London, UK

Computer Science
- Computer Science A*
- Mathematics A
- Further Mathematics B
- Physics B

Angelica Mayahi
York University, Canada

Visual Arts
- Fine Art A*
- Graphic Communication A
- English Literature C
- Geography C

Syed Ahsan Ali Zaidi
Aga Khan University, Pakistan

Medicine
- Biology A*
- Chemistry A
- Physics C

Ali El-Hashim
King's College London, UK

General Engineering
- Mathematics A*
- Biology B
- Physics B

Abdulazziz Ghumman
Western University, Canada

Finance
- Mathematics A
- Business A
- Economics A

Mohamed Ishak Guetta
University of Southampton, UK

Computer Science
- Mathematics A
- Biology A
- Computer Science A
- AS Chemistry A

Mustafa Kerem Dayangac
Eindhoven University of Technology, The Netherlands

Mechanical Engineering
- Mathematics A
- Physics A
- Computer Science A
- AS Further Mathematics C

Nupur Gupta
Bocconi University, Italy

Economics, Management and Computer Science
- English Literature A
- Computer Science A
- Economics B
- Mathematics C
- Extended Project A*

YEAR 12 | GCE AS LEVEL

Yousef Albaghday

Mathematics A
Biology A
Chemistry A
Physics A
Computer Science A

Farbod Farrokhi Derakhshandeh

Mathematics A
Biology A
Chemistry A
Physics A
Computer Science A

Uijin Lee

Mathematics A
Biology A
Chemistry A
Physics A

Raghad Ali

Mathematics A
Biology A
Chemistry A
Physics A

Vedant Gala

Mathematics A
Biology A
Chemistry A
Economics A

Thenuwara Bandara

Mathematics A
Further Mathematics A
Chemistry A
Physics A

Ayden Reddy

Mathematics A
Further Mathematics A
Physics A
Computer Science A

Salma Harfoush

Mathematics A
Biology A
Chemistry A
Physics B

Youssif Jamali

Mathematics A
Further Mathematics A
Chemistry A
Physics B

Omar Abdelmoneim

Mathematics A
Biology A
Chemistry A

Rawan Bayoumi

Biology A
Chemistry B
Mathematics B
Extended Project C
French C

Thwin Htoo Gyaw

Business A
Computer Science A
Mathematics B
Physics C

Noureyah Alhai

Business A
Chemistry B
Biology B

Aljouri Alshammari

Mathematics A
Biology A
Chemistry B

Yahia Badr

Biology A
Chemistry A
Physics B

Ghanima Alqattan

Mathematics A
Biology A
Chemistry B

Liaba Anees

Biology A
Chemistry A
Mathematics C
English Literature C

Munerah Almutairi

Biology A
Chemistry A
Mathematics C

Natalia Suleiman

Biology A
Economics A
Chemistry C

Khaled El Hosni

Biology A
Chemistry A
Mathematics C

Ameena Ali

Mathematics A
Biology B
Chemistry B
Economics C

YEAR 11 | GCSE AND IGCSE

Maryam Abu Roush

English 1st Language 9 (A*)
English Literature 9 (A*)
Mathematics 9 (A*)
Biology 9 (A*)
Chemistry 9 (A*)
Physics 9 (A*)
Arabic 2nd Language 9 (A*)
Music 9 (A*)
English 1st Language 8 (A*)
History 8 (A*)

Darlin Thanasi

English 1st Language 9 (A*)
English 2nd Language 9 (A*)
Mathematics 9 (A*)
Biology 9 (A*)
Chemistry 9 (A*)
Physics 9 (A*)
Fine Art 9 (A*)
Design Technology 9 (A*)
Business 8 (A*)
English Literature 7 (A)
Digital Communication 7 (A)

Dana Abdelrahman

English 1st Language 9 (A*)
English 2nd Language 9 (A*)
Mathematics 9 (A*)
Biology 9 (A*)
Chemistry 9 (A*)
Physics 9 (A*)
Arabic 2nd Language 9 (A*)
Fine Art 9 (A*)
English Literature 8 (A*)
Arabic 1st Language 7 (A)
French 7 (A)

Zara Hasnain

English 1st Language 9 (A*)
English Literature 9 (A*)
Mathematics 9 (A*)
Biology 9 (A*)
Chemistry 9 (A*)
Physics 9 (A*)
Business 9 (A*)
Economics 9 (A*)
French 8 (A*)

Khalid Al-Shawaf

English 1st Language 9 (A*)
English 2nd Language 9 (A*)
English Literature 9 (A*)
Mathematics 9 (A*)
Biology 9 (A*)
Chemistry 9 (A*)
Physics 9 (A*)
History 9 (A*)

Emanuela Nistor

English 1st Language 9 (A*)
English Literature 9 (A*)
Biology 9 (A*)
Chemistry 9 (A*)
Economics 9 (A*)
Geography 9 (A*)
French 9 (A*)
English 2nd Language 8 (A*)
Mathematics 8 (A*)
History 8 (A*)
Business 7 (A)

Elisa Calenda

English 1st Language 9 (A*)
English 2nd Language 9 (A*)
Mathematics 9 (A*)
Biology 9 (A*)
Chemistry 9 (A*)
Physics 9 (A*)
Fine Art 9 (A*)
Business 8 (A*)
Photography 8 (A*)

Shreshtha Basu

English 1st Language 9 (A*)
Mathematics 9 (A*)
Biology 9 (A*)
Chemistry 9 (A*)
Physics 9 (A*)
Economics 9 (A*)
Geography 9 (A*)
French 8 (A*)
Computer Science 7 (A)
English Literature 6 (B)

Akhita Sundeep Singh

English 1st Language 9 (A*)
English 2nd Language 9 (A*)
Mathematics 9 (A*)
Biology 9 (A*)
Chemistry 9 (A*)
Physics 9 (A*)
Graphic Communication 9 (A*)
German 8 (A*)
Computer Science 7 (A)

Leen Maatouk

English 1st Language 9 (A*)
English 2nd Language 9 (A*)
Mathematics 9 (A*)
Biology 9 (A*)
Chemistry 9 (A*)
Physics 9 (A*)
German 9 (A*)
Business 8 (A*)
Computer Science 6 (B)

Jenna Al Haidar

English 1st Language 9 (A*)
Mathematics 9 (A*)
Biology 9 (A*)
Chemistry 9 (A*)
Physics 9 (A*)
Computer Science 9 (A*)
Business 8 (A*)
ICT 8 (A*)
English 1st Language 7 (A)

Maysoun El Astal

English 2nd Language 9 (A*)
English Literature 9 (A*)
Mathematics 9 (A*)
Biology 9 (A*)
Chemistry 9 (A*)
Physics 9 (A*)
Arabic 2nd Language 8 (A*)
ICT 8 (A*)
English 1st Language 7 (A)

Mohamad Ftayeh

Mathematics 9 (A*)
Biology 9 (A*)
Chemistry 9 (A*)
Physics 9 (A*)
Computer Science 9 (A*)
German 9 (A*)
English 1st Language 8 (A*)
English 2nd Language 8 (A*)
English Literature 7 (A)

Ahmed Bakrash

English 1st Language 9 (A*)
Mathematics 9 (A*)
Biology 9 (A*)
Chemistry 9 (A*)
Physics 9 (A*)
ICT 9 (A*)
Business 8 (A*)
English Literature 7 (A)

Jovana Efreмова

English 1st Language 9 (A*)
English 2nd Language 9 (A*)
Biology 9 (A*)
Chemistry 9 (A*)
Physics 9 (A*)
German 9 (A*)
English Literature 8 (A*)
Mathematics 8 (A*)
Physics 8 (A*)
Business 7 (A)

Rana Fituri

English 1st Language 9 (A*)
English 2nd Language 9 (A*)
Mathematics 9 (A*)
Biology 9 (A*)
Chemistry 9 (A*)
English Literature 8 (A*)
Physics 8 (A*)
French 8 (A*)
Arabic 1st Language 6 (B)
Physical Education 6 (B)

Fouad Zidan

Biology 9 (A*)
Physics 9 (A*)
Economics 9 (A*)
History 9 (A*)
Spanish 9 (A*)
Mathematics 8 (A*)
Chemistry 8 (A*)
English 1st Language 7 (A)
English 2nd Language 7 (A)
English Literature 7 (A)
Computer Science 7 (A)

Fares Abdalla

English 1st Language 9 (A*)
Mathematics 9 (A*)
Biology 9 (A*)
Chemistry 9 (A*)
Physics 9 (A*)
Business 8 (A*)
Geography 8 (A*)
English 1st Language 7 (A)
English 2nd Language 7 (A)
Computer Science 7 (A)

Lara Mahmoud

English 2nd Language 9 (A*)
Mathematics 9 (A*)
Biology 9 (A*)
Chemistry 9 (A*)
Physics 9 (A*)
French 9 (A*)
Biology 8 (A*)
Arabic 1st Language 8 (A*)
English 1st Language 7 (A)
Computer Science 6 (B)

Samira Zubaydova

English 1st Language 9 (A*)
English 2nd Language 9 (A*)
Biology 9 (A*)
Chemistry 9 (A*)
Physics 9 (A*)
Mathematics 8 (A*)
Fine Art 8 (A*)
Graphic Communication 7 (A)
Business 6 (B)

Fahd Abdullah

English 1st Language 9 (A*)
Mathematics 9 (A*)
Biology 9 (A*)
Chemistry 9 (A*)
Physics 9 (A*)
ICT 8 (A*)
English 2nd Language 8 (A*)
English Literature 7 (A)
Arabic 1st Language 6 (B)

Elizabeth White

English 1st Language 9 (A*)
Mathematics 9 (A*)
Biology 9 (A*)
Chemistry 9 (A*)
Physics 9 (A*)
Geography 8 (A*)
French 8 (A*)

Grace Ibrahim

English 1st Language 9 (A*)
Mathematics 9 (A*)
Biology 9 (A*)
Chemistry 9 (A*)
Physics 9 (A*)
English 2nd Language 8 (A*)
English Literature 7 (A)
ICT 6 (B)
Design Technology 6 (B)

Salma Elshimy

English 1st Language 9 (A*)
English 2nd Language 9 (A*)
Biology 9 (A*)
Chemistry 9 (A*)
Physics 9 (A*)
Mathematics 8 (A*)
Astronomy 7 (A)
English Literature 6 (B)
Computer Science 6 (B)

Mohamed Awadallah

Mathematics 9 (A*)
Biology 9 (A*)
Chemistry 9 (A*)
Physics 9 (A*)
Arabic 1st Language 9 (A*)
English 2nd Language 8 (A*)
Economics 7 (A)
Computer Science 6 (B)

Ali Al-Qaffas

English 2nd Language 9 (A*)
Biology 9 (A*)
Chemistry 9 (A*)
Physics 9 (A*)
Mathematics 8 (A*)
Arabic 2nd Language 8 (A*)
English 1st Language 6 (B)

Chalaka De Zoysa

English 2nd Language 9 (A*)
Biology 9 (A*)
Physics 9 (A*)
English 1st Language 8 (A*)
Mathematics 8 (A*)
Chemistry 8 (A*)
English Literature 7 (A)
Business 7 (A)
Economics 7 (A)

Judy Daher

Mathematics 9 (A*)
Biology 9 (A*)
Chemistry 9 (A*)
English 1st Language 8 (A*)
English 2nd Language 8 (A*)
Arabic 2nd Language 8 (A*)
ICT 7 (A)

Mohammad Husain

Mathematics 9 (A*)
Biology 9 (A*)
Chemistry 9 (A*)
English 2nd Language 8 (A*)
Physics 8 (A*)
Arabic 2nd Language 8 (A*)
Economics 7 (A)

Hamad Alqattan

Biology 9 (A*)
Chemistry 9 (A*)
Arabic 2nd Language 8 (A*)
English 2nd Language 8 (A*)
Mathematics 8 (A*)
Physics 8 (A*)
Business 6 (B)

Moaz Helal

Physics 9 (A*)
Arabic 2nd Language 9 (A*)
Geography 9 (A*)
Arabic 1st Language 8 (A*)
English 1st Language 8 (A*)
English 2nd Language 8 (A*)
Business 6 (B)

Joudy Mohamed

Mathematics 9 (A*)
Biology 9 (A*)
Chemistry 9 (A*)
Physics 9 (A*)
English 2nd Language 8 (A*)
Astronomy 7 (A)
English 1st Language 6 (B)
English Literature 6 (B)

'Looking for Scheherazade' makes significant impact at Edinburgh

Kuwait's Hamad Al Jenaie takes Fringe Festival by storm



From left to right: Hamad Al Jenaie (Producer & Director), Rasoul Saghir (Actor), Fawaz Al Adwani (Writer), Syed Hasham Ali (Lighting Designer)

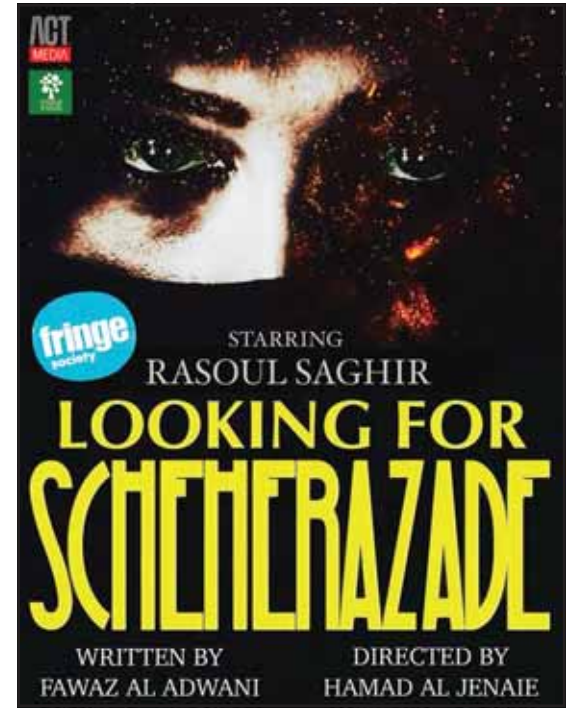
By Chaitali B. Roy
Special to the Arab Times

It's not easy to find too many young Kuwaitis involved in or excelling in performing arts. Hamad Al Jenaie is an exception. One of Kuwait's biggest creative talents, Hamad is an actor, director, producer, and writer trained and mentored by Alison Shan Price MBE. He trained in the UK and Kuwait under Shan Price, Emmy Award winner Adam Darius, Soprano Anna Karadimitrova, and Tenor Jumel Carvajal. Hamad has given Kuwait some great theatrical productions, including Hamlet, which was staged earlier this year. Over the years, his talent and efforts have been recognized nationally and internationally. In 2019, Hamad Al Jenaie won the first Dame Judi Dench Award for Shakespeare. In 2017, he won the Adam Darius Award for Excellence in Performance.

Presently, Hamad is at the Edinburgh Festival Fringe, a renowned international event held annually in Scotland every August, presenting 'Looking for Scheherazade'. Hamad's presentation is the only Kuwaiti production featured at the Fringe this year. The festival, which attracts multimedia artists from around the world, showcases a diverse array of performances, including theatre, music, dance, and stand-up comedy. Hamad Al Jenaie is at the Fringe, representing Kuwait. "As ACT Media Production based in Kuwait, we are proud to present our project titled, 'Looking for Scheherazade,' written by the talented young Kuwaiti playwright Fawaz Al Adwani and starring Rasoul Saghir," said Hamad from Edinburgh.

Hamad Al Jenaie is not new to the Edinburgh Fringe. Although this is Hamad's first experience in the UK as a producer and director, he previously participated in the Fringe Festival in 2015 and 2016 as a performer with the One World Actors Centre under the direction of Alison Shan Price MBE. In 2015, Hamad portrayed the role of Arabic Creon in a bilingual 'Antigone: an Arabian Tragedy production,' starring Diana Sfeir and Eleni Price and directed by Alison Shan Price. In 2016, he played the father in 'The Blue Box: Memories of Children of War' by Emma Abdullah, and he played the role of Richard the Lionheart in a modern version of 'The Lion in Winter' by James Goldman. But the Fringe has changed since Hamad was last there nine years back. "The audience now seems to have a stronger interest in stand-up comedy and contemporary dance. However, some are still passionate about new theatrical works and eager to support brilliant young talents as they showcase their creations in public venues. The work being presented is truly outstanding and creative."

'Looking for Scheherazade' is inspired by the story of the legendary storyteller from One Thousand and One Nights. "Whether Scheherazade was a mythical character or a real person, her tale continues to captivate," explains Hamad. "It was exactly one year ago today that I met veteran actor Rasoul Saghir in London. During our conversation, the idea of participating in the Fringe Festival came up, and Rasoul suggested I speak with the writer, Fawaz Al Adwani, in Kuwait. We had an hour-long phone call discussing the Scheherazade myth concept, which sparked our project's beginning. Fawaz then started working on the script, and the story took shape."



'Looking for Scheherazade' film poster.

What followed was months of preparations as Fawaz Adwani's words came to life through Rasoul Saghir's performance. Supported by a talented crew, with lighting design by Syed Hasham Ali and costume design by Fahad Awadh, it has truly been a dream team for Hamad Al Jenaie.

The play revolves around Dr Akeem, a seasoned museum explorer, who embarks on a riveting and symbolic quest to uncover the mysterious origins of Scheherazade, the legendary storyteller of One Thousand and One Nights. As his life approaches twilight, he races against time, unravelling a tale brimming with drama, romance, power, and intrigue. Hamad had heard of Rasoul Saghir from Alison Shan Price, Kuwait's leading theatre personality. But it was as recently as a year back that Hamad met the veteran actor with a distinguished theatre career, including his most recent performance in "A Museum in Baghdad" by Hannah Khalil at the Royal Shakespeare Company.

"The audience in Edinburgh has been very supportive, especially when it comes to discussions about Scheherazade, a character many of them remember studying in school or university," says Hamad when asked about the audience's response. "They've found it both challenging and unique to see this story told in such an inspiring and different way. We've had wonderful audiences, and they've expressed a desire to see more."

Speaking of his most significant takeaway from participating in this year's Fringe Festival, Hamad Al Jenaie says, "Our biggest takeaway from this experience is the importance of being open to creativity and embracing the opportunity to meet talented individuals from around the world. It's been incredibly rewarding to share knowledge, tell stories, and support others as they present their art at the festival."

Call for AI network to enhance health skills

Improve patient safety, prevent medical errors

By Marwa Al-Bahravi

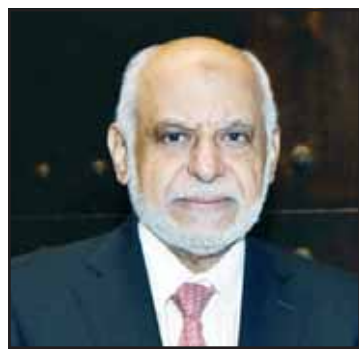
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 24: Chairman of the Islamic Organization for Medical Sciences, Dr. Mohammad Al-Jarallah has recommended the establishment of a Gulf and Arab network for developing the skills of health officials, particularly in using artificial intelligence.

