



We're proud of historic ties: Sheikh Jarrah

Kuwait-UK Steering Group sees signing of co-op deals

LONDON, Sept 5, (KUNA): The 21st session of the Kuwaiti-British joint Steering Group that was co-chaired by Kuwait's Deputy Foreign Minister Sheikh Jarrah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah and UK Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State at the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office Hamish Falconer came to a close on Wednesday.

The meeting witnessed the signing of an action of plan for the next six months and a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on cooperation to support Kuwait's Civil Service Commission (CSC) as well as two memoranda for joint funding and development support in Palestine and Yemen.

The memo on CSC was signed by Sheikh Jarrah and Falconer to provide a training program for government employees to improve services. They also signed the action of plan.

The two memos were signed by acting Director General of Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development (KFAED) Waleed Shamlan and Falconer.

Under the MoU on backing humanitarian situations in the Gaza Strip and Yemen, Kuwait and the UK will provide USD 1.5 million each for United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund's (UNICEF) projects to restore supplying water and sewage in Gaza and maintain basic healthcare services in Yemen.

Speaking to KUNA in a statement, Ambassador Sheikh Jarrah said this year is

important for both Kuwait and the UK as they are marking the 125th anniversary of their partnership.

The State of Kuwait is proud of its deep-rooted and historic relations with the UK, Sheikh Jarrah noted.

"We got pleased for the cultural Kuwaiti-British week and the holding of the 21st session of the Steering Group," he said.

The action of plan approved during the group's meeting paves the way for further cooperation in a number of fields between the two sides, Sheikh Jarrah elaborated.

Commenting on signing those memoranda, Sheikh Jarrah expressed his gladness for cooperation with the UK to back UNICEF in Palestine and Yemen.

He went to say that they would continue to explore means of boosting cooperation to provide humanitarian and development assistance to those affected by conflicts and natural disasters across the globe.

On behalf of His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Jarrah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah attended Wednesday "Rhythms of Kuwait" concert at the Theater Royal Drury Lane in London.

Continued on Page 5



KUNA photo

Kuwait's Deputy Foreign Minister Sheikh Jarrah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah and UK Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State at the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office Hamish Falconer shake hands after signing the deals.



Ahmed Aboul Gheit

Call for urgent help to war-hit Gaza residents

CAIRO, Sept 5, (KUNA): The Arab Ministers of Finance and Economy called on Thursday to offer urgent assistance to the families impacted by Israeli aggression in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, and to implement the emergency response plan submitted by Palestine to address the repercussions of the occupation.

The ministers commended the Arab popular positions made in support of the Palestine at the end of the 114th Economic and Social Council session, and condemned the crime of genocide committed by Israel against the Palestinian people, calling on all Arab states to continue efforts to stop the crime of genocide in the Gaza Strip.

The Secretary-General of the League, Ahmad Aboul Gheit, said in his speech before the opening session of the Economic and Social Council at the ministerial level, the regular session (114) headed by the UAE. "We monitor with great concern Israel's continued attempts to expand the circle of conflict to neighboring countries under pretexts whose internal dimensions and the personal political calculations that drive them have become exposed to everyone."

He added that it is no secret that this entails real risks of the outbreak of a regional war that will undoubtedly have dire consequences for the region and the world as a whole, and its impact will be severe on the people seeking development and progress, as it will set this region years back.

They called for confronting the terroristic armed Israeli settlers, their crimes of destroying and harassing Palestinians and their properties, the non-compensation of resulting damages to Palestinians, the piracy of their money, and the heavy loss of Palestinian life and economy, resulting in high unemployment and poverty.

They stressed the need to implement the emergency response plan, calling on states, organizations, and the relevant national and international funds to contribute to the financing and implementation of the plan in coordination with Palestine.

The ministers asked the General Secretariat of the Arab League to coordinate with Arab countries, organizations, institutions, and the Palestinian Ministry of Social Development to provide relief to tons of thousands of orphaned Palestinian children, and call for greater attention on the installation of prosthetics to amputees.

They appealed for the relief of Palestinian workers who have been persecuted and prevented from working by the Israeli Occupation since the beginning of the aggression on the Strip, by coordinating with the Palestinian Ministry of Labor and the General Secretariat of the Social Affairs Sector.

They called on League member states to support Palestinian students by increasing scholarships provided by them and higher education institutions by 5,000 scholarships to students from the Gaza Strip, especially after losing any source of funding or living, and work to accommodate students for free to study some courses, until the end of the aggression and their return to their universities.

They stressed the need for Arab member states to support Palestinian exports through bilateral agreements with the Palestinian Ministries of National Economy and Industry to develop programs that support channeling Palestinian exports to Arab markets, and to allocate free spaces for Palestinian participation in Arab exhibitions.

They called on Arab member states to give preferential prices for raw materials and ready-made goods to Palestinian importers through incentive measures that urge their private sector, and to invest in Palestine and benefit from the incentives of the Palestinian investment law.

Six meet fate on gallows as pardon saves 1 from noose

KD 1 mln blood money paid by woman for waiver



KUNA photo

The 36th meeting of the Gulf Technical Committee for Food and Agricultural Standards, held in the Qatari capital of Doha, with the State of Kuwait participating.

GCC chief touts regional efforts

Food security key challenge facing Gulf nations

DOHA, Sept 5, (KUNA): Qatari Minister of Municipality Abdullah Al-Attiya said Thursday that food security is one of the key challenges to the Gulf countries amid climate change, population growth pressure, and global market volatility.

The Qatari minister made the remarks while addressing the 36th meeting of the Gulf Technical Committee for Food and Agricultural Standards, held in the Qatari capital of Doha, with the State of Kuwait participating.

He underlined that it is essential to adopt holistic national and regional strategies to shore up self-sufficiency and secure food sustainability amid heavy reliance upon imports to answer food needs, a thing that subjects the Gulf countries to foreign volatility.

He also called for developing policies that buttress sustainable agriculture, stimulate investments in local farming, and introduce modern agricultural technology that could result in boosting production

Continued on Page 5

Jobs top priority: Al-Budaiwi

'GCC makes marked progress in '23 GCI'

DOHA, Sept 5, (KUNA): Jassem Al-Budaiwi, Secretary General of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), stated Wednesday that GCC countries have made significant progress in the 2023 Global Competitiveness Index (GCI), underscoring the success of strategic solutions and initiatives implemented within their development plans and visions.

Al-Budaiwi made these remarks during the opening of the 10th Ministerial meeting of the committee of GCC Ministers of Social Affairs and Development, held in the Qatari capital, Doha, with the participation of Kuwait.

GCC countries seek to adopt the best programs that provide suitable job opportunities for their citizens equipping them with the necessary skills and qualifications to secure appropriate jobs, Al-Budaiwi affirmed.

Al-Budaiwi noted that in the 2023 Global Competitiveness Index, GCC countries have made remarkable advancements,

Continued on Page 5

Beware scammers posing as Mol staff

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 5, (KUNA): The Ministry of Interior (MoI) has once again issued a warning regarding the increasing number of fraudulent activities carried out by international gangs impersonating security personnel through phone calls and video communication platforms. In a statement released by the General Department of Security Relations and Media, the ministry emphasized that it has repeatedly cautioned the public against falling victim to these scams.

These individuals, operating from outside Kuwait, are posing as security officials to deceive people. The MoI made it clear that it never communicates through video calls or requests any bank information.

The ministry urged both citizens and residents to immediately report any suspicious calls to the relevant authorities, assuring that the MoI is actively monitoring and tracking these incidents to take appropriate action.

Kuwait rolls out winter vaccines to 57 centers

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

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 5: The Ministry of Health announced that it has distributed vaccine doses for winter diseases to 57 preventive health centers throughout the country. This includes 20 centers operating during both morning and evening hours (8:00 am to 1:00 pm and 4:00 pm to 8:00 pm), and 37 centers open only during morning hours. There are six preventive health centers located in the hospitals of the Ministry of Health that are dedicated to providing vaccines to health workers, medical staff, and at-risk groups.

Capital Health Zone

In a press statement, the Ministry of Health announced that 15 preventive health centers in the Capital health zone are operating during morning hours. These centers include:

- Hamad Al-Saqer in Adailiya; Abdullah Abdul-Mughni in Faiha; Ali Thanyan Al-Ghanim in Sulaibkhat; Al-Ihqaqi in Daiya; Qairawan Health Center; Zalzalah Center in Dasma; Abdullah Abdul-Hadi in Yarmouk; Jaber Al-Ahmad Q3;

Continued on Page 5

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 5: The Ministry of Interior has carried out the death sentences issued against six individuals who were convicted of murder, including two Iranians who had murdered an elderly man in Salwa, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The execution of a Kuwaiti woman, who was convicted of stabbing her friend to death eight years ago, was suspended after the victim's mother granted a waiver just moments before the sentence was to be carried out.

Just eight hours before the execution process began, Bader Al-Mutairi, who is known as "the wronged prisoner", shared several intriguing details and described some tense moments via his social media account.

Al-Mutairi explained that he received a call from the women's prison informing him that the citizen whose story he had previously shared would be executed on Thursday. In response, he made several urgent humanitarian appeals, including a call to the lawyer of the victim's family to plead for the suspension of the death sentence.

He said, "Upon my arrival at Cairo Airport a short while ago (Wednesday evening), I received several calls from people in the women's prison notifying me that the Kuwaiti woman will be executed. She kept saying, 'I beg you, please tell Bader Al-Mutairi not to forsake me,' as she was kept in isolation before her execution."

I asked, "What can I do? To be honest, my whole body was shaking. I called several numbers until I reached the lawyer representing the victim's family, to request negotiations for a postponement of the execution and to allow more time."

Continued on Page 5

No plan to make Kuwaiti staff redundant in near future: KPC

By Najeh Bilal
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

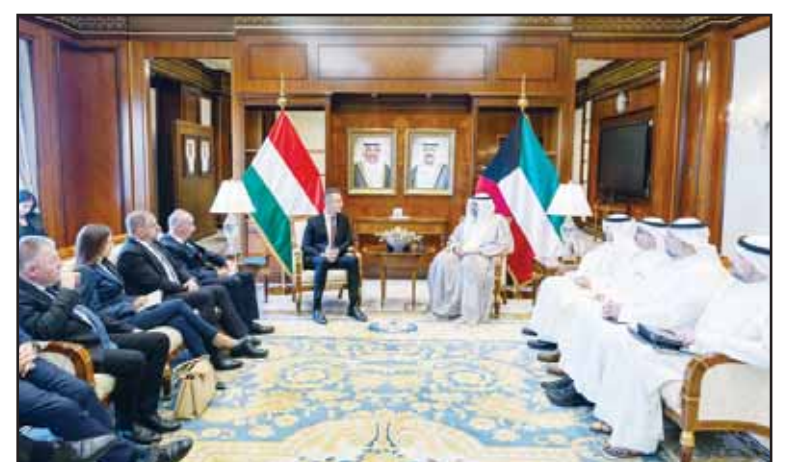
KUWAIT CITY, Sept 5: Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) is currently studying the possibility of merging similar activities in its subsidiaries like the recent merger of similar sectors in Kuwait Oil Company (KOC), including West Kuwait Directorate and North Kuwait Directorate that were merged into North and West Kuwait Directorate.