He pointed out that artificial intelligence and digital health are the main axes for improving the skills of health officials, especially their ability to make decisions in health institutions.

Al-Jarallah presented his recommendation during the symposium entitled, "Health Practices ... Making Health Decisions at the Right Time," held Saturday through Zoom and under his patronage; with the participation of about 500 doctors and health workers from several countries, including the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

He cited the World Health Organization's (WHO) orientation towards using artificial intelligence in achieving sustainable development goals and universal health coverage.



KUNA photo
Dr. Mohammad Al-Jarallah, Chairman of the Islamic Organization for Medical Sciences.

He said the continuous training programs on digital health will improve the capability of medical practitioners to make accurate and quick decisions by up to 40 percent.

He stressed the importance of making clinical decisions in diagnosis and treatment in a timely manner to prevent exacerbation of the patient's condition, medical errors that could lead to dire consequences, and high treatment costs.

He also emphasized the need for balance in the use of artificial intelligence; while warning against rapid development without regulatory controls to guarantee justice, equality, ethical and legal aspects.

He disclosed that the Islamic Or-

ganization for Medical Sciences issued the 'Kuwait Document for Artificial Intelligence' under the sponsorship of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah to be the nucleus of a global document for the establishment of ethical and legal controls in using artificial intelligence in the healthcare sector.

He considers such Amiri support a reflection of the leadership's commitment to develop the health sector in line with the latest global innovations and in a way that guarantees the rights of patients, health service providers and society as a whole.

He explained that the use of artificial intelligence to improve patient safety and prevent medical errors is important, as it is a shared responsibility falling on the shoulders of all health workers; considering the studies conducted by WHO have shown that medical errors cause the death of millions of people around the world annually.

He added: Digital health is vital in adopting the best global practices in the field of patient safety, and developing systems for monitoring and reporting medical errors. British Medical Journal affirmed that medical errors could be reduced by up to 50 percent through the development of communication and digital health systems.

Ministry awaits Audit Bureau approval

Kuwait secures summer electricity through KD35 mln GCC agreement

By Mohammad Ghanem

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 24: The total value of the agreement for Kuwait to import electricity through the Gulf Cooperation Council Interconnection Authority (GCCIA) in the summer of 2024 reached KD34,954,337.

Reliable sources informed the newspaper that the Ministry of Electricity, Water and Renewable Energy and GCCIA made the agreement on May 19; which includes offers to purchase 500 megawatts through the network, starting with the supply of energy in June followed by the months of July and August.

Sources affirmed that the State Audit Bureau (SAB) is currently studying the agreement, since the ministry referred it back to the bureau for further study after receiving the responses to its inquiries and comments. Sources revealed that earlier, the agreement was returned to the ministry for not adhering to SAB Circular No. 6/2018 on the rules and regulations that the entities under the bureau's oversight must follow; including the guidelines for preparing tender documents, draft contracts, engagements and agreements subject to oversight before submission.

Sources stressed the ministry is keen on implementing the rules, regulations and circulars of SAB, as it is one of the entities subject to the bureau's oversight. Sources said the ministry is now waiting for the response of SAB about the agreement to proceed with the related procedures.

Sources clarified that the decision to purchase energy was taken after the extensive studies conducted by the ministry to face the challenges of the current summer in light of the increas-



Origami workshop

KUNA photo

NCCAL and Japanese Embassy host origami workshop at Cultural Center

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 24, (KUNA): An origami workshop began on Thursday at the Abdulaziz Hussein Cultural Center, organized by the National Council for Culture, Arts and Letters (NCCAL) in collaboration with the Japanese Embassy in Kuwait. The workshop is part of the 16th Cultural Summer Festival and aims to teach children the art of paper folding, a key element of Japanese culture.

The workshop seeks to enhance

children's and youth's manual skills while giving them the opportunity to explore and practice the artistic traditions of different cultures worldwide.

Origami, derived from the Japanese words "ori" (folding) and "gami" (paper), involves transforming flat paper into various shapes through folding. With imagination and skill, enthusiasts can create a wide range of realistic, geometric, or abstract designs.

ing demand for electricity and the insufficient local production.

Sources added the import process is also at the cost of production, especially since Kuwait owns 26.7 percent of the shares of GCCIA -- a joint-stock

entity that aims to link the electricity networks of the member states, secure the energy supply in their networks, invest and achieve economic returns from energy exchange, and diversify sources of income for the members.

Kuwait lauds Geneva talks on Sudan

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 24,

(KUNA): The Ministry of Foreign Affairs expressed Kuwait's appreciation for the statement issued by the group "Allied to Save Lives and Achieve Peace in Sudan," commending the efforts of international and regional partners involved in the Geneva talks.

In a statement released on Saturday, the ministry praised the agreement to open crossings and secure roads to ensure the delivery of international humanitarian aid to the Sudanese people, while also welcoming the call to adhere to the Jeddah Declaration issued in May 2023.

launched an investigation to find the two thieves who targeted the expatriate. They have decided to review the bank's security footage to identify the suspects or the vehicle they may have used.

Similarly, two men robbed a Kuwaiti citizen of KD 700, his watch and vehicle registration book, reports Al-Anba daily.

According to security sources, a 1987-born Kuwaiti citizen went to Sulaibiya Police Station and reported that he was driving in the area when he was stopped by two men. One among them pulled him out of his vehicle, assaulted him, and took his money, which amounted to KD 700, his watch and his vehicle registration book. The second suspect was encouraging the first.

The investigator at Sulaibiya Police Station has ordered the arrest of two individuals. The incident was classified as a felony, and a case of theft by force has been filed.

6 suspected

Continued from Page 1

two each in Ahmadi and Farwaniya governorates. Laboratory test results confirmed that these cases were negative for the mpox virus.

The sources explained that the symptoms of mpox infection are similar to those of many other skin diseases, such as chickenpox, which is more common at this time of year. As a result, suspected cases were closely monitored, and the Ministry of Health took necessary precautionary measures until laboratory tests confirmed the absence of the virus.

The Preventive Health Department also identified approximately 130 doctors, nurses, cleaners and other staff members who interact directly with patients at the Infectious Diseases Hospital, as well as 50 patients from high-risk groups. These individuals are scheduled to receive mpox vaccinations in the coming days to protect against the potential spread of the virus and its

The ministry reaffirmed Kuwait's commitment to providing humanitarian aid to the Sudanese people through the Kuwaiti air bridge, which has delivered approximately 24 planes carrying essential supplies, including food, medical supplies, shelter materials, and ambulances.

impact if it were to enter the country.

The Medical Warehouses Department has hundreds of mpox vaccines in stock, including approximately 360 doses designated for immunizing doctors and staff of the Infectious Diseases Hospital, with two doses required per person. The administration of the first dose is expected to begin within a few days, with the second dose scheduled to be given one month later.

Kuwait plans

Continued from Page 1

In addition, the gathering focused on the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora, CITES, and the biodiversity and the general framework deal for transferring ownership of falcons and others, it added.

GCC members' representatives issued some recommendations to be submitted to the committee of undersecretaries to be referred to the GCC ministerial committee responsible for environment affairs during its next meeting, it stated.

The conferees discussed holding the first Gulf conference on wildlife and marking Gulf wildlife day, which includes organizing some workshops and training programs in this field.

KAC cuts

Continued from Page 1

Additionally, the airline will soon announce a new job opportunity for aircraft mechanics, specifically targeting fresh graduates. This initiative is part of the company's effort to inject new talent into its operations and improve productivity.

Kuwait Airways is also implementing policies to prevent employees from holding multiple positions or receiving dual allowances, reflecting its commitment to optimizing workforce management and operational efficiency.

World News Roundup

Asia

'Plane harassed'

Isolationist policy not healthy: Haley

TAIPEI, Taiwan, Aug 24, (AP) — Former US ambassador to the United Nations, **Nikki Haley**, put in good words for Republican nominee Donald Trump on Saturday during her visit to Taiwan, saying that an isolationist policy isn't "healthy" and called on her party to stand with her country's allies.



Haley

Haley, who ran against Trump for the party's presidential nomination, told reporters in the capital, Taipei, that supporting U.S. allies, including Ukraine and Israel, was vital while underscoring the importance of Taiwan - which Beijing claims as its territory to be brought under control by force if necessary. "I don't think the isolationist approach is healthy. I think America can never sit in a bubble and think that we won't be affected," she said.

While the US doesn't formally recognize Taiwan, it is the island's strongest backer and main arms provider. However, Trump's attempt to reclaim the presidency has fueled worries. He said Taiwan should pay for US protection in an interview with Bloomberg Businessweek published in July and dodged answering the question of whether he would defend the island against a possible Chinese military action.

Alliances

When Haley shuttered her own bid for the GOP nomination, she did not immediately endorse Trump, having accused him of causing chaos and disregarding the importance of US alliances abroad. But in May she said she would be voting for him while making it clear that she felt her former boss had work to do to win over voters who supported her.

On Saturday, she said that having previously served with Trump's administration, "we did show American strength in the world", pointing to their pushback against China and their sanctioning of Russia and North Korea among other efforts.

"I think that all of that strength that we showed is the reason that we didn't see any wars, we didn't see any invasions, we didn't see any harm that happened during that time. I think Donald Trump would bring that back," she said.

'Fisheries plane threatened by flares': A Philippine fisheries bureau plane was threatened by flares fired from a Chinese island base while conducting a routine patrol in the South China Sea, Philippine officials said Saturday.

It's the latest territorial spat between Beijing and Manila over one of the world's busiest trade routes, with confrontations spreading from the disputed waters to the airspace above.

The Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources' Cessna 208B Grand Caravan plane was flying near Subi Reef on Thursday when it spotted flares being fired from the fishing atoll, which has been transformed by China into a militarized island base, a Philippine government interagency task force said in a statement.

No other details were provided, including the distance of the flares from the Philippine plane and if it proceeded with its patrol to monitor for poachers in the internationally recognized exclusive economic zone of the Philippines.

The same Philippine fisheries plane was subjected to "harassment" on Aug 19 when a Chinese air force fighter jet "engaged in irresponsible and dangerous maneuvers, deploying flares multiple times at a dangerously close distance of approximately 15 meters (yards)" near the disputed Scarborough Shoal, the Philippine task force said.

Police raid compound in search of Quiboloy: Hundreds of police officers backed by riot squads raided a vast compound in a southern Philippine city Saturday in search of a local preacher accused of abuse and human trafficking, police officials said.

A supporter of the group, reportedly died due to a heart attack during the massive police raid that started at dawn in the group's compound in Davao city, livestreamed online by a local TV network owned by the group, police said, adding that the death was not related to the police operations.

Officers brought equipment that could detect people behind cement walls. But by mid-afternoon, they found no sign of Apollo Quiboloy in the compound - some 30 hectares (75 acres) that includes a cathedral, a school, a living area, a hangar and a taxiway leading to Davao International Airport.

Quiboloy and his lawyer have denied the criminal allegations against him and his religious group, saying these were fabricated by critics and former members, who were removed from the group after committing irregularities.

'Hotel fire made worse by lack of sprinklers': A fire that killed seven people in a South Korean hotel was possibly made worse by the lack of sprinklers, fire officials said Friday as they investigated the cause of the blaze.

Twelve people were being treated for injuries related to the fire that broke out Thursday evening at the nine-story property in the city of Bucheon, just west of the capital, Seoul.

Officials say the fire didn't spread broadly after starting in an unoccupied room on the 8th floor. But with the room was unprotected by sprinklers and toxic smoke quickly filled the upper floors. Most of the victims were found in the rooms and hallways of the eighth and ninth floors.

The hotel, which was built in 2003, wasn't mandated to have a sprinkler system, said Lee Sang-don, an official with the Bucheon Fire Station. While South Korea began requiring sprinklers on all buildings with more than six floors starting in 2017, the requirement wasn't retroactively applied to most older buildings, except for some medical facilities and nursing homes.

Woman disappears down Malaysia sinkhole: A woman from India disappeared in Malaysia's capital Friday when pavement collapsed beneath her and she fell into a sinkhole where she may have been swept away by an underground water current, police said.

The woman plunged into the 8-meter-deep (26-foot-deep) sinkhole in the Dang Wangi area of the Malaysian capital, where local police chief Sulizmie Affendy Sulaiman said witnesses saw the paved walkway suddenly collapse under her while she was walking.

The woman was identified as a 48-year-old tourist from India.

Rescuers barricaded part of the area and used an excavator to clear debris in the sinkhole, but there was no immediate sign of the victim.



In this photo released by Xinhua News Agency, a drone photo taken on Aug 21 shows a vehicle overturned by floodwaters in Heishanke Township, Huludao City of northeast China's Liaoning Province. Inset: Rescue team members evacuate affected residents in Heishanke Township in Huludao City, northeast China's Liaoning Province on Aug 23. (AP/Xinhua)

Heavy rainstorms kill 11 and 14 others missing in northeastern Chinese city

Heavy rainstorms that swept a city in northeast China this week killed 11 people and left 14 others missing, while causing more than \$1 billion in damages, state media reported Friday.

State broadcaster CCTV said an officer who was trying to save lives was one of the people who died in the city of Huludao in Liaoning province. Rescuers were still trying to find the people who went missing during the "historically rare" destructive rainfall, it said. An image from the broadcaster showed roads

seriously flooded. According to preliminary estimates, 188,800 people were affected by the natural disaster, with losses amounting to 10.3 billion yuan (about \$1.4 billion), officials announced. A large number of roads, bridges and cables were damaged.

CCTV said the maximum daily rainfall recorded was 52.8 centimeters (nearly 21 inches), breaking the provincial record. The hardest-hit parts of the city experienced a year's worth of rain in just half a

day, and overall it was the strongest rainfall in Huludao since meteorological records began in 1951, it said.

The Chinese government allocated a fund of 50 million yuan (\$7 million) to support disaster relief efforts. China was in the middle of its peak flood season over the past month. Chinese policymakers have repeatedly warned that the government needs to step up disaster preparations as severe weather becomes more common. (AP)

US

Reject political divisions: Harris

RFK Jr suspends campaign, backs Trump

PHOENIX, Aug 24, (AP) — Robert F. Kennedy Jr. suspended his independent campaign for the White House and endorsed Donald Trump on Friday, a late-stage shakeup of the race that could give the former president a modest boost from Kennedy's supporters.

Hours later, Kennedy joined Trump onstage at an Arizona rally, where the crowd burst into "Bobby!" cheers.

Kennedy said his internal polls had shown that his presence in the race would hurt Trump and help Democratic nominee Kamala Harris, though recent public polls don't provide a clear indication that he is having an outside impact on support for either major-party candidate.

Kennedy cited free speech, the war in Ukraine and "a war on our children" as among the reasons he would try to remove his name from the ballot in battleground states.

Support

"These are the principal causes that persuaded me to leave the Democratic Party and run as an independent, and now to throw my support to President Trump," Kennedy said at his event in Phoenix.

However, he made clear that he wasn't formally ending his bid and said his supporters could continue to back him in the majority of states where they are unlikely to sway the outcome. Kennedy took steps to withdraw his candidacy in at least two states late this week, Arizona and Pennsylvania, but election officials in the battlegrounds of Michigan, Nevada and Wisconsin said it would be too late for him to take his name off the ballot even if he wants to do so.

Kennedy said his actions followed conversations with Trump over the past few weeks. He cast their alliance as "a unity party," an arrangement that would "allow us to disagree publicly and privately and seriously." Kennedy

suggested Trump offered him a job if he returns to the White House, but neither he nor Trump offered details.

Kennedy's running mate, Nicole Shanahan, this week entertained the idea that Kennedy could join Trump's administration as secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services.

The announcement ended days of speculation and landed with heaps of confusion and contradictions from Kennedy's aides and allies, an emblematic cap for a quixotic campaign.

Shortly before his speech in Phoenix, his campaign had said in a Pennsylvania court filing that he would be endorsing Trump for president. However, a spokesperson for Kennedy said the court filing had been made in error and the lawyer who wrote it said he'd correct it. Kennedy took the stage moments later, aired his grievances with the Democratic Party, the news media and political institutions, and extolled Trump. He spoke for nearly 20 minutes before he said explicitly that he was endorsing Trump.

Kennedy later joined Trump onstage at a rally co-hosted by Turning Point Action in Glendale, where Trump's campaign had teased he would be joined by "a special guest."

Kennedy was greeted by thundering applause as he took the stage to the Foo Fighters and a pyrotechnics display after being introduced by Trump as "a man who has been an incredible champion for so many of these values that we all share."

Also:

CHICAGO: Kamala Harris summoned Americans on Thursday to reject political division and instead chart what she called a "new way forward," as she accepted her party's nomination while blending biography with warnings about electing Donald Trump



Independent presidential candidate Robert F. Kennedy Jr. arrives to endorse Republican presidential nominee former President Donald Trump at a campaign rally at the Desert Diamond Arena on Aug 23, in Glendale, Arizona. (AP)



Zelenskyy



Putin

Europe

Moscow, Kyiv swap POWs: Russia and Ukraine exchanged over 100 prisoners of war on Saturday as Kyiv marked its third Independence Day since Moscow's full-scale invasion.

Ukraine said the 115 servicemen who were freed were conscripts, many of whom were taken prisoner in the first months of Russia's invasion. Among them are nearly 50 soldiers captured by Russian forces from the Azovstal steelworks in Mariupol.

The Russian Defense Ministry said the 115 Russian soldiers had been captured in the Kursk region, where Ukrainian forces launched their surprise offensive into Russia two weeks ago. The ministry said the soldiers were currently in Belarus, but would be taken to Russia for medical treatment and rehabilitation. (AP)

Modi visits Ukraine: Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi offered "as a friend" to help bring peace to Ukraine in a meeting with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy during a brief visit on Friday that many in the war-battered country hope will pave the way for an Indian role in peace mediation.

Modi's trip marks the most prominent wartime visit by a leader from a nation that maintains a neutral position on Russia's invasion of Ukraine. India's support is seen as a factor that could bolster efforts toward peace negotiations. Zelenskyy and Modi discussed at length Ukraine's peace formula, which prioritizes territorial integrity and the withdrawal of Russian troops, according to the Indian Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

"We say it very loudly and clearly that we support the respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity," Modi said through a translator during his meeting with Zelenskyy. "It's our highest priority."

Modi added that during his visit to Rus-

sia last month, he told Russian President Vladimir Putin "that problems cannot be resolved on the battlefield." (AP)

Police scour city for attacker:

Special police units on Saturday joined the search for an unknown man who carried out a stabbing attack at a crowded festival



Police and ambulances near the scene where three people were killed and at least eight others injured in an attack at a festival in Solingen, western Germany, the German dpa news agency reported on Aug 23. (AP)

again to the White House.

Taking the stage to a thunderous standing ovation as she closed out the Democratic National Convention in Chicago, the vice president argued that her personal story and background as a prosecutor made her uniquely qualified to protect Americans' interests against a former president she cast as only having his own interests in mind.

"Our nation with this election has a precious, fleeting opportunity to move past the bitterness, cynicism, and divisive battles of the past," Harris said. "A chance to chart a new way forward. Not as members of any one party or faction, but as Americans."

The daughter of Jamaican and Indian immigrants, Harris became the first Black woman and person of South Asian descent to accept a major party's presidential nomination and she would become the first female president if elected. Harris did not explicitly reference the historic firsts she would set in her 40-minute speech, and she only mentioned the words "Democrat" or "Republican" in the context of discussing a bipartisan border bill that Trump helped scuttle earlier this year, which she promised to sign into law if elected.

Her address - and the Democratic convention at large - was intended to appeal to a broad swath of Americans, not just partisans already energized by Harris' ascension after President Joe Biden ended his reelection bid. She made several implicit appeals to the large swath of voters who just weeks ago were disaffected with both of their options for the White House, particularly those disaffected with Trump, underscored by the appearances of several people who have broken with the 45th president, while embracing the policies and approach of Biden, the 46th.

in the western German city of Solingen, killing three people and wounding at least eight others, five of them seriously.

"The police are currently conducting a large-scale search for the perpetrator," police said in a statement. "Both victims and witnesses are currently being questioned," they said.

Police did not indicate that they had yet established the identity of the attacker and warned people to stay vigilant even as well-wishers started to leave flowers at the scene. Police established an online portal where witnesses could upload footage and any other information relevant to the attack.

People alerted police shortly after 9:30 p.m. Friday to an unknown attacker having wounded several people with a knife on a central square, the Fronhof. (AP)

Italy opens manslaughter probe: Prosecutors in Italy said Saturday they have opened an investigation into shipwreck and manslaughter after a superyacht capsized during a storm off the coast of Sicily, killing seven people onboard.

Termini Imerese prosecutor Ambrogio Cartosio confirmed the investigation but said no suspect is currently identified.

"We are only in the initial phase of the investigation. We can't exclude any sort of development at present," he told reporters at a news conference. (AP)

		Change	Closing pts			Change	Closing pts		
↑ JAPAN	Nikkei 225	+153.26	38,364.27	↓ DUBAI	DFMGI	-16.41	4,292.67		
	BRITAIN	FTSE 100	+39.78		8,327.78	PAKISTAN	KSE 100	-4.88	78,814.74
	EUROPE	Euro Stoxx 50	+24.20		4,909.20				

Business

Recording remarkable growth of 102%

NBK-Egypt reports EGP 3.17 billion in net profit in first half of 2024

CAIRO, Aug 24: National Bank of Kuwait - Egypt (NBK-Egypt) has reported net profits of EGP 3.17 billion (equivalent to KWD 24.9 million) for the first six months of 2024, a significant increase from the EGP 1.57 billion (Equivalent to KWD 16.2 million) reported in the first six months of 2023, showcasing an impressive growth rate of 102%.

Net Operating Income stood at EGP6.1 billion, recording a substantial increase of 56% from EGP3.9 billion recorded in the corresponding period of 2023. In the meantime, Net Interest Income grew by 62%, reaching EGP 5.2 billion compared to EGP 3.2 billion in 1H2023.

Meanwhile, Net Operating Income (excluding interests) increased to EGP 905.7million in 1H2024, compared to EGP 711.4million in 1H2023, up by 27%, while Cost to Net Operating Income dropped from 33.8% in 1H2023 to 22.9% in 1H2024.

Total assets reached EGP 163.2 billion in 1H2024, up by 25% compared to EGP 130.6 billion by the end of 2023. Furthermore, total loans and credit facilities expanded to EGP 95.40 billion in 1H2024, reflecting a growth rate of 25.43% compared to EGP 76.06 billion recorded at the end of 2023. The significant increase in the balance of loans and credit facilities in foreign currencies, which grew by 27.80%, was largely driven by the impact of the rise in the exchange rate.

Additionally, customer deposits increased to EGP 129.14 billion by the end of 1H2024, up from EGP 105.93 billion at the end of 2023, representing a growth rate of 21.91%. The key factor driving the 45.21% increase in foreign currency customer deposits was the impact of the rising exchange rate. Furthermore, The Return on Average Assets (ROAA) improved to 4.3% in 1H2024, compared to 2.9% in the corresponding period of 2023, while the Return on Average Equity (ROAE) increased to 38.8% in 1H2024, up from 26.9% in the corresponding period of 2023.

Commenting on the financial results announced by NBK-Egypt, Ms. Shaikha Al-Bahar, Deputy Group Chief Executive Officer, National Bank of Kuwait, and Chairman of NBK-Egypt, said: "NBK Egypt's achievement of historic growth and record business results in the first half of 2024 clearly underscores its ongoing success in strengthening its position within the Egyptian market. Egypt remains a key market for NBK Group due to its promising growth potential and positive outlook. The bank's operations in Egypt continue to rank among the most profitable within the Group, showcasing the highest rates of return on equity and assets."

Al-Bahar emphasized that the continued expansion of the balance sheet and the growth of all financial indicators reflect the success of the bank's business diversification strategy and its accelerated digital transformation efforts. This strategy aims to increase the bank's market share, particularly in retail banking services, in the region's largest market by population.

"We are committed to enhancing the quality of our services, expanding our geographical footprint, and reaching a more diverse customer base. This is made possible by the significant advancements in our digital infrastructure, information technology, and digital channels. These developments have positioned NBK-Egypt as a strong competitor in the Egyptian banking market," Al-Bahar added.

"Egypt stands as a key growth market for NBK Group and a cornerstone of our long-term strategic investment. We remain steadfast in our commitment to further expansion, with our ongoing success underscoring the Group's vision for this market. Our focus is on harnessing this momentum to meet the increasing demand for banking services and to drive financial inclusion for-



Ms. Shaikha Al-Bahar



Mr. Yasser El-Tayeb

Al-Bahar:

- In the first half of 2024, we recorded unprecedented profits, driven by robust operational performance across our diverse business segments.
- We are committed to enhancing service quality, expanding our geographical presence, and targeting a broader range of customer segments.
- Our strategic focus is on increasing market share, advancing banking transactions, and elevating their quality to meet the rising demand.
- Despite challenges in the Egyptian market, our long-term investment remains robust and continues to grow.

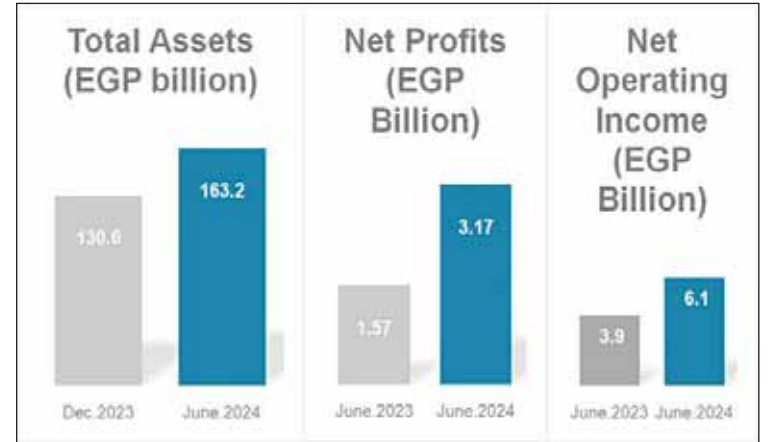
El-Tayeb:

- We consistently deliver strong performance, achieving growth rates that surpass expectations across all financial indicators.
- Our focus is on further strengthening our position in both the corporate and retail banking sectors.
- We are committed to supporting the global shift towards sustainable finance and the transition to a green economy.
- Our goal is to expand our digital services and actively support the move towards digital transformation.

ward," Al-Bahar concluded," Al-Bahar concluded.

Meanwhile, Vice Chairman, CEO, and Managing Director of National Bank of Kuwait-Egypt, Mr. Yasser El-Tayeb, said: "The strength of the bank's business results in 1H2024, which have exceeded all expectations and targets for this period of the year, reflects the resilience and adaptability of our business model. This growth continues despite the exceptional market challenges we face locally, regionally, and globally."

El-Tayeb emphasized that NBK-Egypt is experiencing consistent growth across all activities and business sectors while maintaining efficiency rates



and risk ratios that align with this expansion. This approach ensures business sustainability and customer satisfaction alike, thanks to the bank's prudent policies and its robust business model capable of meeting customer needs and diversifying income sources.

"A significant portion of NBK - Egypt's income is generated through a balanced approach, with strong contributions from both corporate credit operations and the rapidly growing retail banking sector. Our credit portfolio is notably diverse, covering large, medium, and small enterprises, while our retail banking portfolio serves a wide array of customer segments. This diversity is a testament to the strength and resilience of our income streams. Looking ahead, we are dedicated to further solidifying our leadership in the retail banking sector by delivering more advanced services and products tailored to the evolving needs of our diverse customer base," El-Tayeb stated.

He also highlighted that NBK - Egypt is dedicated to advancing the global shift towards sustainable finance and the transition to a green economy. The bank is committed to supporting environmentally friendly projects that foster sustainability and enhance the use of renewable energy. Additionally, NBK - Egypt is focused on exploring solutions to mitigate the adverse impacts of climate change and reduce carbon emissions. Sustainable finance is increasingly recognized as a vital tool for ensuring and maintaining long-term financial stability.

El-Tayeb concluded by underscoring the bank's firm belief in the pivotal role of technological advancements and digital channels in the banking sector. Recognizing their significance in bolstering competitive advantage, the bank has proactively enhanced its digital services and encouraged customers to broaden their use in payments. This aligns with the national policy and the Central Bank of Egypt's objectives to promote financial inclusion and integrate new customer segments into the formal banking system, ultimately contributing to a less cash-dependent society.

Other Voices

AI & Bitcoin halving drive surge in 'crypto' mergers

US Bitcoin mining firms hit \$22.8 bln amid AI interest

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 24: Recent advancements in artificial intelligence (AI) and the Bitcoin mining halving event have sparked a notable surge in mergers and acquisitions within the cryptocurrency sector, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The market value of US Bitcoin mining companies hit a record high of \$22.8 billion in early June, according to JPMorgan's research.

AI technologies, particularly generative AI, have intensified the interest in Bitcoin mining companies due to their extensive data centers, high-speed fiber internet access, and diverse power sources. These

assets are crucial for the computational demands of AI operations, making mining companies valuable targets for acquisition.

The recent Bitcoin halving, which occurred in late April, has significantly decreased the profitability of generating new bitcoins, adding financial pressure on mining firms.

As a result, many are seeking to diversify their revenue streams or explore exit strategies.

This evolving landscape has led to a rise in mergers and acquisitions, as companies in the AI sector seek to leverage the robust infrastructure and energy resources of Bitcoin mining firms.

The alignment of goals between these two sectors is driving increased consolidation in the cryptocurrency market.

Al-Ghais advocates for diversified energy mix

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 24: Haitham Al-Ghais, Secretary General of OPEC, has underscored the importance of a diversified energy mix that includes both oil and electricity to address the rising global energy demand, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

In a recent statement, Al-Ghais emphasized that the notion of treating oil and electricity as mutually exclusive is misguided.

Al-Ghais argued that oil remains crucial for various vital industries, including transportation and heavy industries, which rely heavily on petroleum products for their efficient operation.

He dismissed the idea of a zero-sum game between different energy sources, asserting that oil and its derivatives are essential components of a broader energy framework.

According to Al-Ghais, OPEC's perspective rejects the zero-sum approach to energy sources.

Instead, the organization recognizes that oil and its byproducts play a vital role in many sectors, complementing rather than competing with other forms of energy.

Agreement promises long-term benefits

Kuwait to 'secure' Qatar gas supply for electricity

By Kamel Al-Harami
Independent Oil Analyst

With the supply of gas from Qatar to Kuwait, there will be no more concerns about our limited gas availability. It is time to think big and strategically. Let us focus on transitioning away from using our limited domestic gas for electricity generation and rely more on imported gas as our main energy source. In the future, we can consider using our domestic supply, but only once we ensure its adequate availability.



Al-Harami

Negotiations between Kuwait and Qatar are ongoing, with an agreement expected to be finalized by the end of the year.

A supply agreement has been signed to purchase approximately three million tons of lean gas from Qatar over the next 15 years, starting in 2026. The framework is set, and the gas is available and ready. This lean gas will be used exclusively for electricity generation in Kuwait.

The gas will be coming from Qatar's North Gas project, which is expected to be completed and ready to produce by the end of 2026. It will be transported via sea to the Al-Zour terminal, which has been specifically built for gas import. The terminal is equipped to handle various cargoes of gas from

multiple sources. Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) and the Ministry of Electricity and Water are still finalizing the exact figures for gas supply needs and requirements. Given the unpredictable nature of demand and the potential for annual increases, the facility will also accommodate additional volumes of gas for emergency situations.

Kuwait will continue to import lean gas, as opposed to rich gas, which is used for petrochemical purposes and is more expensive. Since Kuwait's immediate needs do not include rich gas, we can focus on using naphtha for any future petrochemical ventures. It is unfortunate that we are not fully utilizing our naphtha and are instead exporting all our refinery products from our three refineries, which are being used to generate products of value almost 300 percent, such as manufacturing medical products used in hospitals and other advanced sectors.

The gas imports from Qatar represent an added value for both countries and could pave the way for further collaboration and joint ventures. Qatar's limited oil supply contrasts with Kuwait's abundance, presenting an opportunity for strategic partnerships. Developing such strategies could benefit both nations significantly.

Concluding a long-term gas agreement would be a strategic move, ensuring sustained benefits for both Kuwait and Qatar for a long term.

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Markaz 'real estate' macro index scores reflect positive trends in key GCC markets for H1 2024

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 24: Kuwait Financial Centre "Markaz," in its latest real estate reports, forecasts a positive outlook for the real estate markets in Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, and the UAE in H2 2024. These comprehensive reports, developed by Markaz MENA Real Estate team and Marmore MENA Intelligence, the research arm of Markaz, offer a detailed analysis of the real estate sector's performance during H1 2024 and present an optimistic forecast for H2 2024. The positive projections are based on a thorough evaluation of critical macroeconomic indicators such as GDP growth rates, fiscal policies, and the oil market dynamics.



Markaz Logo

ment reforms and a positive market sentiment. This optimism is quantitatively supported by the Markaz Real Estate Macro Index, projecting a 3.5 out of 5.0 score for H2 2024, indicating substantial growth potential.

Additionally, inflation is expected to ease, with the Consumer Price Index (CPI) moderating to 3.17% year-on-year by April 2024 from 3.37% at the end of 2023. Currently moderated by high interest rates, credit growth is anticipated to improve as the Central Bank of Kuwait may lower rates later in the year. This financial adjustment, alongside legislative reforms aimed at reducing land hoarding and promoting large-scale residential developments, is set to stimulate the market further.

The sector is poised for further growth despite the decline in overall volume and value of real estate transactions—a normalization from the pent-up demand seen post-pandemic. The Kuwaiti real estate market's future looks promising, supported by macroeconomic stability and strategic reforms likely to drive continued recovery and expansion. Investors and stakeholders are encouraged to stay informed of the evolving economic and regulatory environment as they plan their activities for the latter half of 2024.

KSA Real Estate Report

The Saudi Arabian real estate market is set to experience a significant upturn in 2024 following a sluggish period last year, buoyed by burgeoning activities in both the oil and non-oil sectors. According to the International Monetary Fund (IMF), Saudi's real GDP is anticipated to climb to 2.6% in 2024 from a previous contraction, with an optimistic projection of 8.1% growth in 2025. This economic recovery is mirrored in the real estate domain, where the General Authority for Statistics (GASTAT) reports a 0.6% rise in the real estate price index for the first quarter of 2024, led by a 1.2% rise in residential land prices.

Further, housing rents have seen a notable increase of 10.4% in April 2024, largely due to a 9.4% hike in villa rents.

In Saudi cities Riyadh, Jeddah, and Dammam, the residential sector saw a substantial year-over-year increase in sales transactions by 77%, 93%, and 28%, respectively, during the first quarter of 2024. The office sector also strengthened with rising rents in high-end and mid-range properties across these cities. This increase in rents has been partly driven by the new regional headquarters initiative, a part of Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030, which kicked off at the start of 2024.

The hospitality sector, too, displayed healthy growth, with Riyadh leading with a 26.8% increase in average daily rates during the first quarter. This was supported by a rise in business travel, religious tourism from Hajj and Umrah pilgrimages, and a vibrant slate of international and cultural events. However, not all areas saw growth; the Dammam Metropolitan Area experienced a slight decline.

Despite challenges posed by persistently high interest rates, the outlook for Saudi Arabia's real estate market remains positive, with strong performance expected to continue into the latter half of 2024 due to solid non-oil sector activities and significant government spending on infrastructure. The market is believed to be in an accelerating phase, indicative of a dynamic period of growth ahead.

UAE Real Estate Report

The UAE real estate sector is poised for continued growth through 2024, driven by solid demand across residential, office, and hospitality segments, as detailed in the latest UAE Real Estate Report. The non-oil economy, including significant contributions from the real estate sector, is expected to sustain strong growth, buoyed by government support and favorable policies such as the revised Golden Visa requirements, which now enhance investor eligibility.

Despite geopolitical uncertainties mildly clouding economic prospects, the real estate market remains vibrant, with record-breaking transactions and price increases. In the first quarter of 2024 alone, residential property prices in Dubai and Abu Dhabi showed impressive annual gains of 18.3% and 8.6%, respectively, strengthening the UAE's position as a competitive luxury housing market globally. Moreover, easing the AED 1 million minimum down payment for golden visas is anticipated to further stimulate the real estate market by attracting more international investors.

New IBRD bonds offer attractive yields

World Bank raises \$6.5 billion in record-breaking bond issuance

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 24: The International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) has raised \$6.5 billion through a significant bond issuance, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The deal comprised two tranches -- a \$3 billion two-year bond maturing in August 2026 and a \$3.5 billion 10-year bond maturing in August 2034.

This latest issuance attracted an impressive response from the global investment community, with over 300 applications totaling more than \$22.7 billion -- marking the World Bank's largest application book to date. The dual-tranche format was designed to cater to a wide range of investment strategies, offering opportunities across both short-term and

long-term maturities. Barclays, Citi, Montreal, and HSBC managed the bond issuance, which will be listed on the Luxembourg Stock Exchange.

The two-year bond was priced at a spread of +6.9 basis points above the US Treasury benchmark, yielding a semi-annual return of 4.061 percent.

Meanwhile, the 10-year bond was priced at a spread of +13.9 basis points, with a semi-annual yield of 3.951 percent. Jorge Familiar of the World Bank highlighted the successful dual-tranche issuance as a reflection of the ongoing strong support from the global investment community for the World Bank's sustainable development initiatives.

UK energy price cap to rise 10 pct from Oct

The energy price cap in the United Kingdom (UK) will rise by 10 percent in the fourth quarter of 2024, pushing bills up to 1,717 British pounds (about 2,263 U.S. dollars) a year for a typical household, the UK's energy regulator said on Friday.

"Rising prices on the international energy market - due to increasing geopolitical tensions and extreme weather events driving competition for gas - are

the primary cause of the rise," the Office of Gas and Electricity Markets (Ofgem) said.