According to sources, merging similar activities in oil companies is imminent; as it aims to unify efforts, elimi-

nate fragmentation within the same company, and reduce the number of officials which, in turn, leads to reduction of bonuses, incentives and other benefits.

Sources affirmed that the oil companies affiliated with KPC are currently preparing to promote a number of mid-level executives as per the regulations, in addition to companies that adopted KPC's strategy to promote competent and dedicated junior employees to qualify them for mid-level leadership posts in the future.

Continued on Page 5



KUNA photo

Kuwait Minister of Foreign Affairs Abdullah Al-Yahya meets the Hungarian counterpart Peter Szijarto and the accompanying delegation at the ministry headquarters. — See Page 2

Newswatch

DUBAI: Bahrain's king pardoned 457 prisoners Wednesday night to mark his 25th anniversary as the island nation's ruler, with one activist saying many of those freed appeared to be political prisoners.

The announcement by the state-run Bahrain News Agency marks another mass release of prisoners in the Gulf kingdom that has experienced repeated crackdowns on all dissent in the years following its 2011 Arab Spring protests. (AP)

RIYADH: Saudi Foreign Minister Prince Faisal bin Farhan and his visiting German counterpart Annalena Baerbock Thursday discussed the latest regional and international developments, chiefly the situation in the Gaza Strip.

During the meeting, they also tackled ways and means of promoting and bolstering bilateral relations between Saudi Arabia and Germany, the Saudi Press Agency (SPA) reported. (KUNA)

Prayer Timings

Fajr	04:06	Asr	15:19
Sunrise ..	05:27	Maghrib ..	18:06
Zohr	11:47	Isha	19:25

Local

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

Expected weather for next 24 hrs:

By Day: Hot with light to moderate freshening at times northwesterly wind, with speeds of 12-45 km/h with a chance for rising dust over open areas.

By Night: Hot to rather hot and relatively humid over coast-

Weather

al areas with light to moderate northwesterly wind to light variable wind, with speeds of 08-30 km/h.

Station	Max Exp	Min Rec
Kuwait City	45	33
Kuwait Airport	45	33

Abdaly	45	29
Bubyan	45	23
Jahra	46	32
Failaka Island	42	28
Salmiyah	43	33
Ahmadi	39	31
Jal Aliyah	45	29
Nuwaisib	41	30

MoH continuously tracking disease's developments and its locations

Kuwait on high alert after mpox case detected in Jordan

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 5: Following the recent discovery of an mpox case in Jordan, the Ministry of Health in Kuwait has been closely monitoring the situation and is fully prepared to handle any mpox cases, reports Al-Anba daily.

In a press statement, sources from the health sector affirmed the ministry's readiness to handle any health emergencies, and its interest in following up all developments related to mpox disease.

They explained that the ministry has been continuously tracking the disease's developments and its locations, in coordination with the World Health Organization (WHO), the Gulf Health Council, and other international health organizations. It recently established the Kuwait Center for Disease Prevention and Control (CDC), which collaborates with relevant authorities to prevent infectious diseases.

UAE, Kuwait leaders discuss strengthening fraternal ties

Kuwait plays pivotal role regionally, globally: UAE VP

ABU DHABI, Sept 5, (KUNA): UAE's President Sheikh Mohammad bin Zayed Al Nahyan held on Wednesday talks with Kuwait's First Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Defense and Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad Yousef Al-Sabah on the brotherly historic bonds between the two countries, UAE's news agency (WAM) reported.

President Mohammad bin Zayed received Sheikh Fahad at Qasr Al Shati in Abu Dhabi where he conveyed the greetings of His Highness the Amir of Kuwait Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah to the UAE's leader, along with his best wishes for the UAE's continued progress and prosperity, it said.

In return, Sheikh Mohammad bin Zayed extended his greetings and best wishes to His Highness the Amir, wishing further progress and prosperity for Kuwait's people under his leadership.

During the meeting, the two sides also focused on the long-standing fraternal ties between the UAE and Kuwait, and the progress in their collaboration in various fields that serve the two countries' interests and meet their shared aspirations for development and prosperity, it added.

The meeting further stressed the importance of supporting Gulf Cooperation Council efforts to serve common interests of GCC countries and their peoples, and contribute to enhancing regional security, stability, and prosperity.

Meanwhile, Sheikh Mansour bin Zayed Al Nahyan, UAE's Vice President, Deputy Prime Minister and Chairman of the Presidential Court, discussed on Wednesday means of bolstering brotherly relations with Kuwait's First Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Defense and Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad Yousef Al-Sabah, UAE's news agency (WAM) reported.

Cooperation

During a meeting held at Qasr Al Watan in Abu Dhabi, the two sides focused on the path of developing mutual cooperation in all vital fields that serve the two countries, and meet aspirations of their peoples for development and prosperity, in line with the needs of the present and the future, it said.

They stressed the brotherly bonds between the two nations that the two countries' leaders boost, under the wise leadership of UAE's President Sheikh Mohammad bin Zayed Al Nahyan and His Highness the Amir of Kuwait Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah.

In addition, they underlined the significance of enhancing joint Gulf action amid challenges facing the region and the world in a way that meets aspirations of the GCC member states and their nations, in addition to prosperity and progress, according to the agency.

In the meantime, UAE Vice President Sheikh Mohammad bin Rashid Al Maktoum commended Wednesday the State of Kuwait's pivotal and influential roles at the regional and global levels.

The State of Kuwait, with its regional weight and prestigious status, also enjoys full respect and appreciation at all Gulf, Arab and international arenas, Sheikh Mohammad bin Rashid, also UAE prime minister and ruler of Dubai, said.

Sheikh Mohammad bin Rashid made these remarks during his reception of Kuwait's First Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Defense and Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad Yousef Saud Al Sabah at the Union House in Dubai, according to a statement by the Media Office of Dubai Government.

During the meeting, Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid and Sheikh Fahad Yousef reviewed the future of joint Gulf action with a view to furthering development and progress of the GCC Member States in all domains.

They discussed the prospects for increasing bilateral cooperation at all political, economic and cultural levels, with a special focus on trade exchange and tourism promotion.

The two sides also highlighted the need to involve the private sector and explore new investment op-



KUNA photo

Kuwait's Sheikh Fahad meets UAE Mol on security cooperation.



KUNA photo

FM Abdullah Al-Yahya and Hungarian Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade Peter Szijarto during the signing of the accords.

Kuwait, Hungary sign cooperation accords

The State of Kuwait and Hungary on Thursday signed a number of memos and accords for cooperation in various fields namely cyber security.

The agreements were inked during a meeting that grouped the Minister of Foreign Affairs Abdullah Al-Yahya and his visiting Hungarian counterpart (also the Minister of Commercial Affairs) Peter Szijarto, at the ministry headquarters.

The two sides discussed the

solid relations bonding the two friendly countries and means of promoting the ties in various sectors. Moreover, the two sides talked about current regional and international developments.

Following the meeting, the Kuwaiti and Hungarian sides inked a number of accords and memos, "depicting the resolve of the two friendly countries to enhance the mutual cooperation in diverse vital fields." One of the inked memoranda of understanding

deals with cyber security cooperation and an executive program for cultural cooperation for the period (2024-2025-2026-2027).

Another was signed between Saud Al-Nasser Al-Sabah Diplomatic Institute and the Hungarian Diplomatic Academy.

On Wednesday, Minister Al-Yahya received Szijarto and his accompanying delegation upon their arrival at the airport, starting an official visit (September 4-5). (KUNA)

36 tons of relief aid, two ambulances sent

Kuwait's 12th relief plane arrives in Sudan

KHARTOUM, Sept 5, (KUNA): The 12th relief plane of the Kuwaiti Air Bridge arrived at Sudanese (Port Sudan) Airport on Wednesday, carrying 36 tons of relief aid, along with two ambulances to support those affected and displaced.

The Ambassador of Kuwait to Sudan, Dr. Fahad Al-Dhafiri told KUNA that the plane was dispatched with support from the Kuwaiti Zakat House within the framework of the "Fazaat Al-Sudan" campaign, launched by the Kuwaiti Relief Society in partnership with eight charitable societies with the aim of alleviating the suffering of the displaced in Sudan.

He explained that the air bridge comes in implementation of the directives of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber

opportunities to achieve the ambitious goals of both nations and secure a better future for their peoples.

They touched upon important regional and international developments, particularly the situation in the Middle East.

They explored strategies to address regional challenges, with a focus on ensuring security and stability while working towards a comprehensive peace.

At the advent of the meeting, Sheikh Mohammad bin Rashid welcomed the visiting dignitary and discussed ways to bolster the strategic partnership between the two countries.

He discussed the progress resulting from the signing of several MoUs and Executive Programmes across various sectors during the fifth session of the UAE-Kuwait Joint Higher Committee, held earlier this week in Abu Dhabi.

Sheikh Mohammad bin Rashid

FM receives letter from Tajik counterpart on boosting ties

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 5, (KUNA): Foreign Minister Abdullah A-Yahya on Thursday received a written message from his Tajik counterpart Sirojiddin Muhriddin dealing with the close relations bonding the two friendly countries and means of

boosting them in various domains. Minister Al-Yahya received the letter during a reception of the Tajik Republic Ambassador to the State of Kuwait, Dr. Zubaydullo Zubaydzoda, at the Foreign Ministry headquarters.

Al-Sabah, and an embodiment of the solidarity of the Kuwaiti people with the brothers in Sudan.

Al-Dhafiri conveyed Sudan's thanks through the Sovereignty Council, the local authorities in the Red Sea State, and the beneficiaries,

praising the role of the Sudanese side in coordinating needs.

This air bridge is the second operated by the State of Kuwait since the outbreak of war in Sudan in April 2023, as the first bridge included 16 aircraft and two ships.

attributed the steady progress in boosting the partnership between the UAE and Kuwait to the deep-rooted fraternal ties, established long ago.

Foundation

The foundation for these ties were laid by the late UAE leader Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan, and the late Kuwaiti Amirs: Sheikh Sabah Al-Salem Al-Sabah and Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah.

Sheikh Mohammad emphasized that the UAE and Kuwait's development journey continues to grow stronger each day, driven by the visionary leadership of the leaders of the two sisterly countries: President of the UAE Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan and Kuwait's Amir His Highness Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah.