The increase of the price cap, which sets a maximum rate per unit that can be charged to customers for their energy use, will add around 12 pounds a month to the average bill, said Ofgem.

"We know that this rise in the price cap is going to be extremely difficult for many households. Anyone who is struggling to pay

their bill should make sure they have access to all the benefits they are entitled to," said Jonathan Brearley, CEO of Ofgem.

Brearley urged British households to "shop around" and look for options that could save them money. The regulator also called for efforts to build a homegrown renewable energy system in order to lower bills and create a sustainable and secure market that works for customers. (Xinhua)

Mexico City assembly OK's strongest rent control

The legislature of Mexico City approved the most ambitious rent control law since the 1940s Thursday, limiting rent increases to the rate of inflation in the previous year.

Rents in the vast city of 9 million inhabitants were essentially frozen in the 1940s, and remained so for decades on older buildings. Those controls were largely lifted in the 1990s.

The new law will also require

landlords to register all rental agreements with the city. It was unclear whether the new law will allow landlords to charge more for improvements on their properties.

Mexico City, like many around the world, had seen complaints that rents were shooting up because of digital nomads and short-term rentals. But it appears that largely affected only a handful of touristy neighborhoods

near the center of the sprawling metropolis.

"A lot of people with higher incomes are willing to pay more for housing, both by buying and renting it," said legislator Martha Soledad Avila Ventura of the governing Morena party. "Moreover, short-term rentals on the internet have made it a question of profit, which has resulted in the expulsion of the traditional residents of the capital." (AP)

Overall recovery slow in first half of 2024

China's growth helps bolster global economic recovery in H1

BEIJING, Aug. 24, (Xinhua): The global economy in the first half of this year has experienced modest growth and a sluggish recovery, with prospects remaining uncertain. Yet, China's growth, buoyed by a rebound in domestic consumption and strong export performance, has provided a much-needed boost to global economic momentum.

The International Monetary Fund (IMF)'s July edition of the World Economic Outlook (WEO) forecasts global growth to remain stable at 3.2 percent in 2024 and 3.3 percent in 2025, yet warns that near-term risks have gained prominence, particularly upside risks to inflation, as services inflation remains high and geopolitical tensions continue.

In an increasingly turbulent and imbalanced global environment, China's economy has continued its upward trajectory, registering a 5-percent growth in the first half of 2024. By fostering new quality productive forces and promoting high-quality development, China remains the main engine for the global economy.

"The Global Economy in a Sticky Spot" reads the subtitle of the July edition of the WEO.

Despite a slow overall recovery in the first half of 2024, global economic imbalances continue to deepen. The divergence in growth among advanced economies is particularly stark. While the U.S. economy accelerates, Europe struggles to keep up.

U.S. gross domestic product (GDP) expanded at an annualized rate of 2.8 percent in the second quarter, up from 1.4 percent in the first. In contrast, the eurozone's economy remains lethargic, with contractions recorded in several economies, including Germany, Latvia, Sweden and Hungary, in the same period.

Analysts argue that recent U.S. policies, notably the Inflation Reduction Act, have exacerbated these disparities. By boosting debt and subsidies, the United States has stimulated both consumption and production. However, American industrial policies have also enticed European manufacturers to relocate stateside, further eroding Europe's industrial base and amplifying fears of de-industrialization in Europe.

Monetary policy, too, has grown more intricate. Japan, which ceded its position as the world's third-largest economy to Germany last year, surprised markets with 0.8 percent GDP growth in the second quarter, exceeding expectations. Nevertheless, the Japanese government projects a full-year growth of just 0.9 percent, with significant risks stemming from the widening monetary policy gap between Japan and the United States.

The Bank of Japan ended its negative interest rate policy in March and raised its key short-term interest rate in July, as speculations grew that the U.S. Federal Reserve might cut rates by September. On Aug. 5, Japan's Nikkei

225 plunged 12.4 percent on Monday, marking its worst day since the Black Monday crash of 1987.

Meanwhile, emerging markets and developing economies are enjoying a rosier outlook, even as short-term volatility persists. The World Bank's June Global Economic Prospects report predicts that, as the effects of monetary tightening in major economies recede, growth in Latin America, the Middle East, and Sub-Saharan Africa will pick up pace. The report forecasts growth rates of 2.7 percent, 4.2 percent and 3.9 percent in these regions respectively next year, outstripping those of advanced economies.

According to the latest reports from the IMF and the World Bank, global economic growth is projected to inch forward to 3.2 percent and 2.6 percent respectively this year, with both forecasts suggesting a marginal 0.1 percentage point uptick for 2025.

Economists anticipate this year could mark the first stable expansion in three years. But by historical standards, the pace remains sluggish, with numerous headwinds threatening to derail the current trajectory in the latter half of this year.

One looming threat is the mounting global debt. The Institute of International Finance reported a staggering 1.3 trillion U.S.-dollar surge in global debt in the first quarter of 2024, pushing the total to a record 315 trillion dollars. The global debt-to-GDP ratio now hovers at 333 percent, with advanced markets like the United States and Japan responsible for the bulk of the increase.

In the United States, federal debt surpassed 35 trillion dollars for the first time, and interest payments are projected to outstrip defense spending this year. Such ballooning debt poses significant risks to global economic and financial stability, said Sant Manku, an analyst at Is Yatirim, the investment banking division of Isbank Group in Istanbul.

Another destabilizing factor is that 2024 is the biggest election year in human history. Half of the world's population will go to the polls in over 70 countries.

In the United States, the economic and industrial policy divides between Democratic and Republican presidential candidates could have far-reaching effects.

For instance, Goldman Sachs economists predict that a re-election of Donald Trump, with his proposed tariff hikes, could shave 1 percent off the eurozone's GDP.

In addition, Guy Platten, secretary-general of the International Chamber of Shipping, warned of dangers posed by a potential Trump presidency to trade, saying the threat is now at its highest level since World War II.

Prolonged geopolitical tensions are another drag on global prospects. The Russia-Ukraine conflict has entered its third year, while the Israel-Palestine conflict is spreading over the region.

Internet subsidy expires

FCC moves to fill connectivity gaps

LOS ANGELES, Aug. 24, (AP): The Biden administration is moving to bid the loss of an expired broadband subsidy program that helped more than 23 million families afford internet access by using money from an existing program that helps libraries and schools provide WiFi hotspots to students and patrons.

Jessica Rosenworcel, chairwoman of the Federal Communications Commission, told The Associated Press last week that the agency had voted in July to "modernize" a federal program known as E-Rate to fill at least some of the gaps left by the Affordable Connectivity Program, which gave families with limited income a monthly subsidy to pay for high-speed internet.

"A lot of those households are at risk of disconnection," Rosenworcel said after a visit to a Los Angeles elementary school. "We should be clear that it's not always an on-off switch. It's about sustainability."

The Affordable Connectivity Program, part of a broader effort pushed by the administration to bring affordable internet to every home and business in the country, was not renewed by Congress and ran out of funding earlier this year.

Mothers of students at Union Avenue Elementary School, which has a 93% Latino student population, told Rosenworcel that their need for the internet has never been greater. They said the cost of rent and food makes it hard to prioritize maintaining a continuous connection.

After listening to the mothers describe using WiFi in a McDonald's parking lot so they can take part in remote doctor's appointments, pay bills, and provide their kids with an internet connection for their online homework, an emotional Rosenworcel called their stories "chilling."

"That family and that child are go-

ing to have a harder time thriving in the modern world without that connection at home," she said.

The E-Rate program, established in the 1990s, has provided more than \$7 billion in discounts for eligible schools and libraries since 2022 to afford broadband products and services. According to a data analysis by the AP, it offered benefits to more than 12,500 libraries, nearly half of them in rural areas, and 106,000 schools.

For the most recent round of funding, the E-Rate program was expanded to include WiFi on school buses. Starting next year, Rosenworcel said, the list of eligible products will expand to WiFi hotspots.

The Affordable Connectivity Program was helping one in six families in the U.S. afford internet access. Rosenworcel said the decision to include WiFi hotspots in E-Rate was partly a response to the failure to extend the subsidies.

"Every child needs internet access at home to really thrive," Rosenworcel said.

Alex Houff, who manages digital equity programs for the Baltimore County Public Library in Maryland, said the library began a WiFi hotspot lending program right before the COVID-19 lockdown began in 2020 with around 50 devices.

She said the program has grown to include 1,000 devices, which still falls short of meeting demand. There are more than 160 people waiting to use a hotspot, Houff said.

"Most of the time we were hearing from branches that their communities were borrowing these hotspots because it was their only source of connectivity," Houff said.

Affordability, Houff said, is the biggest barrier to connection. She said the library system would apply for E-Rate funding to double the number of hotspots it offers to patrons.

Time ripe for the Fed to soon begin reducing interest rates

Powell speaks at Jackson Hole



Federal Reserve Chairman Jerome Powell, left, Governor of the Bank of Canada Tiff Macklem, center, and Governor of the Bank of England Andrew Bailey pose for a photo at the Jackson Hole Economic Symposium at Jackson Lake Lodge in Grand Teton National Park near Moran, Wyo., on Aug. 23, 2024. (AP)

JACKSON HOLE, Wyoming, Aug. 24, (AP): With inflation nearly defeated and the job market cooling, the Federal Reserve is prepared to start cutting its key interest rate from its current 23-year high, Chair Jerome Powell said Friday.

Powell did not say when rate cuts would begin or how large they might be, but the Fed is widely expected to announce a modest quarter-point cut in its benchmark rate when it meets in mid-September.

"The time has come for policy to adjust," Powell said in his keynote speech at the Fed's annual economic conference in Jackson Hole, Wyoming. "The direction of travel is clear, and the timing and pace of rate cuts will depend on incoming data, the evolving outlook, and the balance of risks."

His reference to multiple rate cuts was the only hint that a series of reductions is likely. Powell stressed that inflation, after the worst price spike in four decades inflicted pain on millions of households, appears largely under control. According to the Fed's preferred measure, inflation fell to 2.5% last month, far below its peak of 7.1% two years ago and only slightly above the central bank's 2% target level.

"My confidence has grown," he said, "that inflation is on a sustainable path back to 2%."

Powell's assessment signaled that the Fed is making a fundamental shift from its 2 1/2-year fight against inflation, toward a broader effort to keep the economy growing and employers hiring.

The Fed chair's assurance that rate cuts are coming helped fuel a rally on Wall Street. Bond yields fell, and stock indexes were broadly higher.

"The only question remaining for the Sept. 18 meeting is: By how much will the Fed be cutting?" said Joseph LaVorgna, chief economist at SMBC Nikko Securities.

"The outcome of the August employment report," which will be reported Sept. 6, LaVorgna said, "is obviously critical." If that report shows a second straight month of weak hiring, the Fed may cut its key rate by a more aggressive half-point.

Most economists expect the Fed to cut its benchmark rate by a quarter-point at each of its final three meetings this year. Wall Street traders, though, foresee a one-in-three likelihood that the Fed will cut by a half-point at one of those meetings, according to futures prices. A lower Fed benchmark rate will lead eventually to lower rates for auto loans, mortgages and other forms of consumer borrowing and could also boost stock prices.

In his remarks Friday, the Fed chair suggested that rate cuts should help extend the much sought-after "soft landing," whereby inflation falls back to the Fed's 2% target without a recession occurring.

Continued growth could boost Vice President Kamala Harris' presidential

US average rate on a 30-year mortgage eases to 6.46%, lowest level in 15 mths

WASHINGTON, Aug. 24, (AP): The average rate on a 30-year mortgage eased this week to its lowest level in 15 months, welcome relief for home shoppers navigating a housing market that remains out of reach for many Americans.

The rate fell to 6.46% from 6.49% last week, mortgage buyer Freddie Mac said Thursday. A year ago, the rate averaged 7.23%.

The average rate is now the lowest it's been since mid-May last year, when it was 6.39%.

Borrowing costs on 15-year fixed-rate mortgages also fell this week, good news for homeowners seeking to refinance their home loan at a lower rate. The average rate fell to 5.62% from 5.66% last week. A year ago, it averaged 6.55%, Freddie Mac said.

Mortgage rates are expected to continue trending lower overall this year, as signs of waning inflation and a cool-

ing job market have raised expectations that the Federal Reserve will cut its benchmark interest rate at its policy meeting next month, which would be the first such easing in four years.

"Although mortgage rates have stayed relatively flat over the past couple of weeks, softer incoming economic data suggest rates will gently slope downward through the end of the year," said Sam Khater, Freddie Mac's chief economist.

After jumping to a 23-year high of 7.79% in October, the average rate on a 30-year mortgage has mostly hovered around 7% this year - more than double what it was just three years ago. But this month, the average rate has made its biggest downshift in more than a year, sliding to around 6.5%.

The recent pullback in mortgage rates overall has sparked a pickup in applications for home refinancing loans, which are 23% higher than a

month ago, according to the Mortgage Bankers Association.

Applications for home purchase loans have lagged, however.

"We expect rates likely will need to decline another percentage point to generate buyer demand," Khater said.

Elevated mortgage rates, which can add hundreds of dollars a month in costs for borrowers, have kept many would-be homebuyers on the sidelines, extending the nation's housing slump into its third year.

Sales of previously occupied U.S. homes are running below last year's pace, though they ended a four-month slide in July.

The rate on a 30-year mortgage is influenced by several factors, including how the bond market reacts to the central bank's interest rate policy decisions. That can move the trajectory of the 10-year Treasury yield, which lenders use as a guide to pricing home loans.

campaign, even as most Americans say they're dissatisfied with the Biden-Harris administration's economic record, largely because average consumer prices remain far above where they were before the pandemic.

"We will do everything we can," Powell said, "to support a strong labor market as we make further progress toward price stability."

By cutting rates, he said, "there is good reason to think that the economy will get back to 2% inflation while maintaining a strong labor market."

A rate cut in mid-September, coming less than two months before the presidential election, could bring some unwelcome political heat on the Fed, which seeks to avoid becoming entan-

gled in election-year politics. Former President Donald Trump has argued that the Fed shouldn't cut rates so close to an election. But Powell has repeatedly underscored that the central bank would make its rate decisions based purely on economic data, without regard to the political calendar.

In his remarks, Powell said the Fed has grown concerned about slower hiring and a rising unemployment rate, even while it still wants to see inflation fall further. That dual focus is replacing the Fed's previous singular focus on inflation.

"The cooling in labor market conditions is unmistakable," the Fed chair said. "Job gains remain solid but have slowed this year. ... We do not seek or

welcome further cooling in labor market conditions."

In what amounted to something of a victory lap, Powell noted that the Fed had succeeded in conquering high inflation without causing a recession or a sharp rise in unemployment, which many economists had long predicted.

The soft landing "did come as a big surprise to the (economics) profession," Gaulti Eggertson, an economist at Brown University, said during a presentation Friday at the Jackson Hole conference. He attributed that outcome to the unraveling of the pandemic's disruptions to supply chains and labor markets and a reduction in job vacancies, which allowed wage growth to cool.

Justice Department files antitrust lawsuit

RealPage accused of scheme to help landlords hike rental prices

WASHINGTON, Aug. 24, (AP): The Justice Department filed an antitrust lawsuit Friday against real estate software company RealPage Inc., accusing it of an illegal scheme that allows landlords to coordinate to hike rental prices.

The lawsuit, filed alongside attorneys general in states including North Carolina and California, alleges the company is violating antitrust laws through its algorithm that landlords use to get recommended rental prices for millions of apartments across the country.

Rents across the U.S. saw a huge spike in 2021 and 2022, and though

their growth has since tapered off, they remain stubbornly high for many tenants, thanks in part to a huge lack of housing supply.

Justice Department officials allege that RealPage is another reason for the high rents since the algorithm allows landlords to align their prices and avoid competition that would otherwise keep rents down.

"Americans should not have to pay more in rent simply because a company has found a new way to scheme with landlords to break the law," Attorney General Merrick Garland told reporters.

In a statement, RealPage said the

Justice Department's claims were "devoid of merit and will do nothing to make housing more affordable."

"We are disappointed that, after multiple years of education and cooperation on the antitrust matters concerning RealPage, the DOJ has chosen this moment to pursue a lawsuit that seeks to scapegoat pro-competitive technology that has been used responsibly for years," the company said.

RealPage came under scrutiny after a 2022 ProPublica investigation into the company's practice suggested that it could be to blame for some of the

rapid increases in housing costs. Since then, RealPage has drawn the ire of Democratic lawmakers, including Sen. Amy Klobuchar of Minnesota, who in February introduced a bill to bar companies from using algorithms to collude and fix prices. The company is also facing several lawsuits filed by state attorneys general.

And last week, in a speech in Raleigh, North Carolina, Democratic presidential nominee Vice President Kamala Harris pledged to crack down on "corporate landlords (who) collude with each other to set artificially high rental prices (by) using algorithms and price-fixing software."

Bank recognized for leadership development and talent acquisition

Kuwait Finance House wins 13 Global Awards in Human Resources for 2024

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 24: Kuwait Finance House (KFH) Group has reaped 13 distinguished global awards in the field of Human Resources for 2024 from the renowned Brandon Hall Group, a company specialized in the evaluation and performance assessment of institutions around the world. This achievement highlights KFH Group's success in securing the highest number of awards at both the local and regional levels this year.

The collection of awards earned by KFH Group includes seven accolades specifically awarded to KFH Kuwait, which are:

- Best Leadership Development Program (Gold) for the Leadership Excellence Program
 - Best Social Impact (Gold)
 - Best Certification Program (Silver)
 - Best New Hire Onboarding Program (Silver)
 - Best Unique or Innovative Learning and Development Program (Bronze) for Forssah Program
 - Best Approach to HCM Innovation (Bronze)
 - Best HR Data Analytics (Bronze)
- The awards also include six recognitions secured by KFH - Türkiye, which are:
- Best Benefits, Wellness and Well-being Program (Gold)
 - Best Selecting and Onboarding Interns (Gold)
 - Best Talent Acquisition Process (Gold)
 - Best Corporate Culture Transformation (Gold)
 - Best Corporate Learning University (Gold) for Kuveyt Turk Academy (KFH-Türkiye)
 - Best Use of Blended Learning

(Gold) for Kuveyt Turk Academy (KFH-Türkiye)

The awards are based on several criteria, the most important of which is that the program meets the needs of the organization in terms of being a measurable design and presentation and achieves a positive impact on the institution in general.

On this occasion, KFH Group Chief Human Resources and Transformation Officer, Zeyad Abdullah Al-Omar, said that the recognition highlights the efforts of the Group in managing human resources. He added that these awards affirm KFH's leadership in implementing global best practices in HR, which positively impacts employee performance and enhances the institution's reputation, standing, and the quality of services offered to customers.

AlOmar noted that winning 13 awards from the Brandon Hall Group, across various fields of human resources, underscores the success of the Group's vision in achieving optimal management of its human capital. Additionally, this achievement reflects KFH's advanced and comprehensive approach, starting from recruitment and talent acquisition to innovative and unique training programs in collaboration with global universities and professional institutions. This approach extends to career development, succession planning, youth empowerment, leadership development, with a focus on employee health, well-being, and engagement. It is also geared towards women empowerment, recognition programs, and leveraging technology and data analysis to ensure high quality and precision in performance, keeping



Zeyad AlOmar

AlOmar:

- The awards affirm KFH's leadership in implementing optimal practices in HR management.
- Securing the highest number of awards at both the local and regional levels is a global recognition for KFH's excellence.

pace with the rapid advancements in the banking sector.

Leadership development

AlOmar explained that KFH has achieved significant success in leadership development by collaborating with prestigious universities and global training institutions. One of the most notable accomplishments in this area is the launch of the Leadership Excellence Program in partner-



Bank wins 13 Global HR Awards for 2024.

ship with Headspring, aimed at advancing the development of KFH's leaders

Learning and development

He highlighted that KFH is distinguished by a comprehensive plan for the continuous training and development of its employees. The plan is designed to enhance their expertise through a defined vision aimed at empowering them with the necessary technological tools and fostering innovation. This approach

ensures that they remain the cornerstone of KFH's leadership both locally and globally. He also mentioned the Forssah program, which has played a vital role in cultivating a distinguished generation of employees through advanced training courses and innovative development modules. Over the past six months, the program has successfully trained 39 employees through an exceptional boot camp, featuring numerous workshops and both theoretical and practical training sessions. These ef-

orts have significantly contributed to enhancing employees' personal skills, transforming them into well-rounded professionals in both technical and business aspects.

Talent acquisition

AlOmar pointed out that KFH remains committed to its strategy of attracting and developing human talents that are capable of driving positive change and keeping pace with growth. KFH is also dedicated to solidifying its leadership in recruiting and retaining top-tier talents, particularly young Kuwaitis who possess the passion and ambition.

Onboarding of new hires

Speaking about onboarding new employees, AlOmar indicated that KFH provides an outstanding work environment, marked by strong internal communication and transparency. KFH is committed to equipping new employees with the latest technological tools and creating ample opportunities for career growth. This dedication makes becoming a part of the KFH family a sought-after goal for any newcomer aiming to excel and advance in the banking industry.

The true asset for maintaining leadership

AlOmar affirmed that human resources at KFH are the cornerstone and true asset in achieving success and maintaining the Group's global leadership. He emphasized that the Group's focus is driven by a clear strategy aimed at securing KFH's place among the world's top 100 banks.



KIB's Qurtoba self-service ITM.

New ITM at KIB offers comprehensive banking services 24/7

KIB launches first self-service ITM at Qurtoba Co-op

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 24: Kuwait International Bank (KIB) announced the launch of its first self-service ITM at Qurtoba Co-op in an effort to guarantee easy access to all KIB banking services and provide them in a modern and more convenient manner. This comes as part of the Bank's commitment to implementing its comprehensive digital infrastructure development strategy and offering products and services that conform with the latest innovations and advances in the global banking industry. The new self-service ITM is also a testament to KIB's unwavering commitment to fortifying and developing its suite of innovative financial solutions in response to the customers' evolving needs and aspirations, cementing its role as a "Bank for Life".

Commenting on the self-service ITM opening, Nawaf Al-Kharyef, Assistant General Manager of the Retail Banking Department at KIB, said: "Today marks the beginning of a new phase in our ongoing efforts for developing KIB's infrastructure and the suite of banking products and services it offers customers in Kuwait. We pride ourselves on being among the leading banking institutions on the network expansion front, whether in the form of traditional or digital branches, as well as continuously spearheading the launch of new innovative solutions. The self-service ITM represents a leap in KIB's quality of financial solutions that are designed in response to our customers' evolving needs and aspirations in a comprehensive, inclusive, and secure manner."

He added: "This advanced step will undoubtedly bolster KIB's digital infrastructure development strategy and how it reflects onto the quality of retail banking services and products. It will also motivate domestic banking institutions to compete over innovating new solutions that keep pace with the global technologies and exceed customers' expectations."

It serves to note that the new digital ITM stands out for its modern design and offers a full suite of services, allowing customers to complete a vast array of banking operations and transactions with ultimate ease, speed, and safety. The new ITM's services and benefits include an interactive teller machine (ITM), which operates between 8 a.m. and 12 a.m. and allows customers and non-customers to benefit from a wide range of banking services, including cash depositing or withdrawals as well as cheque depositing or withdrawals. The new ITM also has a general inquiries feature, allowing both customers and non-customers to view the Bank's products and inquire about methods of opening accounts, among other inquiries, such as opening a Dirwaza account, reviewing electronic 'know your customer' (eKYC) status and much more. Furthermore, the self-service card instant issuance machine allows customers to request and receive KIB banking cards securely within minutes. Other features include the advanced ATM which offers specialized advantages, such as cash transactions between KIB accounts, account management, card services—including PIN assignment and change, cardless withdrawal using the near field communication (NFC) technology, SMS subscription, balance inquiry, credit and prepaid card payment, and much more.

In conclusion, Al-Kharyef said: "We are proud of our leading position in offering digital retail banking solutions, and we vouch to continue working tirelessly to offer our customers all the benefits, services, and products that contribute to earning their satisfaction and trust and enabling them to take active steps toward their aspirations."

It is worth noting that KIB upholds its strategic plan for adopting the latest digital advancements in the banking industry, manifesting its vision that puts the customer at the top of its priorities and underscores the importance of reinforcing their banking experience with exceptional benefits that secures KIB's leading position in the Kuwaiti banking sector.

About KIB

Kuwait International Bank (KIB) is a bank that operates according to the Islamic Shari'ah, based in the State of Kuwait. Incorporated in 1973, and

originally known as Kuwait Real Estate Bank, KIB made the transition to its current Islamic operating model in 2007. In 2018, KIB embarked on a new phase of its journey full of innovation and development. As part of its new strategic direction, the Bank focuses on offering a next-level customer experience under the slogan: "Bank for Life".

Through a network of branches spread across the State of Kuwait, KIB offers a broad range of banking products and services, as well as innovative digital banking solutions in line with international best standards. As part of its duty towards the community, the Bank also encompasses a leading social responsibility program that aims at positively impacting all members of the community through a wide range of impactful initiatives and activities.

Today, KIB has taken concrete steps in implementing its new strategic objectives. The Bank has cemented its role as a key player in the local banking industry and has continued to maintain its strong financial performance; enabling it to be globally recognized for its strong credit rating and financial position.

Pakistan Women's Forum celebrates 77th Independence Day

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 24: On the auspicious occasion of Pakistan's 77th Independence Day, Pakistan Women's Forum, Kuwait (PWF) organized a splendid event to celebrate the day at Ibis Hotel on 14th August, 2024. The event was attended by a vast number of ladies.

Mrs. Nighat Tariq (President - PWF) and Mrs. Shazia Arshad (General Secretary - PWF) warmly welcomed the guests. Cake cutting ceremony of the 77th Independence Day was also held.

The women prayed for the prosperity of Pakistan and said that Pakistan is a blessing for us and may Allah protect it (Ameen).

National songs were performed by well known artists; Mr. Nayyar Javed, Mr. Binyamin Sahotra and Mr. Waqar Hassan to not only entertain the guests but, to also arouse patriotism in them.

Gifts were distributed amongst the guests by Mrs. Sabiha Ubaid Arain (Senior Advisory - PWF).

Concluding the event Mrs. Nighat Tariq (President) paid a vote of thanks to all the guests and artists for their incredible participation in the event.



Photos during the event.

Bank cautions against phishing scams

Gulf Bank advises immediate reporting of electronic fraud

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 24: In support of the Central Bank of Kuwait's "Diraya" campaign, in partnership with the Kuwait Banking Association, Gulf Bank urged customers to immediately report any suspected or actual incidents of electronic fraud. This prompt reporting enables banks and authorities to act quickly to track and stop the fraud before any funds are transferred abroad.

Gulf Bank advised customers to exercise caution with emails, text messages, and phone calls from unfamiliar sources to safeguard their banking information. The bank emphasized that legitimate institutions will never request personal information via these methods. Responding to such communications can result in fraudulent attempts to access your banking details.

The bank also warned about increasing fraud risks through fake donation pages following disasters, where fraudsters exploit people's willingness to help by deceiving them and stealing their money.

Gulf Bank advised customers not to store sensitive information, such as ATM or credit card numbers and PINs, on their mobile phones. Customers should also avoid writing their PIN on their credit card or sharing one-time passwords (OTPs). It is crucial to log out of the bank's app or website immediately after completing any transactions.

Customer awareness is vital for protecting banking data, especially with the growing use of digital services. Gulf Bank advised custom-



'Let's be aware' campaign poster

ers to verify that they are engaging with legitimate, well-known, and licensed institutions when making donations.

Gulf Bank aims to be Kuwait's leading bank, fostering a diverse and inclusive workplace to deliver exceptional customer service while contributing sustainably to the community. Through its extensive branch network and innovative digital services, the bank empowers customers to conduct banking transactions conveniently and efficiently, ensuring a seamless experience.

In alignment with Kuwait Vision 2035, "New Kuwait," and its commitment to fostering collaborative partnerships, Gulf Bank is dedicated to driving robust sustainability initiatives across environmental, social, and governance (ESG) dimensions. The bank is committed to implementing strategically selected and diverse sustainability programs both internally and externally.

Series resonates 'really emotionally' with Zainichi Koreans

'Pachinko 2' explores ethnic Koreans' plight in Japan

SEOUL, South Korea, Aug 24, (AP) — The second season of "Pachinko," opened Friday, delicately captures the plight of ethnic Koreans brought to Japan during colonial rule and their descendants, exploring themes of home and identity through several generations.

The award-winning series, based on the New York Times bestselling novel, returned to Apple TV+ with eight episodes that follow four generations of an immigrant Korean family living in Japan since before World War II. The star-studded cast includes Oscar-winning actor Youn Yuh-jung and Korean actor Lee Minho.

Many ethnic Koreans were brought to Japan, often forcibly, to work in mines and factories during the country's 1910-1945 colonial rule of Korea. They were treated as second-class citizens and faced discrimination, which the series portrays.

Youn, who plays the older version of protagonist Sunja, said she was largely unfamiliar with the situation of ethnic Koreans in Japan — known as Zainichi Koreans — before she spoke with actor Soji Arai, who plays Mozasu, the son of her character. Arai was born into an ethnic Korean family in Japan.

"It broke my heart and I cried inside because I felt so bad after hearing about their stories," Youn told The Associated Press.

The second season continues Sunja's story as she struggles to feed her sons Noa and Mozasu during the war.

In the series, ethnic Koreans face discrimination generation after gen-

eration. In one episode, a Japanese worker at a wartime Nagasaki factory refers to his Korean colleagues as "roaches" that "keep multiplying."

Decades later, Sunja's grandson Solomon nearly explodes at a Japanese store clerk whom he thinks is showing discrimination over his grandmother's Korean heritage. He senses that discrimination will follow him even after attaining academic and professional credentials.

The series is in Japanese, Korean and English with subtitles and is based on Korean-American author Min Jin Lee's novel, titled after a Japanese game played in arcades where ethnic Koreans often worked in jobs typically shunned by Japanese.

Discrimination

Youn said she portrayed Sunja as "intimidated, scared and feeling small," believing discrimination is her fault due to endless exposure to it. Youn added that she has felt similarly in her own life, having an "inferiority complex" over her struggles with the English language.

Around half a million ethnic Koreans still live in Japan. Although many have become naturalized Japanese citizens, about half a million have not and are officially considered foreigners.

Executive producer and showrunner Soo Hugh said she was "nervous" about how the show would be received among Zainichi Koreans, but that she was happy to learn that it had resonated "really emotionally."

"This is their story," she told the AP, adding that she had to unlearn previous history education to understand "from the point of view of the people on the ground," including those in Nagasaki.

When Youn was asked if she was concerned about playing a role in a series touching on sensitive parts of East Asian history, Youn said no. "We are talking about the past," she said. "I am not a politician, so it doesn't matter to me."

Hugh said the series gradually transitions from the family's day-to-day survival to answering big questions about their shifting identities: "What does it mean to live a good life ... knowing that Japan is now my home?"

These are familiar questions to Hugh, who is Korean American.

"So many Korean immigrants come to America and think, 'We'll make a better life, but I'm not going to die in America because Korea is my home. ... You know, a year goes by, then a year, another year, and then another year,'" Hugh said.

"It must feel really sad to know that you're not going to die where you want to die. And that's, I think, something so many of our characters confront in this show," she said.

Youn said that people will always carry their identity with them despite circumstances. "I see many people who try their best to erase (their Korean identity)," she said. "I really don't like that. There is no need to do that."

Television

Variety



This image released by Lionsgate shows Bill Skarsgård in 'The Crow'. (AP)

Film

Modern take on classic fails to match 1994's impact

'The Crow' reboot is stylish, operatic

By Mark Kennedy

One of the first things you see in the reimagined "The Crow" is the sight of a fallen white horse in a muddy field, bleeding badly after becoming entangled in barbed wire. It's a metaphor, of course, and a clunky one at that — a powerful image that doesn't really fit well and is never explained.

That's a hint that director Rupert Sanders will have a tendency to consistently pick the stylish option over the honest one in this film. In his attempt to give new life to the cult hero of comics and film, he's given us plenty of beauty at the expense of depth or coherence.

The filmmakers have set their tale in a modern, generic Europe and made it very clear that this movie is based on the graphic novel by James O'Barr, but the 1994 film adaptation starring Brandon Lee hovers over it like, well, a stubborn crow.

Brandon, son of legendary actor and martial artist Bruce Lee, was just 28 when he died after being shot while filming a scene for "The Crow." History seems always to repeat: The new adaptation lands as another on-set death remains in the headlines.

Lee's "The Crow" was finished without him and he never got to see it enter Gen X memory in all its rain-drenched, gothic glory, influencing everything from alternative fashion to "Blade" to Christopher Nolan's "Dark Knight" trilogy.

Bill Skarsgård seizes Lee's role of Eric Draven, a man so in love that he returns from the dead to revenge his and his sweetheart's slayings in what can be best called a sort of supernatural, romantic murderfest. (The tagline, "True love never dies," clumsily rips off Andrew Lloyd Webber's "The Phantom of the Opera.")

William Schneider, who co-wrote the screenplay with Zach Baylin, has given the story a near-operatic facelift, by introducing a devil, a Faustian

bargain, blood-on-blood oaths and a godlike guide who monitors the limbo between heaven and hell, which looks like a disused, weed-covered railway station. "Kill the ones who killed you and you'll get her back," our hero is told.

The first half drags at it sets the table for the steady beat of limbs and necks being detached at the end. Eric and his love, Shelly (played by an uneven FKA Twigs), meet in a rehab prison for wayward youth that is so well lit and appointed that it looks more like an airport lounge where the cappuccinos are \$19 but the Wi-Fi is complimentary.

Eric is a gentle loner — tortured by a past the writers don't bother filling in, who likes to sketch in a book (universal cinema code signaling a sensitive soul) and is heavily tattooed (he's often shirtless). His apartment has rows of mannequins with their heads covered in plastic and his new love calls him "brilliantly broken." He's like a Blink-182 lyric come to life.

Complex

Shelly is more complex, but that's because the writers maybe gave up on giving her a real backstory. She has a tattoo that says "Laugh now, cry later," reads serious literature and loves dancing in her underwear. She clearly comes from wealth and has had a falling out with her mom, but has also done an unimaginably horrible thing, which viewers will learn about at the end.

Part of the trouble is that the lead couple cast off very little electricity, offering a love affair that's more teen-like than all-consuming. And this is a story that needs a love capable of transcending death.

There are lots of cool-looking moments — mostly Skarsgård in a trench coat, stomping around the desolate concrete jungle in the rain at night — until "The Crow" builds to one of the better action sequences this year, albeit another one of those

heightened showdowns at the opera.

By this time, Eric has donned the Crow's heavy eye and cheek makeup. He adds to this ensemble a katana and an inability to die. As he closes in on his target, mowing down tuxedoed bad guys as arias soar, the group movements on stage are echoed by the furious fighting backstage. A few severed heads might be considered over the top at curtain call, but subtlety isn't being applauded here.

If the original was plot-light but visually delicious, the new one has a better story but suffers from ideas in the films built on its predecessor, stealing a little from "The Matrix," "Joker" and "Kill Bill." Why not create something entirely new?

"The Crow" isn't bad — and it gets better as it goes — but it's an exercise in folly. It cannot escape Lee and the 1994 original even as it builds a more allegorical scaffolding for the smartphone generation. To use that very first metaphor, it's like the trapped white horse — held down by its own painful past, never free to gallop on its own.

"The Crow," a Lionsgate release that hits theaters Friday, is rated R for "strong bloody violence, gore, language, sexuality/nudity and drug use." Running time: 111 minutes. Two and a half stars out of four.

Also:

LOS ANGELES: John Woo revisits one of his own classic films in "The Killer" (streaming Friday, Aug. 23 on Peacock), a remake of his 1989 Hong Kong-set action movie. Nathalie Emmanuel ("Game of Thrones") stars as an assassin trailed by a detective (Omar Sy) in Europe. A remake of "The Killer" has been in the works since the early '90s, with a wide gamut of filmmakers and stars (from Denzel Washington to Lupita Nyong'o) who have been attached over the years. In the end, Woo, 77, decided to remake it himself. (AP)

LOS ANGELES: Justin Bieber, who rose to international stardom in 2010 with his hit "Baby," has welcomed one of his own with his wife, Hailey Bieber (nee Baldwin).

The singer, 30, posted a photo of a baby's foot Friday on Instagram, revealing the child's name as Jack Blues Bieber. The model, 27, reshared the post on Instagram Stories. It's not clear when the baby was born; a representative for Hailey Bieber told The Associated Press on Friday night that no further details were available.

The couple announced they were expecting a baby in May via Instagram posts on their respective pages from an intimate vow renewal ceremony. The videos and photos show the model, who also founded the skincare brand Rhode, wearing a form-fitting white dress that showed off her baby bump. The AP confirmed Bieber was just over six months pregnant at the time of the announcement.

Since the pregnancy announcement, the couple have each shared photos together and of Hailey Bieber that displayed the model's baby bump, including a campaign for the Rhode skincare line.

The Biebers married in November 2018, which they also announced through an Instagram post. The singer posted a photo of the duo with the caption, "My wife is awesome," and his wife followed up by changing her Instagram username to "Hailey Bieber." The couple dated for about a month before tying the knot.

Justin Bieber rose to fame as a teenager and went on to become a Grammy-winning artist with eight No. 1 songs under his belt, including "Sorry," "Love Yourself" and "What Do You Mean?" His latest album, "Justice," was released in 2021. (AP)

OULU, Finland: They're the most fervent musicians no one has ever heard.

Performers at this year's Air Guitar World Championships in Finland tuned up Friday at the Olympics of air guitar for the 27th time, featuring dedicated competitors like "Shred Lasso" and "Guitarantula."