Sheikh Fahad Yousef Al-Sabah discussed with UAE Deputy Prime

Minister and Minister of Interior Lt-Gen. Sheikh Saif bin Zayed Al Nahyan ways to strengthen security cooperation between their two sisterly countries.

During their meeting at the UAE Ministry of Interior in Abu Dhabi on Wednesday, both sides discussed a range of issues of common interest, UAE's news agency (WAM) reported.

Sheikh Saif accompanied Sheikh Fahad and his party during a visit to the UAE Interior Ministry's Customer Happiness Center to inspect the e-services provided by the Ministry to the public according to the world's latest standards, according to WAM report.

In the meantime, First Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Defense and Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad Yousef Al-Sabah arrived in Kuwait after concluding an official visit to the sisterly United Arab Emirates on Wednesday.



KUNA photo

UAE president and Kuwait's 1st Deputy Premier hold talks on historic bonds.



KUNA photo

FM Al-Yahya receives Burkina Faso's ambassador to Kuwait.

Foreign minister receives copy of Burkina Faso envoy's credentials

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 5, (KUNA): Kuwait Minister of Foreign Affairs Abdullah Al-Yahya received a copy of the credentials of Burkina Faso's Ambassador to the State of Kuwait at the Ministry on Thursday.

During the reception, the minister wished the new ambassador the best of luck and further development and pros-

perity for bilateral relations between both friendly countries, the ministry said in a press release.

Meanwhile, Al-Yahya received on Wednesday the Hungarian Minister of Foreign and Commercial Affairs Peter Szijarto and his accompanying delegation upon their arrival at the airport, starting an official visit (September 4-5).

Other Voices

Suffering and pleasure of writing ... and bitterness of false accusation

By Ahmed alsarraf

I have stated many times that I am not a professional writer, nor do I claim to be one. By upbringing, I am a banker, a businessman by passion, and I only became a daily writer over the past three decades by sheer coincidence, driven by the ideas that were simmering in my mind -- ideas I believed were worth sharing. This doesn't mean they were groundbreaking or superior to anyone else's thoughts.

As a non-professional writer, the act of daily writing -- putting my thoughts onto paper -- is a challenging task. It often comes with mental fatigue, stress, and the anxiety of questioning whether the article is even worth publishing.

Sometimes, after all the effort, the result can be disheartening, especially when the article doesn't receive the response or readership I hoped for, for whatever reason.

Still, the act of publishing is preferable, because unexpressed ideas tend to weigh on their owner, begging to be shared. The pressure of publishing, even with limited readership, is far less than the strain of keeping those thoughts locked away, waiting for the right moment to release them.

A writer, like any professional,

seeks an audience -- people who will "buy" their ideas or appreciate their work. However, just as those who purchase a product don't often think about the labor and sacrifices that went into creating it, readers rarely consider the mental, physical, and emotional effort that a writer endures to bring their ideas to life.

Even when I read the work of others, I too don't always stop to think about the struggle the writer might have faced in crafting their text. This is simply human nature.

For me, writing is more of a demanding hobby than a profession, and one that requires significant mental energy -- writing, reading, revising, and submitting my work to the newspaper.

After all this effort, it is deeply painful when someone, especially a respected friend and colleague, accuses me -- due to a disagreement over politics -- of hiring someone to write my articles.

The sting of such accusations is profound, particularly for a writer like me who doesn't receive financial compensation for my work. To be accused not only of outsourcing my writing but also of corruption in my business dealings and stealing public money is truly devastating.

There's no need to delve further into the personal suffering this has caused me. The exhaustion of daily writing speaks for itself. I apologize for sometimes dragging my readers into these personal reflections.

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diwaniya

A DIGEST OF PUBLIC OPINION

'Student elections need to be reformed immediately'

"I HOPE that the Minister of Higher Education and Scientific Research will take the time to read an interview recently published by Al-Nahar newspaper with the Secretary-General of the Kuwaiti National Integrity Society and former Municipal Council member, Eng. Hamoud Al-Enezi," columnist and former deputy director-general of Kuwait News Agency (KUNA) **Iqbal Al-Ahmed** wrote for **Al-Qabas** daily.



Iqbal Al-Ahmed

"The interview contained significant information that warrants attention. I believe it is essential for the minister and the government to carefully consider this information and take the necessary and timely actions.

"In this meeting, Eng. Al-Enezi warned of the danger of tribal polarization of student activity at the university level, and in the elections of university and applied student unions inside and outside Kuwait.

"According to what Al-Enezi said, about 30 tribal branches were monitored in the elections of student unions and associations inside and outside Kuwait, and about one million dinars are pumped annually to finance student conflicts within the university, these student unions are unofficial in origin, and are funded (according to what was mentioned in the meeting) in a way that is not subject to oversight by any party in the state.

"Al-Enezi warned that this opens the door for the intervention of 'political' poles to fuel student violence and sectarian polarization in these elections, which are often characterized by fanaticism, hatred and violence, which we often witness in these elections.

"With the approach of the student union elections, which will be held in the coming weeks, it is easy for these elections to be held on these same foundations, which he described as 'destructive' and inconsistent with the state's efforts, which aim to establish the values of citizenship and combat corruption.

"I hope that Minister Dr. Nader Al-Jalal, who many agreed was competent and had high hopes for correcting many mistakes, would deal with this issue in a purely professional manner, in accordance with the law, and intervene immediately to stop these elections, or postpone them until the electoral system is amended (at least its declaration), and to cancel the direct general student vote, and to stop the by-elections that are criminalized by law, as they are in the National Assembly, for which punitive rulings were issued punishing those who practiced them in the last elections.

"What is disturbing about the issue is what Eng. Al-Enezi pointed out, as he had previously presented observations, recommendations and solutions to previous ministers of higher education, who did not acknowledge the problem at all, but rather turned a deaf ear to all that was raised from solutions, and used as an excuse to avoid the threat of interrogations by some members of the National Assembly.

"Today, and in light of the absence of such threats, which he referred to, I hope that the current new Minister of Education, Dr. Nader Al-Jalal, will look into this issue, and review these observations, recommendations and solutions that were presented to the minister before him, so that the issue of student union elections inside and outside Kuwait can be dealt with according to the rules, and away from any other spirit other than the national spirit.

"The main issue in the subject is to first acknowledge the existence of the problem, then work immediately to stop these elections, or postpone them until they are studied from all sides, so that they are placed, as Al-Enezi mentioned, within a legal framework that includes simplifying the election procedure, and avoiding direct general elections, and the resulting tribal polarization that may undermine this educational process, and the basic national goal of student activity. This activity must be based on healthy standards and steps that yield healthy results that serve the in-

terests of the nation and nothing else.

"The unfortunate thing about the issue is that most of the election announcements and committee activities resulting from these elections inside and outside Kuwait often have titles that are the names of tribes, not to mention tribal flags and songs accompanying manifestations of joy and jubilation.

"Advertisements fill social media, including student services provided by the 'such-and-such tribe' committee, and all of this is done in full view of university and ministry officials, for many years, without any action being taken to put an end to these actions.

"Even the invitation to Ramadan ghazwa or any celebration is in the name of 'The Tribal Committee... at Kuwait University, invites you to...'

"This is meaningless, except that there is no one to hold accountable or monitor these practices, which have been going on for many years, unfortunately, for one reason that everyone knows.

"A final word to conclude my article with is that all of this was done in public for many years without anyone objecting decisively and firmly, for fear of interrogations, as Al-Enezi mentioned. But today... if these elections are held in the same spirit and with this method, then the negligence is yours, 'O government', and no one else."

* * *

"A person's origin, tribe, and affiliation are beautiful things that we all take pride in and are proud of, but these things have their place in social life, within our social fabric... our occasions and relationships, and not in the circle of work and education."

* * *

"There is no doubt about the significance of Kuwait's strategic location, which historically made it a vital land and sea connection point between various parts of the ancient world," columnist **Dr. Nada Suleiman Al-Mutawa**, wrote for **Al-Jarida** daily.

"Positioned at the crossroads of waterways and land routes leading to major commercial centers, Kuwait served as a hub for caravans traveling from Persia and Mesopotamia to the eastern and interior regions of the Arabian Peninsula.

"Additionally, it played a crucial role as a commercial link between the countries bordering the Indian Ocean, the Levant, and Europe, marking the convergence of one of the longest and most significant trade routes of the ancient world.

"I have often emphasized this during my contributions to dialogues and lectures on Kuwait's history and foreign policy, whether in my work at the Gulf Center for Studies at Kuwait University or during my recent appearance on Kuwait TV.

"There, I discussed the topics of friendship, security, and Kuwaiti-British relations, highlighting the strategic importance of Kuwait during the years before and after 1899, under the reign of Mubarak the Great.

"His leadership and the strategic value of Kuwait's geographical location, along with the travel bloggers' observations about the people's affection for their ruler, contributed to internal stability, which further enhanced Kuwait's strategic advantages.

"Moreover, the wise decision by Sheikh Mubarak the Great -- may God have mercy on him -- to ally with Great Britain at that time, demonstrated his remarkable foresight, almost as if he anticipated Britain's victory in the First and Second World Wars.

"Reflecting on Kuwait's maritime excellence, Valiaris, the author of 'Sons of Sinbad,' expressed his admiration, likening Kuwait to a vast naval workshop for shipbuilding. He described Kuwaiti sailors as individuals accustomed to a life of hardship and competition, excelling in their endeavors without complaint.

"In summary, Sheikh Mubarak Al-Kabeer's leadership and insight into global events were instrumental in choosing a safe path for Kuwait's international relations, a lesson that remains relevant today.

"The resilience of the Kuwaiti people in enduring life's hardships to earn a living is also a valuable lesson, demonstrating that life itself is a teacher, with more lessons yet to be learned."

- Compiled by PFX Fernandes

Traffic Council urges multi-faceted approach to solve traffic issues ahead of new school yr

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 5: In a recent meeting of the Supreme Traffic Council, the Undersecretary of the Ministry of Interior and Chairman of the Supreme Council for Traffic, Lieutenant General Sheikh Salem Al-Nawaf, emphasized the need for collaborative efforts to tackle Kuwait's ongoing traffic issues, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The meeting, which was the 22nd of its kind, focused on developing practical and scientific solutions to ensure smooth traffic flow, particularly as the new school year begins.

Sheikh Salem highlighted the importance of cooperation between various government and civil entities. He stressed that addressing traffic congestion requires a multi-faceted approach that includes engineering improvements to roads and intersections, heightened public awareness, and stricter enforcement of traffic laws. This holistic strategy aims to not only ease current traffic problems but also prevent future issues.