This year's challenge began Wednesday with Aorientation in Oulu, a city nearly 540 kilometers (335 miles) north of Helsinki, and

was headlined by a class open to veterans and new guitarists alike. The Dark Horses Qualifications followed on Thursday, culminating with the World Championships Final on Friday night with the crowning of Canada's Zachary "Ichabod Fame" Knowles as the 2024 Air Guitar World Champion. It was a tough competition with



Bieber



Hailey

former 2023 World Champion Nanami "Seven Seas" Nagura of Japan and 2022 winner Kirill "Guitarantula" Blumenkrants of France in second and third place respectively.

Contestants are judged on the performance of two songs in two separate rounds, each lasting 60 seconds. While passion is a must, a real

pick or even a finger-picking style is optional. Props and costumes are allowed — but backup bands and real instruments are forbidden.

This year's audience favorite was Mathilde "Clitoriff" Dollat from France with an intense show made all the more dramatic by the heavy rain that drenched the performer and audience alike.

Nanami "Seven Seas" Nagura of Japan last year took home the title — her third, making her the winningest air guitarist in a competition that dates back to 1996. She's seeking a four-peat against nine dark horses as well as the national champions from the United States, Belgium, Canada, Germany, Ireland, Finland and France. (AP)

Features

ARABIC TIMES

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People & Places

Music

'Quantum Baby'

Tinashe's new album goes beyond 'Nasty'

NEW YORK, Aug. 24, (AP) — Tinashe refuses to retreat from the unknowns of life — or the music industry — but instead, embraces them. That's what makes the success of her cheeky, inuendo-filled hit, "Nasty," taste oh so sweet.

"You never really know when that's going to happen. You can't really predict it," she said of the song, which peaked at No. 61 on the Billboard Hot 100, her second-highest charting track as well as No. 2 on the TikTok Billboard Top 50. "It's been a blessing and something that I'm just super excited about."

Leading off her upcoming album "Quantum Baby" out recently, "Nasty" rocketed after a social media user combined a snippet of the song with an existing clip that had already made its viral rounds.

The song also garnered acknowledgement or some form of shoutout from icons like Beyoncé and Janet Jackson, as well Christina Aguilera, Anitta and more. Her standout lyric of "match my freak" has become a popular catch phrase.

This project marks her seventh studio album and the second of a three-part trilogy. The title nods quantum physics, as she hopes fans will enter her personal universe and rediscover her at the most fundamental, molecular level.

"I've been really lucky since leaving my major label, going independent, being able to focus on whatever I want to make creatively. And I've really honed that process over the last three albums," said the songstress, whose previous album, "BB/ANG3L," was released last year. "This second part of the trilogy is really focused on getting to know me a little bit deeper."

The eight-track project, clocking in just over a swift 22 minutes, features production from Nosaj Thing, Ricky Reed and sdtroy, with Tinashe writing on every song.

Success

Known for genre-bending, often fusing R&B, pop, dance and electronic elements with precise performance choreography to match, Tinashe debuted in 2014 with "Aquarius," her highest-charting album to date. Despite not matching that success and often living in musical limbo, she chose to leave the support of RCA's major label machine due to their rocky relationship. However, she's kept her career afloat, in part thanks to a loyal fan base.

"When I first came on the scene, I was young, I was green. I feel like I've learned so much and gained so much, first of all, self-confidence," explained Tinashe. "Being a young woman in these usually male-dominated spaces, there's usually never any other women in the room. And you'd come in with a producer who's made all these amazing records and you don't wanna tell them what to do — and they're not probably gonna listen to you anyway. So, I think now, I just have a much stronger sense of what I want to do and being able to give that direction."

Recorded at her home studio, "Quantum Baby" features songs like the sultry, trap-soul track "Thirsty" and the vibey, Kaytranada-reminiscent "Getting No Sleep," which serves as her second and current single. Often incorporating moody and atmospheric sonics, there's also the intro track, "No Simulation," where she harmonizes, "We're all looking for something/where are we going/what do we do?"

"What I'm mostly looking for at this point in my life is just great experiences and peace of mind," she said. "I'm at the point where I'm not trying to force or create anything anymore."

Despite past collaborations with platinum-selling artists like Britney Spears, Chris Brown, Future and Nick Jonas, she's no longer chasing big features or producer placements in hopes of bettering her chances to scale the charts.

"'2 On' was my first single that I ever put out. So, I set the bar really high... and there was always that sense of like, 'Can we do this?' And that was always kind of on the forefront of my mind when creating records," reflecting on her Schoolboy Q-assisted track, which peaked at No. 24 on the Billboard Hot 100, her highest-charting song. "I think I've made better records since I've stopped considering how they will perform... I just really focus on my instincts and making something that feels good to me."

What feels best to Tinashe now? It's being free from creative confinement and battling industry politics over her career. Her trendy style and fashion-forward eye makes her a frequent front-row guest at fashion shows and red carpet events, and she's expressed an interest in returning to acting. In October, she'll kick off her 23-date Match My Freak world tour, produced by Live Nation, to support the music.

The "All Hands on Deck" artist has managed to steady the ship of her career, and she's willing to live with the results of navigating the turbulent music industry seas — as long as she's the captain.

"Finding contentment in yourself and in your artistry is super important for a music artist in terms of feeling good about what you do because the music industry is so volatile... where I started to feel that freedom and contentment was when I didn't set any expectations for myself," she said. "That's really success right now, it's just to make things that I love and to focus on creating great art that's timeless."

Also:

NEW YORK: Kamala Harris introduced herself to the country she hopes to lead in the climactic moment of the Democratic national convention on Thursday — and despite chatter about potential mystery guests, Beyoncé's only appearance was over the loudspeakers.

In the end, it was the most traditional of convention moments coming through television screens: the candidate, her running mate and their families bathed in the cheers of supporters, with balloons floating from the rafters.

There had been an anticipatory mood as the night took shape, and it wasn't just for Harris. For days, there were rumors of an appearance by mega-stars Taylor Swift or Beyoncé, whose song "Freedom" has been adopted by the vice president as a campaign theme.

"If she's not, they better come up with something," said NBC News' Savannah Guthrie.



Tinashe



George Clooney, (left), and Amal Alamuddin arrive in Venice, Italy, on Sept. 26, 2014, for their upcoming wedding. (AP)



Meryl Streep arrives at the premiere of 'Only Murders in the Building' at Paramount Pictures on Thursday, Aug. 22, in Los Angeles. (AP)



Netrebko



Delon

Variety

NEW YORK: Anna Netrebko's lawsuit against the Metropolitan Opera was narrowed to gender discrimination claims by a federal judge, who agreed to dismiss the star soprano's allegations of defamation, breach of contract and discrimination because of national origin. US District Judge Analisa Nadine Torres in Manhattan issued a 23-page decision Thursday in the suit, filed by Netrebko on Aug. 4 last year.

The Met dropped the Russian soprano from future engagements shortly after Russia invaded Ukraine in February 2022. Met General Manager Peter Gelb had demanded she repudiate Russia President Vladimir Putin.

"It is normal for a court to narrow the issues during litigation, but this court recognizes that the facts as alleged show that the Met wronged Anna Netrebko and that there is still an important case before it," Netrebko's manager, Miguel Esteban, said in a statement. "Anna Netrebko remains fully committed to pursuing this complaint, to vindicating her rights, to restoring her reputation and to demonstrating that the Metropolitan Opera and Peter Gelb treated her unlawfully." (AP)

PARIS: Before he died this week, French film icon Alain Delon once suggested he wanted his beloved sheepdog Loubo buried with him. To the relief of animal lovers around France, Loubo will be allowed to survive.

Delon, an internationally acclaimed and prolific actor and producer, died Sunday, aged 88, and will be buried on Saturday at his family home in Douchy, south of Paris.

He was quoted in a 2018 interview with Paris Match as saying he wanted Loubo, a Belgian Malinois he adopted in 2014, buried with him. "I've had 50 dogs in my life, but I have a particular relationship with this one," he told the magazine. "If I die before him, I'll ask the veterinarian for us to leave together... I'd prefer that to knowing that he would let himself die on my tomb amid so much suffering."

After Delon's death, animal rights activists and concerned citizens raised the alarm about Loubo's fate.

An official with the Brigitte Bardot Foundation — a prominent animal rights group founded by the famed French film star, who was close with Delon — said he contacted Delon's family after foundation members expressed concern. (AP)

CAIRO: An astronomical observatory dat-

Film

Hollywood icon's memorable moments

The many faces of Clooney at Venice

VENICE, Aug. 24, (AP) — No Hollywood star seems as intrinsically tied to Venice as George Clooney.

Twenty-six years ago he attended his first Venice Film Festival with the instant classic "Out of Sight"; 19 years ago, it's where he debuted his sophomore film, "Good Night, and Good Luck," which earned him his first best director nomination; and 10 years ago, it's where he exchanged vows with then Amal Alamuddin, at the Aman Venice, a five-star hotel perched alongside the Grand Canal.

Venice is a city that he, like many, thinks is one of the most beautiful in the world. Unlike most people, he also owns 15-bedroom villa a few hours away on Lake Como that famously co-starred in "Ocean's Twelve."

Though he's never all that far away from Venice, or the city's namesake film festival, it might come as a surprise that Clooney hasn't had a film debut there in seven years. But that clock resets next week as he returns with "Wolfs," the Jon Watts-directed heist thriller that reunites him with Brad Pitt.

It won't be the first time Clooney and Pitt have graced the festival's red carpet together, either. In anticipation of his big return, here are some of Clooney's most memorable Venice moments.

As legend has it, Clooney's long-term love affair with Venice may have begun with the festival's premiere of Steven Soderbergh's Elmore Leonard adaptation "Out of Sight." Then 37 and doing press alongside Jennifer Lopez, the actor would also make another big jump soon: Leaving "ER" that February.

This Coen brothers comedy, co-starring Catherine Zeta-Jones, premiered out of competition at the 60th Venice Film Festival, alongside titles like "Matchstick Men," "Once Upon a Time in Mexico" and "The Dreamers." Clooney's nearby Italian residence was already as famous as him, and a stakeout spot for amateur and professional paparazzi.

In a profile that fall, while shooting "Ocean's Twelve," Vanity Fair writer Ned Zeman observed: "That

an affable, self-effacing Kentucky-born Hollywood actor is fast becoming the most popular public figure in Italy says a little about Italy and a lot about Clooney, who isn't Italian, doesn't speak Italian, and lives here only in summertime."

Clooney's acclaimed black-and-white dramatization of journalist Edward R. Murrow's clash with Joseph McCarthy began its successful run in competition at the 62nd Venice Film Festival. Though it lost the Golden Lion to Ang Lee's "Brokeback Mountain," it did go on to pick up six Oscar nominations including for Clooney's directing. Next year, he'll also be making his Broadway debut in an adaptation.

Wedding

During the trip, he also inspired a cocktail still served at the ritzy Belmont Hotel Cipriani on Giudecca. One night he retreated to the hotel's Gabbiano Bar where his friend, the legendary bar manager Walter Bolzonella, mixed him a drink of lemon, sugar, cranberry juice, ginger and Angostura bitters and named it Buona Notte in honor of the film. The two would later name a Prosecco, passionfruit and elderflower cocktail La Nina after Clooney's mother, which was served at his wedding.

Tony Gilroy's "Michael Clayton," which nabbed Clooney an Oscar nomination for his turn as the titular law firm fixer, played in competition at Venice. The top prize went again to an Ang Lee film: "Lust, Caution," which also beat out the likes of "I'm Not There," "Atonement" and "The Assassination of Jesse James by the Coward Robert Ford."

This Coen brothers comedy featuring Clooney and Pitt opted to debut out of competition in the opening night slot. He said it completed his "trilogy of idiots" that he'd played for the Coens, including "Intolerable Cruelty" and "O Brother, Where Art Thou?" "Looking at the parts we are playing, I'm very concerned about what you think of us," Clooney said at the press conference. Pitt, who'd won the festival's acting prize the year prior, added: "Like George... I'm not sure if I should be flattered or insulted."

Another opening night, out of competition slot debut for this Clooney-directed campaign thriller starring Ryan Gosling and Philip Seymour Hoffman. As usual, Clooney was peppered with political questions in which he observed that, "it's a very difficult time to govern."

Alfonso Cuarón's "Gravity" opened the 70th edition of the Venice Film Festival before going on to win seven Oscars. Clooney, of course, attended the premiere alongside Sandra Bullock and he was self-deprecating about his role: "There were only two parts and Sandy had the other one, so I felt like this was the only one I could get away with."

The canals were packed with paparazzi for the nuptials of one of Hollywood's favorite bachelors. On Sept. 27, Clooney, then 53, and Alamuddin, then 36, exchanged vows in front of 100 of their closest friends and family, including Bono and Matt Damon, at the luxury hotel Aman Grand Canal, originally a grand palazzo built in 1550. She wore a custom Oscar de la Renta dress, of French lace, pearls and diamanté accents. He wore a black wool/cashmere Giorgio Armani tuxedo.

Clooney returned to the festival with another of his directing projects, "Suburbicon," a dark comedic satire about a seemingly idyllic 1950s community with Damon and Julianne Moore. This festival was especially notable for it being the Clooneys' first public appearance since the birth of their twins, Alexander and Ella, a few months prior.

This time George was the plus one to Amal, who was receiving an award from the Diane von Furstenberg and The Diller-von Furstenberg Family Foundation for her work as a human rights lawyer. The power couple gave last year's festival some much-needed star power amid the actors strike with an appearance at the adjacent DVF Awards. "I am here in Venice with my husband; he is a rising star," she said that night. "I just wanted to say, you, my love, like this city, take my breath away."

ing back to the 6th century B.C. has been discovered in Kafr El-Sheikh in the Nile Delta region of northern Egypt, said the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities on

Friday.

The astronomical observatory is believed to be one of the first and largest of its kind, the ministry said in a statement.



This image released by Apple TV+ shows Yuh-Jung Youn in a scene from 'Pachinko.' (AP) — Details Page 11

Unveiled in the Buto Temple at Tell Faraen archaeological site, the mudbrick building was used to observe and register the astronomical phenomena and the movement of the sun and stars, the statement added. (Xinhua)

BEIJING: Beijing is set to host a spectacular lantern show in celebration of the upcoming Mid-Autumn Festival and National Day holiday. The show, to display over 200 creative lantern sets and approximately 100,000 colorful decorations, will take place at the Beijing Garden Expo Park from Sept. 14 to Oct. 31, the Beijing Tourism Group announced on Saturday.

The custom of attending lantern fairs during festivals is a time-honored tradition in Chinese culture. The intricate lanterns that will feature in this show were crafted by hundreds of artisans from Zigong, a city in southwest China renowned for its lantern-making history.

Shen Hongyue, president of the city's lantern industry association, said that the Zigong lantern show has been recognized as a national intangible cultural heritage. What makes this upcoming show special is its blending of Zigong's traditional lantern artistry with Beijing's rich cultural heritage. (Xinhua)

What science says about resetting your body clock

Tips to avoid worst of jet lag, maximize your travel time

LONDON, Aug 24, (AP): It's the bane of many travelers: jet lag. Nobody wants to lose out because they're too tired to enjoy the delights of their vacation spot.

Here are some tips on how to handle jet lag, wherever you might end up.

Scientists define jet lag as the effect on the human body of traveling across different time zones. Our bodies have biological clocks programmed into almost every cell in the body, according to Sofia Axelrod, who studies circadian rhythms at Rockefeller University in New York.

"The clock is set by the 24-hour light and dark pattern," Axelrod said. "Every morning when we wake up, specialized (light) receptor cells in our retina receive a daylight signal, which is transmitted to the brain and from there, the whole body."

When we travel to another time zone, our eyes receive the daylight signal at a different time than usual, causing our internal clocks to reset. But that process can take awhile - and it's during that adjustment period that we feel the effects of jet lag.

Yes, but that can come at a cost.

Malcolm von Schantz, a professor who specializes in circadian rhythms at Northumbria University in Newcastle, said that flying in premium cabins where travelers can stretch out and properly rest, can ward off sleep deprivation, but he acknowledges that isn't an option for most people. Still, he said that timing your flights can help. For example, he suggests flying from Europe to North America during the day, so that it's evening when passengers land and they can get a proper night's sleep.

"If you take the evening flight instead, you'll be woken up at midnight to be served breakfast and land an hour or two later, when both jet lag and sleep deprivation will hit you hard and simultaneously," he said. Von Schantz also said flying in newer models with a lighter frame, like the Airbus A350 or Boeing 787 Dreamliner, would help. That's because those planes can maintain a more comfortable cabin atmosphere, which should help travelers feel less worn out by the end of their flights.

Experts say getting exposure to sunlight is critical to resetting your inter-

More precise, less toxic

UK starts lung cancer vaccine test

LONDON, Aug 24, (KUNA): A lung cancer patient has become the first in the UK to receive a new experimental vaccine to help his body fight the disease, the BBC reported Friday.

The vaccine is made by BioNTech using the same mRNA technology that underpinned its highly effective COVID-19 jab, the British broadcaster pointed out.

Janusz Racz, 67, had six syringes of the jab, each containing genetic material for a different part of the tumour, to train five billion cells in his immune system to go on the attack. The vaccine, codenamed BNT116, is made by BioNTech using the same mRNA technology that underpinned its highly effective COVID-19 jab.

Doctors say it is far more precisely targeted than chemotherapy so shouldn't have the same collateral damage on healthy cells that causes sometimes overwhelming side effects. About 130 patients with non-small cell lung cancer will take part in the study, with six hospitals in the UK involved.

that you need," he said.

Business travelers might want to consider arriving a day or two ahead of any important meetings or events, said Russell Foster of Oxford University, who has authored a book on circadian rhythms.

"You should just be aware that if you're jet-lagged, you're more likely to make unwise decisions, be less empathetic and unable to multitask," he said.

Tourists might not need to be as alert as business travelers, but they should still be careful, he said. He advises tourists to get caught up on their sleep before doing anything potentially risky or that requires concentration, like driving.

Foster said he tries to maximize his light exposure when he arrives at a new destination to offset jet lag. But he also has a fallback strategy: coffee.

"I'm not suggesting it's an ideal thing to do, but caffeine will help override the sleepiness and cognitive impairment you might be feeling as a result of jet lag," he said.

UNICEF seeks \$16.5m

Kenya confirms 2nd case of mpox, boosts vigilance

NAIROBI, Aug 24, (Xinhua): Kenya's Ministry of Health on Friday announced that the second case of mpox had been confirmed in the country, pleading intensified surveillance to prevent further transmission.

Deborah Barasa, cabinet secretary in the Ministry of Health, said that the second case was identified from a long-distance truck driver with a history of traveling to the epicenter of the disease in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC).

According to Barasa, the case was confirmed after laboratory tests at the port health screening in Malaba, a one-stop border check in western Kenya, which borders Uganda.

"The patient has been isolated and is under active management in one of the health facilities in the area," Barasa said in a statement released in Nairobi, the Kenyan capital.

She revealed that since the declaration of the first case of mpox on July 31, a total of 28 contacts have completed a 21-day follow-up period without displaying symptoms and have been freed from active surveillance.

Meanwhile, Cambodia on Saturday told local authorities along border provinces to step up efforts in monitoring and preventing the imports of mpox and other viral diseases such as H5N1 bird flu and anthrax.