The Ministry of Interior said the meeting included a visual presentation by the General Traffic Department, outlining the traffic management plans for the upcoming academic year.

This presentation covered proactive measures to mitigate expected congestion around schools, including the deployment of traffic officers, patrols, and motorcycles to key locations. The aim is to manage the increased traffic volume effectively and ensure the safety of students and commuters alike.

Dr. Nasser Al-Muhaisen, Undersecretary of the Ministry of Information, expressed the



Lieutenant General Sheikh Salem Al-Nawaf chairs the meeting.

Mol photo

ministry's readiness to support a comprehensive media campaign in collaboration with the ministries of Interior and Education.

This campaign will run throughout the academic year to raise public awareness about traffic issues and promote safe driving practices.

In addition, a representative from the Ministry of Education provided details on the preparations for the new school year, announcing that 1,356 buses equipped with tracking devices will be deployed to transport students to and

from schools.

These tracking devices will help monitor bus routes, contributing to a more efficient transportation system and reducing traffic congestion.

The ministry also plans to maintain the same school start times as the previous year, with kindergarten and elementary schools starting at 7:15 am, middle schools at 7:30 am, and high schools at 7:45 am. This staggered timing is expected to help manage traffic flow during peak hours.

Court jails Egyptian 'teacher' for 5 years in child molestation case

Public Prosecution demands execution of Al-Jalal's killer

By Jaber Al-Hamoud

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 5: The Court of Cassation sentenced an Egyptian Islamic education teacher to five-year imprisonment for kidnapping and sexually assaulting an expatriate child.

Earlier, the Criminal Court had sentenced him to ten-year imprisonment but the Court of Appeal reduced the sentence to five years.

According to the case file, the defendant violated the innocence of a young child and betrayed his role as a teacher.

The Public Prosecution had charged him with kidnapping a minor through deception with the intent to sexually assault him. He lured the child by engaging him in conversation, offering him money, and coaxing him to a house in Farwaniya far away from his home, where he sexually assaulted him, the details of which are in the investigation files.

* * *

Killer's execution sought: The Public Prosecution has demanded the execution of Ahmed Al-Jalal's killer and referred the murder case to Criminal Court, which scheduled the trial for Sept 9, reports Al-Rai daily.

It had earlier been reported that the prosecution started investigating the murder of Ahmed Al-Jalal -- the brother of former MP Mutab Al-Jalal.

Case files indicate that the Al-Jalal died in a stabbing incident in Hadiya, where he had a heated argument with the suspect who surrendered to the police after stabbing the victim.

* * *

Drug dealer arrested: Support patrols from Farwaniya Security Directorate arrested an expatriate, in his 40s, for trading in drugs in Khaitan with a bag of various narcotic substances in his possession, reports Al-Anba daily.

While patrolling the area, the security officers got suspicious of the expatriate sitting on the sidewalk opposite a school. When they approached him, he fled on foot, leaving a bag behind. They found different types of narcotics in the bag, so

'800K citizens and 1.86 million residents complete biometrics'

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 5: Brigadier Nayef Al-Mutairi, Director of the Personality Investigation and Automated Search Department at the General Department of Criminal Evidences, said both the citizens and the residents are fully cooperating and shown determination to complete the biometric fingerprinting, reports Al-Rai daily.

Al-Mutairi added, to date, approximately 800,000 Kuwaiti citizens have undergone the process, with around 175,000 still to complete the exercise. Speaking of the residents, he said, nearly 1,860,000 have completed fingerprinting, and that leaves about 800,000 people who are expected to complete the exercise.

He also mentioned that approximately 1,000 cases involving people with special needs and bedridden individuals have been addressed.

Regarding the biometric process, Al-Mutairi explained to Al-Akhabar channel that 11 new devices have been introduced specifically for taking fingerprints from bedridden individuals, people with special needs, and hospital patients.

These devices are intended to facilitate the process and overcome obstacles for these groups.

He emphasized that the final deadline for Kuwaitis to complete biometric fingerprinting is September 30, and for residents, it is December 31.

After these dates, transactions will be suspended for those who have not completed the fingerprinting process.

they chased the expatriate. During the initial investigation, the expatriate admitted that he is selling drugs and that he was waiting for 'customers' when the officers noticed him.

A case was registered and the expatriate was

referred to the Drug Control General Department.

Hearing in fraud case delayed: The Criminal Court has adjourned to September 25 the hearing of the first appeal filed by a lawyer who was sentenced to ten years imprisonment with hard labor and imposed a KD 3 million fine for selling fake apartments in Sabah Al-Salem and chalets in the Sabah Al-Ahmad Marine area.

The court had previously scheduled a hearing to review the appeal against the ruling issued in absentia.

According to the case file, the defendant, who had been a fugitive abroad, was involved in a fraud and money laundering case related to the sale of fake real estate properties in Kuwait. He was arrested in Turkey by Interpol and extradited to Kuwait.

Corporal officer assaulted: Six individuals have been arrested for assaulting a corporal officer, and search is ongoing to find another suspect who is still at large. One among them was discovered to have violated the residency law and in possession of drugs, reports Al-Anba daily.

According to security sources, patrol officers were conducting a routine check in Granada when they saw a luxury vehicle parked in the middle of the road. As officers approached the vehicle to issue a ticket, the vehicle's occupant ran into a nearby house. Another individual who had parked next to the vehicle tried to flee as well but he was detained. He resisted strongly but officers managed to subdue him. They discovered that he was in violation of the residency law. They searched him and found drugs.

By then, five individuals emerged from the house, pushed one of the officers, and obstructed his efforts to perform his duties.

The officers requested for additional backup, and eventually the five suspects were arrested.

The owner of the house where the violator had sought refuge denied that anyone had entered his house or that the officer had been assaulted. It remains unclear whether there were any surveillance cameras nearby that captured the incident.

A case was filed, and search has begun for the seventh suspect who managed to escape.

Central Market opens new branch at Sa'ad Al-Abdullah Academy for Security Sciences

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 5: Under the patronage of Lieutenant General Sheikh Salem Al-Nawaf, Undersecretary of the Ministry of Interior, the Central Market opened its 18th branch at the Sa'ad Al-Abdullah Academy for Security Sciences, reports Al-Jarida daily.

The opening ceremony was graced by Major General Sheikh Fawaz Al-Khaled, Assistant Undersecretary for Education and Training Affairs, and Lieutenant General Eng. Tawheed Al-Kandari, Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Central Market for Employees of the Ministry of Interior.

This new branch is part of a broader initiative aimed at enhancing the work en-

vironment for the academy's employees. The Central Market's expansion seeks to provide an array of high-quality consumer goods and daily necessities at reasonable prices, thereby supporting the staff's welfare and efficiency.

Major General Al-Khaled underscored the significance of the project in improving employee welfare and facilitating their work. Lieutenant General Al-Kandari reiterated the Central Market's dedication to delivering top-notch services to employees and emphasized the ongoing collaboration between various departments to achieve shared objectives.

Woman scammed

500 fils payment leads to over KD 209 withdrawal

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 5: An expatriate woman paid 500 fils via a link sent to her phone, but KD 209,800 was withdrawn from her bank account, reports Al-Anba daily.

The victim explained to the police that she had received advertisements on WhatsApp of household supplies. She responded to the sender, ordered items worth KD 20, and stated that she will make the payment upon delivery of the goods. The sender agreed but asked her to pay a symbolic deposit amount of 500 fils in order to confirm the seriousness of the transaction. After she paid the 500 fils via a link sent to her, she was shocked to find that about KD 209 had been withdrawn from her account.

She gave the police the number of the advertiser. A felony case has been filed.

According to a security source, even though the phone number appeared to be local with eight digits, it was likely set up fraudulently.

KD60,000 gold bar 'fake'

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 5: A Kuwaiti citizen purchased a gold bar for KD 60,000 only to later discover that it is fake, reports Al-Anba daily.

According to security sources, when Capital security-men received a report from the citizen about the fake gold bar, a patrol team was dispatched to his location and dealt with the situation.

It remains unclear how the citizen verified that the bar was fake, whether he had the expertise to do so or if he consulted the Ministry of Commerce and Industry for confirmation.

The sources highlighted the importance of retaining the purchase invoice for such transactions.

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Kuwait's grand infrastructure projects continue to struggle

Will ambitious plans break the cycle of failure?

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 5: The discussion around major infrastructure projects in Kuwait has resurfaced, echoing plans and ambitions from the early 2000s, especially after the fall of Saddam Hussein's regime in Iraq, reports Al-Jarida daily.

Recent weeks have seen increased activity from various government bodies focused on advancing several significant projects, including the Mubarak Al-Kabeer Port, the Kuwaiti Islands projects, and the northern region revitalization.

Moreover, there are renewed efforts to develop free economic zones, railways, and metro systems. However, there's been little attention to addressing the core issues that led to previous project failures.

Over the past 21 years, Kuwait has embarked on several strategic plans aiming to transform the nation into a global commercial and financial hub.

These include the first through third development plans, the financial and economic reform document, the sustainability document, and the Kuwait Vision 2035.

Despite these ambitious plans, many major projects, such as Mubarak Port and the northern region initiatives have faced significant setbacks. According to ministers overseeing these plans, the implementation has been notably below expectations.

Kuwait's global competitiveness has declined, which contrasts sharply with the increasing financial outlays. In the Global Competitiveness Report by the International Institute for Management Development (IMD), Kuwait ranks 37th globally out of 67 countries.

The country struggles in several sub-indicators, including local economic quality, global trade, investment, and business legislation. These rankings highlight the challenges Kuwait faces in improving its investment environment and project execution.

One of the critical issues is the flawed measurement of project success. In Kuwait, the completion rate is often gauged solely by financial expenditure rather than the actual progress in creating a supportive business environment, forging partnerships, or enhancing service quality. This narrow focus on financial metrics without considering qualitative aspects has led to inefficiencies and project failures.

23,551 plots to see major dev't

PAHW issues 3 new tenders for South Saad Al-Abdullah project

By Mohammed Al-Musleh
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 5: The Public Authority for Housing Welfare (PAHW) recently announced the issuance of three tenders for infrastructure development of 23,551 plots in South Saad Al-Abdullah.

According to informed sources, a total of 12 tenders are planned for the South Saad Al-Abdullah project in the current fiscal year. So far, PAHW has issued five tenders, including two for the installation of main power stations. Seven additional tenders are expected to be issued for overseeing infrastructure work on the plots and for constructing further main power stations.

The sources anticipate that construction orders for the project will begin in 2028, provided the contractor adheres to the three-year implementation timeline.

In this context, the Deputy Director General for Control and Information Systems Affairs Amina Al-Awadhi stated that the authority's Tender Committee has approved three tenders for the South Saad Al-Abdullah City project for establishing, completing, and maintaining infrastructure works, including residential suburbs, irrigation tank buildings, and sub-electricity stations.

She explained that the tender projects span 1,080 days and cover all residential and four investment suburbs within the city. This includes infrastructure work for 23,551 residential plots and irrigation tank buildings.

The scope of work also involves the construction of 649 sub-electricity stations for the city's suburbs, as well as the installation of rainwater, sewage, irrigation, treated water, and freshwater networks. The project will include laying the first and second asphalt layers for all roads in the residential suburbs.

The project has been divided into three packages for residential and investment suburbs and will be open for public tenders to international contractors, including foreign, local, and Gulf companies that specialize in roadworks and infrastructure services.



KUNA photo
Amina Al-Awadhi, Deputy Director General for Control and Information Systems Affairs at the Public Institution for Housing Welfare.

Bidder registry fees raised by 10 dinars

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 5: In a recent development, the Kuwait Municipality has decided to raise the fees for registering bidders in its registry by 10 dinars, reports Al-Jarida daily. This decision was confirmed in a letter, issued by the Director General of Kuwait Municipality, Eng. Saud Al-Dabbous.

According to the letter, the increase was approved during a meeting of the municipality's purchasing committee held on Aug 30, 2024.

The decision followed thorough investigation and discussion, and it was made in response to a recommendation from the Deputy Director General for Finance and Administrative Affairs.

This recommendation was based on the Ministry of Finance's directive regarding the setting of fees for the bidders' registry.

Eng. Al-Dabbous noted that the fee adjustment aligns with the existing procedures of the Purchasing Committee at the Suppliers Register.

The new fee structure aims to standardize the registration process and ensure consistency across different types of registries. The adjustment will be implemented pending final approval from the Municipal Council and the Major Auctions Committee at the Kuwait Municipality.

All necessary measures in place

Capital Governor lauds school preps

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 5: During an inspection tour of the Capital Educational District, Sheikh Abdullah Salem Al-Ali, the Governor of the Capital, commended the extensive efforts made to prepare schools for the upcoming academic year, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

His visit was part of an ongoing initiative to ensure that schools in the governorate are fully equipped to meet the needs of both students and teachers.

Accompanied by key officials, including Acting Undersecretary of the Ministry of Education Mansour Al-Daihani and Acting Director of Educational Affairs



Al-Seyassah photo
Governor of the Capital interacted with staff of the Capital Educational District.

Dr. Muhammad Yaqoub Karashi, the governor toured various schools to assess their readiness. He interacted with staff and citizens present, taking note of their feedback on the services provided by the educational district.

Sheikh Abdullah emphasized the importance of addressing any concerns raised and ensuring that all necessary measures are in place to create a conducive environment for education.

He expressed appreciation for the dedication shown by the officials and employees of the educational district, highlighting their crucial role in the smooth functioning of the educational system.

For infrastructure projects to succeed, they must address fundamental economic imbalances. This includes generating job opportunities for Kuwaiti youth, fostering small and medium-sized enterprises, providing non-oil revenue sources, and improving the demographic structure. The success of projects like Mubarak Port should be evaluated based on their impact on these areas rather than just their contractual and construction aspects.

The Mubarak Port project, among others, faces new challenges with Iraq's recent launch of the "Development Road" project, which aims to connect Asian markets with European markets via the Faw Port.

This development necessitates a reevaluation of Mubarak Port's commercial and financial feasibility, considering regional competition and changes since the project's inception.

While there is consensus on the need for major infrastructure projects to diversify Kuwait's income sources, create job opportunities, and attract foreign investments, the current administration's track record raises concerns.

Persistent issues with small-scale projects and contract management suggest that achieving significant success with larger infrastructure projects will require addressing these systemic challenges comprehensively.

333 deals reflect robust market growth

MoJ reveals KD287.1 million in real estate contracts in August

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 5: In a recent update, the Ministry of Justice revealed that August saw a total of 333 real estate contracts exchanged across Kuwait, worth an impressive 287.1 million Kuwaiti dinars, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The figures, released by the Real Estate Registration and Documentation Department, highlight a bustling month in the real estate sector.

The breakdown of these transactions is as follows:

Private Real Estate -- Leading the pack, private real estate contracts involved 217 properties with a combined value of KD 2.88 billion.

Investment Real Estate -- This category included 95 properties, totaling KD 5.107 billion.

Commercial Sector -- Transactions in the commercial sector were substantial, with 15 properties valued at KD 61 million.

Craft Properties -- Two contracts for craft properties were registered, amounting to KD 1.6 million.

Warehouse Sector -- A single contract for warehouse properties was worth KD 3.2 million.

Coastal Strip -- Noteworthy transactions in the coastal strip included two properties valued at KD 17 million.

When examining the geographic distribution of these transactions Ahmadi Governorate led with 95 contracts, reflecting the highest level of activity; Hawalli Governorate followed with 71 contracts; Capital Govern-

MPW deals with 2,437 hotline reports in Aug

By Mohammad Ghanem
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 5: The Ministry of Public Works has announced that it dealt with a total of 2,437 reports received via its hotline No. 150 in the month of August.

It explained that Jahra Governorate had the highest number of reports with 455, followed by Farwaniya Governorate with 419 reports, Ahmadi Governorate 365, Capital Governorate 346, Hawalli Governorate 250, Expressways 250, Sanitary Engineering Sector 197, Mubarak Al-Kabeer Governorate 102, and finally the Operations Department with 53 reports.

norate registered 64 contracts; Mubarak Al-Kabeer had 42 contracts; Farwaniya saw 34 contracts and the Jahra Governorate completed the list with 35 contracts.

The Ministry of Justice's report underscores a dynamic and varied real estate market in Kuwait, showcasing significant investments and diverse property transactions across the nation.

Public officials to get media training

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 5: Aside from the government's decision to train its officials on the art of etiquette; it also intends to develop the skills of officials in government institutions in dealing with traditional and modern media entities, and how to prepare for the customary and unexpected questions of journalists, reports Al-Qabas daily.

The Civil Service Commission (CSC) will conduct the training program aimed at developing the officials' public speaking skills; teach them how to effectively deliver messages, speak in front of the public and manage press, television, radio and social media interviews; and issue statements to various media outlets.

The daily obtained a copy of an official letter explaining that this training program is for the upper echelon of officials like the undersecretaries and assistant undersecretaries in ministries and those in similar positions in other public institutions.

According to the letter, the participants of the training program will learn the following:

- Media policies;
- Fundamentals of dealing with press interviews -- visual, audio and written media;
- Types of interviews and press dialogues and

Regulation for school cafeterias focuses on healthy eating habits

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 5: The Public Authority for Food and Nutrition has introduced a new regulation for school cafeterias aimed at promoting healthier eating habits and reducing obesity among students, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

This initiative, covered by the Ministerial Resolution No 5 of 2021, underscores the Authority's commitment to ensuring a safe and nutritious food environment in Kuwaiti schools, both public and private.

Dr. Shaima Al-Asfour, Deputy Director Gen-

eral of the Community Nutrition Affairs Sector, explained that the new regulation targets specific food groups to align with the healthy nutrition requirements for children and adolescents.

The new guidelines outline which foods are permitted and which are banned to foster better health outcomes.

The regulation permits foods that adhere to healthy school nutrition standards. These include options that are fortified with essential vitamins and minerals, and low in sugar and salt.

- with the common or unanticipated questions of media professionals in press interviews and through social media;
- Using effective approaches and methods in raising sensitive issues to the press;
- Ways to manage media crises;
- Ways to improve and develop the digital leadership skills of officials using modern technology and social media to guarantee the digital media success of the government sector.

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GCC ministers endorse new social strategy

Al-Huwailah joins discussions on future initiatives

DOHA, Sept 5, (KUNA): The 10th Ministerial meeting of the Committee of GCC Ministers of Social Affairs and Development was held on Wednesday in the Qatari capital, Doha, with the participation of the Kuwaiti Minister of Social Affairs, Family and Childhood Affairs, and Minister of State for Youth Affairs Dr. Amthal Al-Huwailah.

The Qatari Minister of Social Development and Family Maryam Al-Misnad highlighted the importance of the meeting in a speech, saying it carries the aspirations and hopes of our people in social development in accordance with a comprehensive vision for a Gulf society united with its identity and sustainable morals and values.

She added that the adoption of the GCC social development strategy of 2021-2025 represents a major step within our joint efforts to bring about social development to our people and the implementation of the initiatives within them.

She expressed her aspiration for the meeting to adopt policies that support cohesion and stability in Gulf society, and strengthen the Arab and Islamic spirit and identity and cooperation among the Gulf States.

The minister pointed out that Qatar puts great importance on supporting pioneering community projects that also empower productive families and enhance community awareness of family cohesion and building families based on the Islamic religion.

She said that Qatar will keep supporting these projects on a national and international level, welcoming recommendations on building development partnerships between sectors in which innovation is used to advance GCC society.

Al-Misnad added that her country is stressing more cooperation to implement the committee's previous decision on the strategy of joint Gulf action for women's affairs in the GCC Countries 2024-2030, and follow up what has been achieved to enhance the role of motherhood in society and achieve harmony between the roles of

men and women.

She welcomed the attendance of the International Conference on Family to commemorate the 30th anniversary of the international Year of the Family, which will be hosted by Qatar from 29 to 31 October 2024, looking forward to hosting the seventh Gulf Theater Festival for Persons with Disabilities from November 27 to December 3 in Qatar.

On his part, the GCC Secretary-General Jassem Al-Budaiwi said that the continued joint work in social development has seen great achievements in the past years under the leadership of founding and current GCC leaders.

He pointed that one of the achievements is supporting and empowering Gulf women's affairs and role in economic development programs in joint GCC work.

He added that the rate of women's economic participation in the GCC countries has increased, reaching 43.2 percent, and the percentage of senior positions in the government sector for women in leadership positions has reached 49 percent.

As for the percentage of senior management positions in the private sector has reached 30.9 percent, and the percentage of female workers in the government sector has reached 43.4 percent, while in the private sector reached 38.2 percent, Al-Budaiwi added.

Acting Deputy Director General for Labor Affairs at Kuwait's Public Authority of Manpower (PAM) MUSAED AL-MUTAIRI stressed Wednesday the importance of the 10th Labor Ministers Committee meeting of GCC, held in Doha.

Al-Mutairi stated to KUNA that many topics on the agenda were discussed including following up on implementing the decisions of the ninth meeting, the activities of the Executive Office, and the results of the strategic initiatives of ministers in the GCC countries.

Also:

RIYADH: The State of Kuwait's Assistant Foreign Minister for GCC Affairs Ambassador **Najib Al-Bader** said on Tuesday that the forthcoming GCC-European Summit, due in Brussels, would cap the bilateral strategic relations.