In another development, the Deputy Director of the National Public Health Institute of Ivory Coast Dr. Daouda Koulibaly said that 28 infections with mpox had been confirmed across the country, including one fatality.

The first infection case was detected in the southern town of Tabou in early July and then the epidemic reached Abidjan and other parts of the country, Dr. Koulibaly told reporters on Wednesday.

The epidemic situation is under control and the health services strengthened surveillance to break the chains of transmission, he said, noting that people who were in contact with infected persons are undergoing lab tests, isolation and monitoring.

Also:

NAIROBI: The United Nations Chil-

dren's Fund (UNICEF) on Thursday appealed for 16.5 million US dollars to scale up mpox response in East and Southern Africa.

UNICEF Regional Director for Eastern and Southern Africa Etleva Kadilli said in a statement issued in Nairobi, the capital of Kenya, that the new strain of mpox is a serious threat to vulnerable children and families.

Children and vulnerable communities are on the verge of an expanding outbreak of mpox in the region as 200 confirmed cases have been detected across Burundi, Rwanda, Uganda, Kenya and South Africa, the statement said.

"Aside from immediate lifesaving response, risk communication efforts and cross-border collaboration, investments in overall health system strengthening, continuity of essential services and targeted focus on programs that support overall child wellbeing must be prioritized," Kadilli said.

The UN children's agency warned concerns are rising over new public health emergencies as communities grapple with other ongoing crises. It said the new variant of the mpox virus (clade 1b) has been detected in all affected countries except South Africa, which is causing concern due to its potential for wider transmission across age groups, particularly young children.

Burundi has so far confirmed more than 170 mpox cases in 26 out of the 49 districts in the country, UNICEF said.

It noted that children and adolescents below 20 years of age constitute nearly 60 percent of cases detected, with children under 5 years old comprising 21 percent of cases.

Kenya, Burundi and Uganda have been struggling with multiple emergencies including drought and floods in addition to the immediate concerns posed by the virus, UNICEF said.

The UN agency also warned concerns remain over the secondary impact of mpox outbreaks on children and adolescents, including stigma, discrimination and disruptions to schooling and learning.

nal body clock. That can mean either avoiding morning sun or deliberately seeking it out, depending on where you've travelled from. Getting light in the morning will advance your body clock, while light exposure in the early evening will delay it. Naps are OK, but scientists warn against taking long siestas later in the day, as that might

compromise your ability to sleep through the night.

Melatonin, a hormone that the brain naturally produces when the body thinks it's night, can be helpful. But it's not available everywhere and in some countries like the U.K. and France, a prescription is required. Von Schantz of Northumbria University said that

one of the advantages of melatonin is that you can start taking it before your journey, to reset your internal clock quicker.

"If you're in a part of the world where melatonin is available over the counter, you can combine the effects of light and melatonin to achieve the advance or delay (in your body clock)

Experts eye vaccine to stop the virus

Bird flu spreads to cows in the US, experts hunt for answers

AMES, Iowa, Aug 24, (AP): At first glance, it looks like an unassuming farm. Cows are scattered across fenced-in fields. A milking barn sits in the distance with a tractor parked alongside. But the people who work there are not farmers, and other buildings look more like what you'd find at a modern university than in a cow pasture.

Welcome to the National Animal Disease Center, a government research facility in Iowa where 43 scientists work with cows and other animals, pushing to solve the bird flu outbreak currently spreading through US animals - and develop ways to stop it.

Particularly important is the testing of a cow vaccine designed to stop the continued spread of the virus - thereby, hopefully, reducing the risk that it will someday become a widespread disease in people. The US Department of Agriculture facility opened in 1961 in Ames, a college town about 45 minutes north of Des Moines. The center is located on a pastoral, 523-acre (212-hectare) site a couple of miles east of Ames' low-slung downtown.

It's a quiet place with a rich history. Through the years, researchers there developed vaccines against various diseases that endanger cattle and other animals, including cholera and brucellosis. And work there during the H1N1 flu pandemic in 2009 - known at the time as "swine flu" - proved the virus was confined to the respiratory tract of pigs and that pork was safe to eat.

The center has the unusual resources and experience to do that kind of work, said Richard Webby, a prominent flu researcher at St. Jude Children's Research Hospital in Memphis.

Infections

The campus has 93 buildings, including a high-containment laboratory building whose exterior is reminiscent of a modern megachurch but inside features a series of compartmentalized corridors and rooms, some containing infected animals. That's where scientists work with more dangerous germs, including the H5N1 bird flu. There's also a building with three floors of



In this photo provided by the US Department of Agriculture, an animal caretaker collects a blood sample from a dairy calf vaccinated against bird flu in a containment building at the National Animal Disease Center research facility in Ames, Iowa, on Wednesday, July 31, 2024. (AP)

Offers free 'tests' by mail

US approves updated COVID vaccines for current variants

WASHINGTON, Aug 24, (AP): US regulators approved updated COVID-19 vaccines on Thursday, shots designed to more closely target recent virus strains -- and hopefully whatever variants cause trouble this winter, too.

With the Food and Drug Administration's clearance, Pfizer and Moderna are set to begin shipping millions of doses. A third US manufacturer, Novavax, expects its modified vaccine version to be available a little later.

"We strongly encourage those who are eligible to consider receiving an updated COVID-19 vaccine to provide better protection against currently circulating variants," said FDA vaccine

offices that houses animal disease researchers as well as a testing center that is a "for animals" version of the

chief Dr. Peter Marks.

The agency's decision came a bit earlier than last year's rollout of updated COVID-19 vaccines, as a summer wave of the virus continues in most of the country. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention already has recommended this fall's shot for everyone age 6 months and older. Vaccinations could be available within days.

Also:

WASHINGTON: On the heels of a summer wave of COVID-19 cases, Americans will be able to get free virus test kits mailed to their homes, starting in late September.

CDC labs in Atlanta that identify rare (and sometimes scary) new human infections.

UN urges safety

Gaza prepares for polio vaccine drive

UNITED NATIONS, Aug 24, (Xinhua): Relief agencies, facing a high risk of polio spreading in the wider Gaza region, have begun preparations for a vaccination campaign, UN humanitarianists said on Friday.

The UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) said the UN relief agency for Palestine refugees, known as UNRWA, and the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) are working with the Gaza Ministry of Health to administer in the coming weeks two rounds of oral polio vaccine to more than 640,000 children under 10 years of age.

Stephane Dujarric, chief spokesman for UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres, told reporters during a regular briefing that humanitarianists moved refrigerated trucks into Gaza in preparation to maintain the cold chain necessary for the vaccine.

Dujarric said the world body already has medical staff in place to administer doses. The vaccine has not arrived.

He said the aim is for a humanitarian pause in the conflict so the staff and children would be safe during the campaign later this month and in early September.

UNRWA Commissioner-General Philippe Lazzarini warned that delaying a humanitarian pause will increase the risk of polio spreading among children. It is not enough to bring the vaccines into Gaza and protect the cold chain -- the vaccines must also end up in the mouths of every child under the age of 10. UNRWA medical teams will deliver the vaccines in the agency's clinics and through its mobile health teams.

OCHA said that following the Gaza Health Ministry confirming that a 10-month-old baby in Deir al Balah has polio, the World Health Organization (WHO) confirmed it is the first case in Gaza in 25 years.

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Driver bags 2nd victory in 8 starts this season

Truex wins the Xfinity Series race at Daytona

DAYTONA BEACH, Aug. 24, (AP) — Ryan Truex won the Xfinity Series race at Daytona International Speedway, taking the checkered flag under caution following an overtime finish.

Truex would have secured a play-off spot with the victory, but he's ineligible because he's a part-time driver for Joe Gibbs Racing. Still, this will be a memorable milestone because it's his third Xfinity Series win in 98 starts and his first at Daytona.

Truex now has two wins in eight starts this season in the second-tier

series. Those might come in handy since he's looking for a full-time ride for 2025.

He took the lead during a green-white-checked restart and held off AJ Allmendinger over the penultimate lap. The race ended when

CAR RACING

Allmendinger tried to block Parker Kligerman low, got turned sideways and ended up hitting the wall.

Truex's JGR teammate Chandler Smith finished second, with Kligerman

man, Riley Herbst and Ryan Sieg rounding out the top five. Allmendinger was 24th.

Kligerman climbed out of his Chevrolet and slammed his fist on his roof in disappointment.

"I just had a run, and I had to go," Kligerman said. "I thought it was a run I had to take to put myself on the bottom to win this race. ... I don't know what to do there. I love him like a brother. I don't want to turn someone like that."

Eight drivers entered the night with solid holds on playoff spots: Justin Allgaier, Cole Custer, Smith,

Austin Hill, Shane Van Gisbergen, Herbst, Jesse Love and Sam Mayer.

Allmendinger, Sheldon Creed, Sammy Smith and Kligerman were in position to get the final four berths. But all of them wanted to win to eliminate any questions about their postseason fates.

The race featured two multicaer crashes in the final 25 laps, including one that collected Love, Smith and Brandon Jones. The other one brought out a red flag and set up an overtime shootout.

No one had much for Truex off the restart.



Kyle Busch (18) and Martin Truex Jr. (19) drive during a NASCAR Cup Series auto race at Michigan International Speedway in Brooklyn, Mich. (AP)

PSG 'rouths' Montpellier to continue impressive start



PSG's Bradley Barcola, right, scores the opening goal during the French League 1 soccer match between Paris Saint-Germain and Montpellier at the Parc des Princes in Paris, Friday, Aug. 23, 2024. (AP)

Club adjusting well to life without Mbappe

PARIS, Aug. 24, (AP) — Paris Saint-Germain seems to be doing just fine without Kylian Mbappe.

PSG routed Montpellier 6-0 to make it two wins in two games in the French league as it starts life without Mbappe, who left for Real Madrid this offseason.

PSG is seeking its fourth straight league title but many had expected its grip on the trophy to loosen after the departure of its star forward. So far, that hasn't been the case, with the team netting 10 goals in its opening two matches.

SOCCER

Bradley Barcola opened the scoring after three minutes with an angled strike from nine yards out and Marco Asensio doubled the lead with a low shot from the center of the area after being teed up by a delicate pass from João Neves.

It was the third assist in two games for the 19-year-old Neves, who arrived from Benfica in the offseason.

Ousmane Dembélé's perfect pass gave Barcola the simplest of tap-ins for the third goal eight minutes into the second half. Achraf Hakimi's side-footed volley made it 4-0 in the 57th and Warren Zaïre-Emery slotted home another on the hour mark.

Substitute Lee Kang-in got his second goal in two games when he completed the rout eight minutes from time.

Montpellier has one point from its first two games.

Norris denies Verstappen pole position for Dutch Grand Prix

ZANDVOORT, Netherlands, Aug. 24, (AP) — Max Verstappen can be beaten at his home Dutch Grand Prix, after all.

Lando Norris produced a blistering lap to qualify on pole position ahead of the three-time world champion on Saturday. Next he'll aim to end Verstappen's winning streak on home soil in Sunday's race, further cutting into the Dutch driver's lead at the top of the overall standings.

Norris' final lap was far ahead of anyone else's pace, beating second-place Verstappen by .356 of a second. Norris said his McLaren felt "amaz-

ing" but that he expected Verstappen would "put up a good fight" in front of his home crowd.

Verstappen, who is heading into his 200th race on Sunday, had taken pole position and won all three of the races held at Zandvoort since the Dutch Grand Prix returned to the F1 schedule in 2021.

Norris has started on pole position three times before, but has yet to convert a pole into a win. To take a second career victory and cut into Verstappen's 78-point lead, Norris will have to change that.

It was wet and windy for much of the race weekend - including rain in two of the three practice sessions - but it stayed dry for qualifying.

McLaren has brought new upgrades for its car and qualifying gave the latest indication it now has the edge on pace over the once all-conquering Red Bull.

Norris took the only win of his career so far in Miami in May - from fifth on the grid - and has finished second four times since then.

Norris' last pole position in Hungary turned into a controversial second-place finish when he was overtaken by teammate Oscar Piastri, regained the lead thanks to McLaren's pit stop strategy, then eventually gave first place back to Piastri in line with team orders - but only after a tense discussion with McLaren over the radio.

Piastri could try to overtake Norris again after qualifying third-fastest in the second McLaren, ahead of Mercedes' George Russell and Verstappen's under-pressure Red Bull teammate Sergio Perez. Charles Leclerc was sixth for Ferrari.

There were two big surprises in the second part of qualifying as Carlos Sainz Jr. was 11th for Ferrari and seven-time champion Lewis Hamilton, who won the last race in Belgium after Russell was disqualified, was 12th for Mercedes.

Logan Sargeant didn't take part after a heavy crash in practice Saturday morning which left his Williams on fire.



PSG's Warren Zaïre-Emery celebrates after scoring his side's fifth goal during the French League 1 soccer match between Paris Saint-Germain and Montpellier at the Parc des Princes in Paris. (AP)

Reese's 20 rebounds to no avail

Mabrey's 24 points push Sun past Sky

UNCASVILLE, Aug. 24, (AP) — Marina Mabrey made five 3-pointers and finished with 24 points off the bench, Alyssa Thomas hit two free throws with 4.1 seconds to play and the Connecticut Sun edged the Chicago Sky 82-80.

Thomas, who finished with 12 points, 11 assists, nine rebounds and four steals, was fouled with the game tied 80-80 and made both free throws to give the Sun the victory. DeWanna Bonner had the chance to give the Sun the lead with 35 seconds to go but split a pair of free throws.

The Sun scored the game's final five points, all from the free-throw line.

Chicago's Angel Reese finished with 13 points and 20 rebounds, becoming the only rookie in WNBA history with 20-plus rebounds in back-to-back games. She's the first rookie with multiple 20-rebound games since Tina Charles in 2010. She has a record 21 double-doubles this season.

Chennedy Carter led Chicago with 19 points, Kamilla Cardoso added a career-high 18 points and Lindsay Allen had 14.

BASKETBALL

Connecticut (21-7) had a 45-35 half-time lead, but Reese scored nine points and grabbed eight rebounds in the third as the Sky outscored the Sun 29-18 to take a one-point lead into the fourth.

That lead stretched to 74-68, but Mabrey, playing against her former team, answered with a 3-pointer and a layup to cut the deficit to 76-75 with 4:38 to play.

Reese made two free throws to give Chicago (11-17) an 80-77 lead with 1:52 remaining.

Connecticut's Tyasha Harris hit two foul shots with 1:01 left to pull the Sun within a point before Dijonai Carrington was called for a blocking foul. A challenge from Connecticut coach Stephanie White overturned the call and the Sky's Chennedy Carter was charged with an offensive foul.

On the next possession, Bonner was fouled in the lane (Chicago coach Teresa Weatherspoon challenged, but the call was upheld) and made 1 of 2 free throws to tie it 80-80.

Chicago's Lindsay Allen missed a mid-range jumper with 15 seconds remaining and Bonner grabbed the rebound before Thomas hit the winning free throws.

Mabrey, in her fourth game with Connecticut after being acquired from the Sky on July 17, led all scorers while connecting on 9 of 13 from the field and 5 of 7 from 3-point range. Bonner had 15 points and Brianna Jones added 12.

Bonner grabbed eight rebounds and became just the 10th player in WNBA history with at least 3,000 career rebounds (3,003). She is just 10 behind Taj McWilliams-Franklin (3,013).

A women's basketball team that reaches the Final Four of the NCAA Tournament could bring its conference roughly \$1.26 million over the next

three years in financial performance rewards.

In an email obtained by The Associated Press on Friday from the NCAA to its basketball committees and conference commissioners, a pay structure was outlined for the proposal that will give performance units to teams that play in March Madness. Units represent revenue.

All that's left for this to happen is the NCAA membership to approve it in a vote on Jan. 15. The Division I Board of Governors voted unanimously on this proposal earlier this month.

There will be \$15 million awarded to teams in the first year of the fund, which is 26% of the women's basketball media revenue deal. That number will grow to \$25 million, which is 41% of the revenue, by 2028. The 26% is on par with what men's basketball teams received the first year the performance units program was established.

The lack of a units system for the women's tournament has been a point of sharp criticism.

The women's March Madness proposal is similar to the men's basketball unit program. Each of 32 conferences that receive an automatic bid to the tournament will receive a unit and additional units will be rewarded for teams that receive at-large bids.

The longer a school's tournament run lasts the more units the school's conference receives. Conferences decide the distribution of unit revenue to each of its members. Each unit was worth about \$2 million for the 2023 men's tourney.

Men's basketball teams now receive 24% of the media rights deal, which is \$8.8 billion over eight years, starting this year. Women's basketball is valued at \$65 million per tournament in the new NCAA's new media rights deal with ESPN - roughly 10 times more than in the contract that ends this year.

The women have a higher percentage of the media revenue deal to bolster the value of each performance unit.

The NCAA sharing March Madness revenue with its member schools has long been a feature of the men's tournament. The 2018 tournament, for example, brought in \$844.3 million in television and marketing rights, the vast majority from a contract with CBS and Turner Sports to televise the games.

Most of the money flows through the NCAA to conferences and then back to member schools, more than 300 of which field Division I basketball teams eligible to play in the tournament. The schools mostly re-invest in athletics, from scholarships for athletes in all sports to coaching salaries, training facilities, stadiums, ballparks and arenas.

The women's tournament is coming off its most successful year ever that included a record audience of 18.7 million for the title game win by South Carolina over Iowa, the highest for a basketball broadcast of any kind in five years. It outdrew the men's championship game - UConn winning its second consecutive title with a win over Purdue - by nearly 3 million viewers. The women's tournament also had record attendance.



UConn guard Paige Bueckers brings the ball up court during the second half of an NCAA college basketball game against South Carolina in Columbia, S.C. (AP)

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Zudaire, Llopis looking for gold in Paralympic swimming pool

MADRID, Aug. 24, (Xinhua) — Nahia Zudaire is getting her sights on a gold medal in the Paralympic Games which open in Paris this week.

The 20-year-old from the region of Navarra, northern Spain missed out on a medal in Tokyo three years ago, finishing fourth in the S8 400m freestyle and 100m butterfly, but speaking to Basque TV network, EITB, she said Paris had always been her objective.

"It's not just that Tokyo was very 'cold'

(in terms of atmosphere), but Paris has been a lifetime objective because it is very close. It's something we have commented amongst ourselves," she said.

PARALYMPICS

The swimmer who took silver in the European Championships earlier this year in 400m freestyle and bronze in 100m breaststroke, said she believed the latter event

gives her the best chance of Olympic success.

"I think it is where I have improved this year and where I have the best options in Paris," she said.

Inigo Llopis, from San Sebastian, also goes to Paris with high medal hopes after winning silver in the S8 backstroke in Tokyo and travels to the Paralympics as world champion in that event.

The son of a football coach, Inigo commented that "I won silver in the last Olym-

pics and I have always been on the podium and winning medals since then, so that has given me hope and strength to train and prepare for Paris." Despite being born missing part of his right arm and right leg, Inigo began by playing football until injury saw him take up swimming as part of his rehabilitation. Now he is one of the favorites to take backstroke gold.