The unprecedented upcoming summit will be a historic turning point in the Gulf-European relations as it will depict the two sides' adherence to establish a full-fledged partnership on the basis of mutual respect and confidence, said Ambassador **Al-Badr**, in a statement to KUNA, as he emerged from the 32nd meeting of the GCC-European Cooperation Committee's meeting.

He revealed that the commission's meeting addressed preparations for the summit, due in October 2024.



Dr. Al-Huwailah



KUNA photo

Part of the activities of the International Government Communication Forum in Sharjah.

'Storytelling influential in connecting to people'

Gov't communication forum continues

SHARJAH, Sept 5, (KUNA): The 13th International Forum for Government Communication, themed "Agile governments, innovative communication," in Al-Sharjah continued its works for the second day, with dialogue sessions and various workshops given by specialized communication experts and speakers in the media field from Gulf, Arab and foreign countries.

The forum will discuss several topics, Thursday, including future innovative communication skills in light of artificial intelligence, the impact of artificial intelligence on individual and institutional communication skills, cultural and creating industrial communication for global

development and the future of media in the era of flexible governments.

Experts and speakers at the forum from various sectors seek to raise topics including government agility and adaptability in the face of modern challenges and the impact of artificial intelligence on the legal field, in addition to special workshops for children.

They also seek to enable participants build their capacities in the field of government communication in addition to enhancing effective communication with the public and using the latest technologies in the field of communication through a series of pioneering intensive programs, sessions and

workshops.

The forum includes training courses, capacity building programs and workshops on preparing television programs, radio presentation skills and how to enhance communication channels for participants with the necessary skills and expertise in light of contemporary challenges.

KUNA's Director General Dr. Fatima Al-Salem on Wednesday marked out storytelling in government media as an influential instrument in connecting governments to people due to adaptability to technological advancements and wide reach.

This was during Dr. Al-Salem's participation at a panel discussion organized by Sharjah journalism club dubbed, storytelling: human connection in a digital age, at the 13th international government communication forum in Sharjah.

Engaging in the discussion were Riyadh newspaper Editor-in-chief Nawal Al-Jaber and Bahraini writer Sawas Al-Shaer, and moderating the panel was Kuwaiti media person Dr. Mohammad Al-Wasmi.

KUNA's Director General said that the significance of storytelling lies in its ability to relay information to audiences in an engaging, accessible and visually appealing manner.

Al-Salem pointed out KUNA's own program, Diaries of a Profession, as an application of storytelling technique. She went on to explain that storytelling plays role in boosting citizen confidence in government activity, as it sets out to meet public demands and display government news.

As for challenges, Dr. Al-Salem pointed out that the technique is new to government media scene, therefore, there is an insufficiency in cadres and expertise.

Recent technological advancements pushed media to take leaps away from orthodox means of news transmission to the integration of visual, audio, and readable material making news more widely available, she commented.

Dr. Al-Salem described storytelling of government narrative through hybrid media as the road to efficiency.

As for Al-Jaber, she spoke of storytelling as a way to boost communication, cultivate sense of identity, efficiently relaying messages, as well as promoting confidence and engagement.

Al-Shaer, on her part, said that government communication departments must be equipped with flexibility and a high level of readiness to ensure success.

Six meet

Continued from Page 1

During previous negotiations to waive the sentence, the victim's family had demanded KD 7 million in blood money, but it was a sum that the perpetrator's family could not afford.

After several attempts, an agreement was reached for a settlement of KD 1 million in exchange for the waiver. However, the family later reversed their decision and demanded KD 7 million once again.

After several calls with the family and various parties, the victim's mother agreed to submit the waiver for KD 1 million. She went to the Central Prison in the evening, just a few hours prior to the scheduled execution, and formally declared her waiver.

Al-Mutairi said the authority to halt the execution lies solely with the Attorney General. He praised the Attorney General's office and the Department of Correctional Institutions for their compassionate handling of such cases.

In the video he published, he expressed hope for the swift commutation of the sentence.

Al-Mutairi highlighted his active involvement in humanitarian issues, adding that he had previously detailed the case in an earlier video.

In a related context, security sources confirmed that the Ministry of Interior suspended the execution of the death sentence for the Kuwaiti woman after the victim's family submitted a waiver.

They said the death sentence was intended to be carried out for seven individuals but it was carried out for six of the individuals, as the Kuwaiti woman narrowly escaped the gallows just moments before the execution. The case involving her dates back to 2016, when she fatally stabbed her friend during a heated argument and in a moment of intense anger and rage.

The sources revealed that she is a divorced woman with children.

Kuwait rolls

Continued from Page 1

Sheikhan Al-Farsi and Shareefah Al-Awadhi Center in Surra; Munira Al-Ayyar Center in Kaifan; Doha Health Center; Northwest Sulabikhat Center; Jaber Al-Ahmad Center Q1; Amiri Hospital Preventive Health Department

The ministry revealed that the centers that are open during both morning and evening hours are: Hamad Al-Saqer in Adailiya; Abdullah Abdul-Mughni in Faiha; Ali Thanyan Al-Ghanim in Sulabikhat; Al-Ihraqi in Daiya; Abdullah Abdul-Hadi in Yarmouk; Jaber Al-Ahmad Q3

Hawally Health Zone
The Ministry of Health has designated six centers in Hawally to provide winter disease vaccinations. Among these, five centers operate during both morning and evening hours. They are: Rumaithiya Center; Nasser Saud Al-Sabah Center; Salmiya West Center; Hawally West Center; Salwa Specialist Center

The Preventive Health Department at Mubarak Hospital operates during morning hours only.

Farwaniya Health Zone
The Ministry of Health has designated ten preventive health centers to provide seasonal vaccines. Among these, two centers operate during both morning and evening hours. They are: Manahi Al-Asimi Center; Farwaniya West Center

The remaining centers operate during morning hours only. They are: Northern Ardiya Center; Southern Jeeb Center; Southern Firdaws Center; Abdullah Al-Mubarak Center; Rabiya Center; Nahda Center; Preventive Health Department at Farwaniya

Hospital Jahra Health Zone

The Ministry of Health has designated six preventive health centers in Jahra Governorate to provide seasonal vaccines. Three of these centers operate during both morning and evening hours. They are: Jahra Health Center; Eye Center; Saad Al-Abdullah Center Q10

The remaining three centers operate during morning hours only. They are: Al-Naem Center; Al-Sulabiya Center; Preventive Health Department at Jahra Hospital

Mubarak Al-Kabeer Health Zone
In the Mubarak Al-Kabeer Governorate, four centers have been designated to provide winter disease vaccines. Three of these centers operate during both morning and evening hours. They are: Adan Specialized Center; Zahra Center; Abdul Rahman Zaid Center in West Mishref

The Preventive Health Department at Jaber Hospital operates during morning hours only.

Al-Sabah Health Zone
In the Sabah Specialized Medical Area, all vaccination centers operate during morning hours only. These centers are designated for the ministry's employees, medical staff, and risk groups. They include the preventive health departments at the following hospitals: Al-Sabah Hospital; Ibn Sina Hospital; Maternity Hospital; Psychiatry Hospital; Chest Diseases Hospital; Hussein Makki Juma Hospital; Addiction Hospital; Sabah Al-Ahmad Kidney Hospital.

No plan

Continued from Page 1

Sources stated that KPC gives importance to developing the capabilities of citizens working in the oil sector. They categorically denied the allegation that many national employees will be referred for retirement, indicating most of those who applied for retirement have reached the legal retirement age. They confirmed the oil sector is attractive to nationals, especially those with high qualifications.

Sources went on to say that some oil companies will soon announce the recruitment of Kuwaitis who graduated from the Public Authority for Applied Education and Training (PAAET), as well as the Engineering, Science and other colleges; but for now, priority will be given to the graduates of PAAET who hold diplomas in the required fields.

Kuwait-UK

Continued from Page 1

In a press statement, the Foreign Ministry said that the concert is held as part of the Kuwait Cultural Week currently organized in the United Kingdom and is sponsored by His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled.

Several senior UK dignitaries and officials as well as foreign diplomats in the British capital London attended the concert, added the statement.

Kuwait's Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs underlined the significant role of cultural activities in strengthening ties with the United Kingdom.

Speaking to KUNA after attending, on behalf of His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, the "Rhythms of Kuwait" concert at the Theater Royal Drury Lane in London, Sheikh Jarrah highlighted the rich cultural heritage of both countries and lauded the successful organization of the concert. The concert is held as part of the Kuwait Cultural Week currently organized in the United Kingdom and is sponsored by His Highness the Crown Prince

Sheikh Sabah Khaled. It was also attended by several senior UK dignitaries and officials as well as foreign diplomats in the British capital London.

Sheikh Jarrah commended the deeply-rooted relations between the State of Kuwait and the United Kingdom.

He pointed out that the Kuwaiti-UK relations date back to 1899 when Sheikh Mubarak Al-Kabeer signed the Anglo-Kuwaiti agreement.

To celebrate the 125th anniversary of their relations, the two governments declared 2024 the year of Kuwaiti-British partnership, as per an agreement signed on sidelines of an official visit by His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, then Crown Prince, to the UK on August 29, 2023.

'GCC makes

Continued from Page 1

and similarly in the Youth Progress Index, where they rank among the top 30 out of 150 countries included in this index.

He further explained that youth of working age in the GCC make up 24.6% of the total population, amounting to over 13 million young men and women, a "tremendous human resource" that must be properly harnessed to drive development and sustainability.

This can be achieved by providing all the necessary educational and training programs to prepare them for their significant future responsibilities.

The meeting's agenda includes several key topics, primarily the implementation of Supreme Council decisions regarding the completion of the Gulf Common Market pathways in the private sector labor market, as well as the Gulf Cooperation Strategy for Labor and Workforce from 2024 to 2030.

In a similar address, Qatari Minister of Labor Ali Al-Marri highlighted the exceptional circumstances in the Arab region and the world, which are affecting labor markets, employment issues, and occupational safety and health.

He also pointed to the direct impact of the digital revolution on labor markets, which presents challenges related to forced labor, human trafficking, and child labor.

Al-Marri expressed his hope that the meeting would yield decisions and recommendations that contribute to fulfilling the aspirations of GCC citizens by securing decent employment opportunities, achieving a balance between creating more jobs, preserving workers' rights, and ensuring safer, more stable, and equitable labor markets.

Food security

Continued from Page 1

and cutting consumption.

For his part, Secretary-General of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) Jassem Al-Budaiwi said the member countries attach paramount significance to food security which has become the main concern of many countries in the region and worldwide.

Speaking at the pan-Gulf gathering, he said the GCC Secretariat General, through all its strategic partnerships with the region's countries and blocs, makes this significant issue one of its top priorities.

The GCC chief touted wonderful blueprints, distinguished programs, and earnest steps being taken by all the GCC countries in order to ensure food security.

Acting Director-General of the Public Authority for Agricultural Affairs and Fish Resources (PAAAFR) Asmaa Al-Otaibi led the Kuwaiti delegation partaking in the event.

10 companies to showcase products

Indian Embassy to hold series of bilateral trade promotion events

By Paulo Francisco X. Fernandes
Arab Times/Al-Seyassah Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 5: The Indian Embassy in Kuwait is organizing a series of bilateral trade promotion events in food, agro and beverages sectors from September 8-10, 2024.

The event will be organized in collaboration with the Trade Promotion Council of India (TPCI), an apex trade and investment promotion organization is organizing an exclusive Buyer Seller Meet (BSM) in Food and Beverages (F&B) sector on 8 September 2024 at Hotel Grand Majestic, Kuwait City.

A delegation of 10 leading Indian F&B companies will be showcasing variety of products during the event. The Embassy, in association with Federation of Indian Export Organizations (FIEO) and Kuwait Chamber of Commerce & Industry (KCCI) will be organizing a Buyer-Seller meet in Food and Agro products 9-10 Sept 9 and 10 at the KCCI Exhibition Hall.

A delegation of around 30 Indian companies will exhibit products range consisting latest trends and innovations in Indian food and agriculture sector, food processing, food packaging, etc. during the event.

The Ambassador of India to Kuwait, HE Dr. Adarsh Swaika will inaugurate both events at Hotel Grand Majestic and KCCI Exhibition Hall respectively.

India's total export of food and agro products to Kuwait was valued at

USD344.36 mn in FY 2023-24.

There is a significant potential for greater bilateral trade in this sector given that India is one of the top producers of agro and food products with Indian food industry currently valued at \$258 billion. India has the second largest arable land available for agriculture and it produced 278 million tonnes of food-grains last year, including rice and wheat.

India is ranked number one in the world in population of livestock and production of milk and buffalo meat, number two in production of fruits and vegetables, eggs and goat meat. India is the third largest producer of poultry meat.

The proposed BSMs will feature a new range of products where exhibitors will present advancements in organic farming, food safety standards, and sustainable agricultural practices. Visitors can expect to see product innovations such as alternative proteins, fortified foods, and advanced food preservation technologies, which promise to open new markets and consumer segments.

The visiting delegations will also hold B2B meetings with the prominent importers, hypermarkets, retail stores in Kuwait.

FIEO delegation will also be participating in a Business networking session organized by Indian Business Professionals Council (IBPC). Both the events are open for B2B meetings.

'Steady pace'

Kuwait 'gears up' for 26th Gulf Cup

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 5, (KUNA): Minister of Information and Culture and Minister of Youth Affairs Abdulrahman Al-Mutairi affirmed on Wednesday that Kuwait is facilitating all capabilities to succeed in hosting the upcoming 26th Gulf Cup in December.

This came in a statement after chairing a meeting of the Kuwaiti Higher Organizing Committee for the tournament, saying that work is progressing in a steady pace to ensure an extraordinary tournament and successful organization.

He added that intensifying efforts to organize this sporting event in its finest look comes as an implementation of the political leadership's directives, which embodies the deep-rooted Gulf relations that unite our peoples throughout history.

He noted that all financial and administrative aspects have been covered during the meeting, expressing his confidence in Kuwaiti cadres to complete the task on time and their abilities in organizing any major sport event.

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ENGINEERS: 8 years' experience in oil & gas field, Graduates in relevant discipline:

1. Planning Engineer
2. Mechanical Engineer
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7. Instrumentation Engineer
8. Communication & Networks Engineer

- **WELDING INSPECTOR:** 6 years' experience, Diploma in Mechanical Engineering or equivalent and relevant experience certifications
- **COATING INSPECTOR:** 6 years' experience, Diploma in Mechanical / Metallurgical Engineering or equivalent and relevant experience certifications
- **SAFETY ENGINEER:** 8 years' experience, Bachelor of Engineering, two or more certified HSE courses, Trainings in General Industrial & Construction Safety, Environmental Management & International Standards etc. etc.
- **SAFETY OFFICER:** 10 years' experience, BSc or Diploma in Engineering, min. 5 years' experience as HSE personnel and should hold all necessary certifications in relevant fields. One or more certified HSE courses, Trainings in General Industrial & Construction Safety, Environmental Management & International Standards etc. etc.
- **SUPERVISORS, MECHANICAL, CIVIL, ELECTRICAL & INSTRUMENTATION:** 8 years' experience in oil & gas, Diploma holder in relevant engineering field
- **FOREMEN, MECHANICAL, CIVIL, ELECTRICAL & INSTRUMENTATION:** 8 years' experience in oil & gas, holder of 2 years' professional diploma in relevant field + trade certifications.
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Eligible candidates shall submit CVs with supporting documents to:
kt.jobs.hr@outlook.com

World News Roundup

Europe

Vulin meets Putin

Barnier named as new PM of France

PARIS, Sept 5, (AP) — President Emmanuel Macron named EU former Brexit negotiator **Michel Barnier** as France's new prime minister on Thursday after more than 50 days of caretaker government.

The appointment of the 73-year-old Barnier follows weeks of intense efforts by Macron and his aides to find a candidate who might be able to build loose groupings of backers in parliament and survive possible attempts by Macron's opponents to quickly topple the new government that Barnier will now put together and lead.

A statement from Macron's office announcing Barnier's appointment said he'd been tasked "with forming a unifying government to serve the country and the French people."



Barnier

"This appointment comes after an unprecedented cycle of consultations during which, in accordance with his constitutional duty, the president ensured that the prime minister and the future government would meet the conditions to be as stable as possible and give themselves the chances of uniting as broadly as possible," the statement said.

Barnier, a career politician proud of his humble roots in France's Alpine region of Haute-Savoie, is no stranger to complex and difficult tasks: He was the European Union's chief negotiator in the difficult talks with Britain over its Brexit departure from the bloc.

Barnier replaces Gabriel Attal, who resigned on July 16 following quick-fire legislative elections that produced a divided and hung parliament, plunging France into political turmoil.

Political

But Macron kept Attal and his ministers on in a caretaker capacity, handling day-to-day affairs, so political instability wouldn't overshadow the July 26-Aug 11 Paris Olympics, when France was in the global spotlight.

In political career over more than 50 years, Barnier has served as French foreign, European affairs, environment and agriculture minister - and twice as a European commissioner.

Influential far-left leader Jean-Luc Melenchon immediately came out against Barnier's appointment and predicted the new prime minister would not get a majority backing in the bitterly divided National Assembly.



Ukraine gets new chief diplomat: Ukraine's parliament approved the appointment of a new foreign minister Thursday, two lawmakers said, as President Volodymyr Zelenskyy sought to breathe fresh life into his administration with the war against Russia poised for what could be a pivotal phase.

Andrii Sybiha, a former ambassador to Turkey, is the country's new chief diplomat. He replaced Dmytro Kuleba, who became one of Ukraine's most recognizable faces on the international stage as he petitioned and pleaded with Western countries to support Ukraine's war effort.

Sybiha, 49, has been working as Kuleba's deputy since April.

Zelenskyy wants to replace almost a dozen top officials in his biggest government shake-up since Russia's full-scale invasion in early 2022. Other possible new faces included the heads of strategic industries, farming and justice.



Serbia official meets Putin: Serbia is a Russian ally and will never impose sanctions against Moscow or join NATO, the Balkan nation's deputy prime minister said Wednesday as he met with Russian President Vladimir Putin.

The remarks by Aleksandar Vulin, a former intelligence chief who is under US sanctions, reflect persistent close relations between Belgrade and Moscow despite Serbia's proclaimed bid to join the European Union. "It's a great honor for me to have the privilege to talk to you," Vulin told Putin. "Please believe me when I say it is a great encouragement for all Serbs, wherever they may live."

Serbia has refused to join Western sanctions against Russia over the war in Ukraine though it has condemned Moscow's aggression. Populist President Aleksandar Vučić has said that imposing the sanctions wasn't in Serbia's national interest.

"Serbia is not only a strategic partner of Russia, Serbia is also Russia's ally," Vulin said. "This is why pressure on us by the West is huge."

Vulin's meeting with Putin in Russia's far-eastern city of Vladivostok came just days after French President Emmanuel Macron visited Serbia when Belgrade signed an agreement to buy French Rafale fighter jets, a move that was seen as possible a shift away from Moscow. German Chancellor Olaf Scholz earlier also visited Belgrade for the signing of a tentative EU deal with Serbia on raw materials needed in green transition.



Conservatives eliminates Patel: Priti Patel, who was Britain's interior minister when Boris Johnson was prime minister, has become the first candidate to be eliminated in the Conservative Party's leadership election, two months after the party resoundingly lost power following 14 years in office.

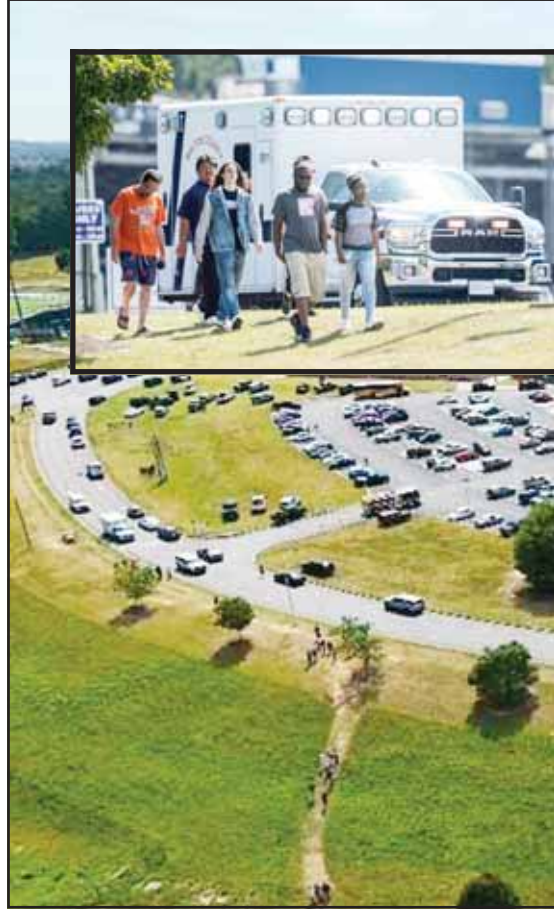
In a vote open to the party's lawmakers Wednesday, Patel garnered the support of only 14 Conservative members of Parliament, placing her last of six.