"After gold (in the World Championships) last year, you have hopes of an Olympic gold medal," he admitted.

Celta Vigo beats Valencia for second straight win to start La Liga season

Leverkusen edges Monchengladbach in season-opening five-goal thriller

BERLIN, Aug 24, (Agencies): Florian Wirtz's late strike gave Bayer Leverkusen a 3-2 win over Borussia Monchengladbach as the 62nd Bundesliga season opened.

The titleholders got off to a fairytale start when Granit Xhaka pounced on a clearance to fire into the top left-hand corner from 20 meters after just 12 minutes.

Monchengladbach responded almost immediately, but Rocco Reitz couldn't beat custodian Lukas Hradecky from a tight angle.

However, the Werkselt remained dangerous and hit the woodwork twice in quick succession, with Victor Boniface hitting the crossbar on a counterattack before Edmond Tapsoba's 25-meter effort was saved by the top corner on 20 minutes.

Monchengladbach had another promising chance on the half-hour mark when Tim Kleindienst's shot from 17 meters went just wide.

At the other end of the pitch, how-

ever, Alejandro Grimaldo's shot was parried into the path of Wirtz, who slotted home from close range in the 38th minute.

Monchengladbach halved the deficit on the hour mark when Leverkusen couldn't clear the ball out of their area and Nico Elvedi was able to poke home.

It looked as if Leverkusen would settle for a 2-1 win, but Monchengladbach restored parity in the 85th minute when Kleindienst danced through the penalty area before slotting the ball past Hradecky.

SOCCER

Leverkusen pushed for the win and were awarded a late penalty when Ko Itakura brought down Amine Adil in the area. Wirtz saw his initial effort saved by goalkeeper Jonas Omlin, but his follow-up shot found the back of the net to make it 3-2 in the dying minutes.

"We knew that a two-goal lead would not be enough, and we were warned at the break. It is only the beginning of the season, and we still must get into the rhythm," said Xhaka.



Celta Vigo marked the 101st anniversary of the club's founding with a 3-1 win over Valencia for a second straight league win to start the season.

It marked the first time since 2015 the Galician club has won its first two matches of the season and handed Valencia a second straight loss.

Celta's captain and talismanic striker Iago Aspas was again at the heart of events. He scored for the second game in a row and then missed a penalty shortly before halftime.

Diego Lopez had put Valencia ahead after 14 minutes when he converted from close range after a goal-mouth scramble, but Celta equalized midway through the first half when Oscar Mingueza volleyed home to



Leipzig's player Lois Openda, right, and Bochum's Matus Bero in action during the German Bundesliga soccer game between RB Leipzig and VfL Bochum at the Red Bull Arena, in Leipzig, Germany. (AP)



Mainz's Dominik Kohr, right, and Berlin's Robin Gosens in action during the Bundesliga soccer match between FSV Mainz 05 and 1. FC Union Berlin, at Mewa Arena, Mainz, Germany. (AP)

complete a neat team move. Aspas' goal came five minutes later when the 37-year-old forward took a weighted throughball from Mingueza

and finished perfectly into the bottom corner.

Valencia keeper Giorgi Mamardashvili then saved Aspas' spot kick in

first-half injury time but Fran Beltrán added the third goal on the hour mark with a classy strike from the edge of the penalty area.

Valencia's run of nine games without a win - dating back to last season - is its worst under one coach since Gary Neville led the club in 2016.

Kuwait Club fires ominous warning to Zain Premier League contenders

Al-Arabi hot on its heel

By Hassan Musa

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 24: Kuwait Club remains at the top of the Zain Premier League standings after the third round, holding 9 points and leading Al-Arabi on goal difference. The league will pause until September 13 to accommodate the Blues' participation in the 2026 World Cup qualifiers.

Kuwait Club delivered an impressive performance by defeating Khaitan 5-0, maintaining a perfect record with three wins, each featuring three goals scored and no goals conceded. This dominant display serves as a strong message to other teams that claiming the title will be challenging. Khaitan struggled with a man disadvantage due to Fawaz Mohammed's red card.

Al-Arabi, also tied at the top, secured a win against traditional rival Al-Qadisiya despite several key absences, proving it will be a formidable contender for the title.

Both Al-Fahaheel and Al-Salmiya, each with 6 points, returned to winning form with victories over Al-Yarmouk and Al-Tadamon, respectively. Al-Fahaheel's Abdul Mohsen Al-Ajmi was named the best player of the round for his standout performance.

SOCCER

Al-Qadisiya has experienced a recent dip in form, managing a narrow win over Al-Yarmouk but subsequently losing to Al-Arabi 2-1. This slump has sparked tensions, particularly between player Mubarak Al-Fanini and Muhammad Al-Mishaan, after a disagreement over a late substitution in the derby match.

In a notable development, Kazma's defeat to Al-Nasr prompted the resignation of Kazma's coach Muhammad Dahilis, making him the first coaching casualty of the season. Dahilis, who had been with Kazma since mid-last season under a contract until June 2026, has been replaced as the club begins its search for a new foreign coach.

Al-Nasr, meanwhile, secured its first three points of the season. Al-Tadamon and Al-Yarmouk have struggled, each earning only one point from their matches and looking for a turnaround.

The league break will provide an opportunity for clubs to reassess and address any issues affecting their performance.

Sheikh Al Jaber, Tunisian Minister discuss tennis cooperation at Arab Championship

TUNIS, Aug 24: Sheikh Ahmed Al Jaber, Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Arab Tennis

Federation, met with Tunisian Minister of Youth and Sports Kamal Daqish during his visit to Tu-

nisia for the closing ceremony of the Arab Championship for juniors and junior girls. The event, held at the Marsa Club courts in Tunis, concluded with the crowning of the tournament's winners.

During their meeting, Sheikh Ahmed Al Jaber and Minister Daqish explored opportunities to enhance sports cooperation, particularly in the field of tennis. Sheikh Ahmed expressed his gratitude for the warm reception and hospitality extended by Minister Daqish. He also acknowledged the minister's support for the Arab Tennis Federation's activities and his enthusiasm for hosting the Arab Championship for juniors and junior girls annually in Tunisia.

TENNIS

The Minister commended the high level of participation in the tournament, reflecting the passion of Arab youth for tennis and the commitment of national federations to youth development. He also unveiled a plan to introduce tennis into schools across Tunisia, aiming to broaden the sport's reach and participation. Sheikh Ahmed Al Jaber praised this initiative and extended his best wishes to Tunisia for continued success and excellence in tennis. He highlighted the achievements of Ons Jabeur, describing her as "the pride of Arab sports and an inspiration to all Arab female players," and commended Dr. Salma Al-Moulhi, Vice President of the International Tennis Federation and President of the Tunisian Tennis Federation, for her significant contributions to advancing tennis both within and outside Tunisia.

By Suzan Nasser

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 24: Al-Qurain Kuwaiti Club began its quest for a spot in the quarter-finals with a decisive 79-25 victory over the Fatima Bint Mubarak Academy team in the first edition of the Fatima Bint Mubarak Gulf Basketball Cup for women.

The tournament, held under the patronage of Sheikha Fatima Bint Mubarak and directed by Sheikha Fatima Bint Hazza Bin Zayed Al Nahyan, runs until August 26 and features four Gulf teams.

In the opening round, Al-Qurain showcased their strength with a notable win against the Qatari team Al-Gharafa, finishing with a score of 72-51. Meanwhile, the Omani team

Kuwait youth team begins Turkey training camp ahead of qualifiers

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 24: The Kuwaiti youth football team embarked on an external training camp in Turkey two days ago, where they will prepare until September 12.

Croatian coach Dario Bašić has named a 24-player squad for the camp. The roster includes Muqdad Safar, Talal Al-Matroud, Jassim Shamouh, Hussein Kankouni, Hussein Al-Aryan, Abdullah Fares, Abdullah Al-Ayoub, Khaled Al-Kharqawi, Abdullah Al-Sarraf, Khaled Al-Othman, Mohammed Arhama, Mohammed Al-Suraie, Ahmed Boudi, Jassim Al-Matar, Fadel Al-Sarraf, Turki Al-Yousef, Mohammed Al-Omran, Abdullah Al-Basri, Ahmed Al-Rashidi, Montaser Suleiman, Omar Al-Azmi, Eid Talal, Jassim Al-Enezi, and Bandar Nawaf.

SOCCER

During the camp, the team is slated to play five friendly matches as part of their buildup for the Asian Youth Cup qualifiers. Kuwait will host Group Three of the qualifiers from September 21 to 29.



Kuwaiti players celebrate after scoring a goal.

Cruz Azul stay in touch with leader

MEXICO CITY, Aug 24, (Xinhua): Carlos Rotondi and Amaury Morales were on target as Cruz Azul showed its title credentials with a 2-0 victory at Queretaro in Mexico's Liga MX.

Rotondi gave the visitors the lead on the stroke of halftime when he converted a penalty after a Pablo Ortiz hand ball.

Morales put the result beyond doubt by slotting home in the 99th minute after combining with Giorgos Giakoumakis on the counterattack.

The result at Estadio Corregidora leaves Cruz Azul second in the 18-team standings with 13 points from five outings, two points behind leader Monterrey.

Meanwhile, Mazatlan scored three first-half goals en route to a 3-0 rout of Pachuca.



Flamengo manager Tite is set to be discharged from hospital on Saturday after recovering from an irregular

heartbeat, the Rio de Janeiro club said.

The former Brazil national team boss, whose real name is **Adenor Leonardo Bacchi**, was admitted to the Copa Star hospital in Rio de Janeiro on Friday morning after feeling unwell on a flight from Bolivian capital La Paz.

"Coach Tite showed good clinical progress with the treatment provided," Flamengo said in a statement. "The arrhythmia has been reversed and the heart rate has now normalized."

It added that the 63-year-old would leave the hospital on Saturday under strict orders to rest in the following 48 hours.

Flamengo suffered a 1-0 loss to **Bolivar** in the second leg of their **Copa Libertadores** round of 16 tie on Thursday but advanced 2-1 on aggregate.

Tite will be replaced in the Flamengo dugout for Sunday's Brazilian Serie A match against **Bragantino** at the Maracana Stadium by his son, **Matheus**.

Al-Qurain secures big win in Gulf Basketball Cup



Players vie for the ball during the Zain Premier League match.



Maryam, the star of the Qurain team.

Salalah triumphed 38-22 over the Emirati Fatima Bint Mubarak Academy. For the semi-finals, the top-ranked

team will face the fourth-place team, while the second-place team will compete against the third-place team. The tournament will culminate with the final match on Monday, featuring the winners of the semi-finals.

BASKETBALL

Abdullah Al Tamimi, representing the Academy, expressed his satisfaction with the tournament's kickoff and the high level of the participating teams, highlighting the Emirati Academy team's ambitious goals.

Maryam shared her excitement about the victory and her hopes of securing the tournament title with her team. She noted the high caliber of competition, makes the tournament both challenging and thrilling.



Manchester City's Erling Haaland kicks the ball during the English Premier League soccer match between Manchester City and Ipswich Town at the Etihad Stadium in Manchester, England. (AP)

Sports

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Haaland nets hat trick as City routs Ipswich

Brighton stuns Man United, Everton slumps to another heavy defeat at Tottenham

LONDON, Aug 24, (AP): Two games into the season, and the scrutiny is already back on Manchester United manager Erik ten Hag.

Joao Pedro was left unmarked to head home in the fifth minute of injury time to give Brighton a 2-1 home win over United on Saturday in a game that showed that the inconsistencies that plagued Ten Hag's team still haven't been eradicated.

After United failed to clear a corner, Pedro was on hand to head home a cross from Simon Adingra to secure a second straight victory for Brighton at the start of its first season under 31-year-old coach Fabian Hürzeler.

Erling Haaland made sure Manchester City joined Brighton on six points by scoring his seventh Premier League hat trick in a 4-1 win over Ipswich, while Sean Dyche could also be feeling the early pressure after his Everton side slumped to another heavy defeat, losing 4-0 at Tottenham.

Also Saturday, West Ham beat Crystal Palace 2-0 away, Fulham earned a 2-1 home win over Leicester and Nottingham Forest won 1-0 at Southampton.

The defeat at Brighton will be extra tough for United to take as the visitors had a potential winner ruled out in the 70th minute for an almost comical offside.

Alejandro Garnacho's shot from a tight angle was heading into an empty net when it deflected off the knee of the sliding Joshua Zirkzee just before it crossed the line - causing the goal to be ruled out as the Dutch striker was in an offside position.



Kuwaiti teams celebrate with their trophies.

Kuwaiti 'handball' youth teams excel in Slovenia Championship

By Khaled Al-Anzi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

LJUBLJANA, Aug 24: The Kuwaiti handball youth team (A) claimed silver medal at the Slovenia International Friendly Championship, after a tightly contested final against the Slovenian team Krasnik. The match ended in a 23-23 draw, leading to a penalty shootout where Kuwait narrowly lost 3-5.

Meanwhile, the Team (B) secured third place by defeating the Slovenian team Celje 34-28 in the third-place playoff.

The participation of both the (A) and (B) teams in the Slovenian Friendly Championship is part of their broader preparation plan for upcoming events.

Team manager Shaker Arti highlighted that competing against European teams with high technical skills and strategic game play provides invaluable experience for Kuwaiti players, helping them develop the necessary skills to excel in the sport.

Arti added that the technical, physical, and mental levels of the players have been steadily improving throughout the training camp. He noted the internal

difficult one.

Jordan Pickford had already made a couple of good saves by the time Yves Bissouma opened the scoring in the 14th minute with a strike from the edge of the area that went in off the underside of the crossbar. Bissouma was suspended by the club for its opening 1-1 draw at Leicester last weekend after uploading a video to social media of himself inhaling laughing gas. But he was back in the starting lineup, and thanked manager Ange Postecoglou by running up to the Australian and giving him a hug after his goal.

Son Heung-min took advantage of a mistake by Pickford to add the second in the 25th, then made it 4-0 in the second half, six minutes after Cristian Romero had headed home a corner.

Denmark defender Joachim Andersen joined Fulham for a second spell after leaving Premier League rival Crystal Palace.

The center back was on loan at Fulham in the 2020-21 season and established himself as a fans' favorite.

Andersen has now moved to Craven Cottage on a permanent basis, on a five-year deal for a reported fee of 30 million pounds (\$40 million). "It's really nice to be here," Andersen said. "Feels a little bit like coming home, so it's a good feeling."

Andersen's signing comes after Fulham lost defenders Tosin Adarabioyo and Tim Ream on free trans-

competition among the players to prove themselves, which is vital for representing Kuwaiti handball honorably.

In a related effort, the junior handball team continues its preparations in Cairo, Egypt, ahead of upcoming international competitions. The team has already played several friendly matches against teams like, Zamalek, Al-Zohour, and Al-Ahly Bank of Egypt. It is scheduled to play three more experimental matches before returning to Kuwait.

Team manager Dr. Khaled Al-Gharib expressed satisfaction with the progress made under the federation's technical roadmap, which is designed in collaboration with the administrative and technical teams. He observed significant improvements in the players' physical, technical, and mental aspects - key goals of the current junior team gathering.

Al-Gharib further explained that the preparation began before the training camp with a focus on strengthening team morale and camaraderie among the players. This phase is part of a well-planned strategy to develop future generations by concentrating on younger age groups.

fers earlier in this transfer window. He is the second central defender to join the club, after Jorge Cuenca from Villarreal.

It is a blow to Palace, which is also battling to keep England center half Marc Guehi at the club amid interest from Newcastle.

Palace also sold Ghana forward Jordan Ayew to promoted Leicester on a two-year deal.



Leicester City's Wout Faes, left, and Fulham's Rodrigo Muniz battle for the ball during the English Premier League soccer match between Fulham and Leicester City at Craven Cottage, London. (AP)

Pizzi selects 25-player squad for the upcoming matches

Kuwait kicks off WC qualifiers preparation in Dubai



Pizzi and his staff start their mission with Al-Azraq.

By Khaled Al-Anzi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 24: The Kuwait senior soccer team will begin their training this evening at the Police Officers Club Stadium in Dubai, UAE. The team arrived yesterday to start a training camp that will run until September 2, before heading to Amman, Jordan, for its first match in the decisive round of the 2026 World Cup qualifiers on September 5.

Al-Azraq is placed in Group

Two alongside South Korea, Iraq, Palestine, and Oman.

The team is scheduled to return to Kuwait on September 6, in preparation a game against Iraq on September 10.

Head coach Juan Pizzi and his assistant staff will lead their first official training session with the national team today. Pizzi selected a 25-player squad for the upcoming matches, including Abdulrahman Kamil, Suleiman Abdul Ghafoor, Abdulrahman Al Fadhli, Rashid Al Dosari, Sami Al Sanea, Khaled Ibrahim, Fahad Al Hajri, Khaled Al Fadhli, Salman Burmiah, Faisal Zayed, Mahdi Dashti, Ahmed Al Dhafiri, Adhbi Shehab, Reda Hani, Hamad

facing formidable opponents aiming for World Cup qualification. He urged everyone to support Al-Azraq in their upcoming campaign, emphasizing that the team is not merely participating as "guests of honor" in the qualifiers.

Meanwhile, Jordan's head coach, Jamal Salami, announced the initial roster for the "Nashama" in preparation for their upcoming matches, including the game against Palestine on September 10.

The coaching staff granted player Yazan Al-Naimat a brief delay in joining the Jordanian camp to complete his contract with Al-Arab of Qatar. The Jordanian national team is set to face North Korea in two friendly matches.

Jordan's roster includes Yazid Abu Laila, Nour Bani Attia, Abdullah Al-Fakhouri, Yazan Al-Arab, Abdullah Naseeb, Hijazi Maher, Saad Al-Rousan, Hussam Abu Dhahab, Ihsan Haddad, Firas Shalbaya, Mohammed Abu Hashesh, Salem Al-Ajaleen, Mohammed Abu Al-Nadi, Ali Hajji, Yousef Abu Al-Jazar, Ibrahim Saada, Khaled Zakaria, Nizar Al-Rashdan, Nour Al-Rawabdeh, Mahmoud Shawkat, Rajai Ayed, Arif Al-Hajji, Mahmoud Mardi, Mohammed Abu Zureiq, Muhammad Abu Taha, Wassim Al-Riyalat, Yousef Abu Jalbus, Rizq Bani Hani, Musa Al-Taamari, Abdullah Al-Attar, Ali Alwan, and Yazan Al-Naimat.

SOCCER

Harbi, Sultan Al Anzi, Yousef Majed, Salman Al Awadhi, Yousef Nasser, Eid Al Rashidi, Moaz Al Asima, Abdul Mohsen Al Ajmi, Hussein Ashkanani, Ali Khalaf, and Hamad Al Qalaf.

Team captain Khaled Ibrahim expressed confidence in the team's readiness, emphasizing the extensive experience of the new coaching staff and the team's commitment to living up to expectations.

Fahad Al Hajri also stressed the importance of strong preparation for the two matches, acknowledging the challenge of