Patel, who was home secretary between 2019 and 2022, was a prominent backer of Britain's departure from the European Union in the referendum in 2016 and is widely perceived to be on the right wing of the party. However, she has a reputation for being a divisive figure, and faced bullying allegations when at the Home Office.

Robert Jenrick, who quit his role in the government led by Rishi Sunak over his opposition to its policies on immigration, came in first with 28 votes. Jenrick was never a senior member of government but has sought to bolster his credentials with the party's right wing since he resigned.

He has argued that the UK should leave the European Convention on Human Rights in order to get a handle on high levels of illegal immigration, one of the main reasons why many traditional Conservative voters deserted the party at the election on July 4.

He was followed by the bookmakers' favorite Kemi Badenoch, the former business secretary, who got 22 votes, and James Cleverly, who was home secretary at the time of the election defeat, who got 21.



People leave Apalachee High School on Sept 4, in Winder, Ga. A shooting at the Georgia high school Wednesday caused an unknown number of injuries and a suspect was arrested in a chaotic scene. Inset: Students and parents walk off campus at Apalachee High School. (AP)

14-year-old student fatally shot 4 in rampage at Georgia high school

More than a year ago, tips about online posts threatening a school shooting led Georgia police to interview a 13-year-old boy, but investigators didn't have enough evidence for an arrest. On Wednesday, that boy opened fire at his high school outside Atlanta and killed four people and wounded nine, officials said.

The teen has been charged as an adult in the

deaths of Apalachee High School students Mason Schermerhorn and Christian Angulo, both 14, and instructors Richard Aspinwall, 39, and Christina Irimie, 53, Georgia Bureau of Investigation Director Chris Hoseney said at a news conference.

At least nine other people - eight students and one teacher at the school in Winder, about an hour's drive northeast of Atlanta - were taken to hospitals

with injuries. All were expected to survive, Barrow County Sheriff Jud Smith said. The teen, now 14, was to be taken to a regional youth detention facility on Thursday. Armed with an assault-style rifle, the teen turned the gun on students in a hallway at the school when classmates refused to open the door for him to return to his algebra classroom, classmate Lyela Sayarath said. (AP)

Politics

VP accepts rules for Sept 10 debate

US Republican Cheney endorses Harris

WASHINGTON, Sept 5, (AP) — Former Republican Rep. Liz Cheney on Wednesday said she would support Kamala Harris for president, ending weeks of speculation about how fully the member of a GOP dynasty-turned-Trump critic would embrace the Democratic ticket.

Cheney, who co-chaired the House investigation into the Jan 6, 2021, attack, became a fierce Trump critic and was ousted in her 2022 Republican primary in Wyoming as a result, made her announcement at an event at Duke University. In a video posted on the social media network X, she finished by talking about the "danger" she believed Trump still poses to the country.

"I don't believe that we have the luxury of writing in candidates' names, particularly in swing states," she said. "As a conservative, as someone who believes in and cares about the Constitution, I have thought deeply about this. Because of the danger that Donald Trump poses, not only am I not voting for Donald Trump, but I will be voting for Kamala Harris."

Harris' campaign chair Jen O'Malley Dillon said in a statement Wednesday night: "The Vice President is proud to have earned Congresswoman Cheney's vote. She is a patriot who loves this country and puts our democracy and our Constitution first."

Also:

PHOENIX: Jimmy McCain, a son of former Arizona senator and 2008 Republican presidential nominee **John McCain**, said this week he has registered as a Democrat and will vote for Vice President **Kamala Harris**, a valuable nod of support for the Democratic nominee in a battleground state.

Meanwhile, Trump's running mate, **Ohio Sen. JD Vance**, appeared outside Phoenix Wednesday for an event with the conservative youth organizing group Turning Point USA, which has been instrumental in remaking the Arizona GOP as a faithful organ of former

Canadian opposition party ends support agreement with Liberals

OTTAWA, Ontario, Sept 5, (AP) — An opposition party in Canada ended a support agreement with Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's Liberal government Wednesday, raising the odds an election could happen before the fall of 2025.

Leftist NDP Leader Jagmeet Singh moved to distance himself from an increasingly unpopular Trudeau.

"The deal is done," Singh said on social media, bringing an abrupt halt to a pact that has kept the government running.

Trudeau's Liberals lack a majority of seats in Parliament and need the support of at least one other party to pass legislation and keep the government alive.

Breaking the deal doesn't mean Trudeau's government automatically falls if a vote of non confidence is

scheduled. Rather, the NDP will determine how to vote on Liberal legislation on a case-by-case basis, and will attempt to squeeze more measures out of them.

The next election is at most a year away, and could happen earlier now depending on the NDP's decisions on future votes.

"I really hope the NDP stays focused on how we can deliver for Canadians, as we have over the past years, rather than focusing on politics," Trudeau said.

Daniel Béland, a political science professor at McGill University in Montreal, said ending the agreement probably increases the odds the election will be before the fixed election date in the fall of 2025, but said the government could still last until then.

President **Donald Trump's** "Make America great again" movement.

Jimmy McCain's endorsement and Vance's Turning Point USA appearance reflect the disparate segments of the GOP that Harris and Trump are trying to reach. Democrats are appealing to traditional conservatives disillusioned by Trump's takeover of the GOP, while Republicans are looking to shore up their base and ensure that their young supporters turn out.

Democrats have made big inroads over the last six years in Arizona, once a Republican stronghold that routinely backed McCain and other Republicans for president, with an anti-Trump coalition that includes Republicans and conservative independents.



WASHINGTON: US Vice President **Kamala Harris** has accepted the rules set forth for next week's debate with

former President **Donald Trump**, although the Democratic nominee says the decision not to keep both candidates' microphones live throughout the matchup will be to her disadvantage.

The development, which came Wednesday by way of a letter from Harris' campaign to host network ABC News, seemed to mark a conclusion to the debate over microphone muting, which had for a time threatened to derail the Sept. 10 presidential debate at the National Constitution Center in Philadelphia.

Harris' acceptance of the debate rules came as Trump - using a night he had proposed as a debate with Harris on Fox News Channel - instead participated in a solo town hall with host **Sean Hannity** in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, a version of debate preparation with a longtime ally who queried him about his plans to take on the Democratic nominee.



Britain's Prime Minister **Keir Starmer** departs 10 Downing Street to go to the House of Commons for his weekly Prime Minister's Questions in London on Sept 4. Priti Patel, who was Britain's interior minister when Boris Johnson was prime minister, has become the first candidate to be eliminated in the Conservative Party's leadership election, two months after the party resoundingly lost power following 14 years in office. (AP)



Trump



Barron

America

Barron Trump enrolled at NYU: Former President **Donald Trump's** youngest son, **Barron Trump**, began his freshman year of college this week at New York University, his father said Wednesday.

Trump revealed the decision in a video interview with the Daily Mail, confirming months of rumors that his son would attend the university's Stern School of Business, which ranks among the nation's top business schools.

"He's a very high aptitude child, but he's no longer a child," Trump said. "He's just passed into something beyond child-dom. He's doing great."

Barron Trump, 18, graduated in May from Oxbridge Academy, an exclusive private school near his father's Mar-a-Lago home in Florida. As a freshman at NYU, he will attend classes a few miles away from his childhood home in Trump Tower, where his father retains a residence.

It wasn't immediately clear if he would live on campus or at home. A spokesperson for NYU did not respond to an emailed inquiry about the enrollment. The Stern campus is located in a bustling area of downtown Manhattan, across the street from the famed Washington Square Park.

Three of Trump's four children - Ivanka Trump, Tiffany Trump, and Donald Trump Jr. - graduated from the University of Pennsylvania, which the former president also attended. (AP)



Firefighters battle wildfire: Firefighters battling a California wildfire that has burned through more than 5 square miles (13 square kilometers) of the high Sierra made significant progress slowing its growth on Wednesday, but hundreds of residents whose homes are threatened remained under evacuation orders.

The battle against a wildfire also got a boost in South Dakota thanks to cooler weather and lighter winds. Residents of the state's second-largest city have been on edge, ready to flee if flames from a nearby blaze moved dangerously close. Estimated containment of the Northern California

fire burning about 50 miles (80 kilometers) north of Lake Tahoe remained at 0%.

Greg Lowdermilk, a sections operation chief for the inter-agency team, said they were continuing to build new fire lines by hand and with bulldozers and began laying additional hose "so we can continue to in-

crease containment." (AP)



Chicago vehicle collision injures 9:

Nineteen people have been hurt after a jail transport van collided Wednesday with another vehicle and struck a pole in northeast-



A group of people thought to be migrants are brought in to Dover, Kent, from a Border Force vessel following a small boat incident in the Channel on Sept 4. A day after 12 migrants died when their small inflatable ripped apart on a failed effort to cross the English Channel, several dozen others made another crossing attempt on a crowded vessel from northern France on Wednesday, as French patrol boats watched it labor through the seas. (AP)

ern Illinois.

Sixteen prisoners were in the van that was traveling to the McHenry County Jail, Grayslake Hainesville Police Chief Jeff Myhra said in a post on Facebook.

The crash occurred about 1 pm in Round Lake when the second vehicle made a left turn in front of the van. Two people were in serious condition. The number of prisoners injured was not immediately released.

The crash was under investigation. Round Lake is about 50 miles (80 kilometers) northwest of Chicago. (AP)



Boy dies after shooting self: An 8-year-old boy has died after accidentally shooting himself with a loaded gun left in a car while his mother was inside a Utah convenience store, police said.

The boy was alone in the car about 7:40 pm Monday in Lehi - a city about 30 miles (48 kilometers) south of Salt Lake City - when he shot himself in the head, Jeantel Livingston with the Lehi City Police Department told KSL-TV. The boy died at a hospital on Tuesday morning, police said.

The shooting appeared to be "unintentional and self-inflicted," police said in a statement. The gun was under a seat in the car, Livingston said. Investigators do not know if the safety was ever on, she said.

Doug Shields said he was putting gas in his vehicle when he heard the gunshot and then a woman screaming. He went to the car where it happened. (AP)

Africa

Uganda athlete dies

Extremists kill 100 in Nigerian village

MAIDUGURI, Nigeria, Sept 5, (AP): At least 100 villagers were killed in northeastern Nigeria when suspected Boko Haram Islamic extremists opened fire on a market, on worshippers and in people's homes, residents said Wednesday, the latest killings in Africa's longest struggle with militancy.

More than 50 extremists on motorcycles rode into the Tarmuwa council area of Yobe state on Sunday evening and began firing before setting buildings ablaze, according to Yobe police spokesperson Dugus Abdulkarim.

The police blamed the attack on Boko Haram, which since 2009 has launched an insurgency to establish its radical interpretation of Islamic law, or Sharia, in the region. Boko Haram has since splintered into different factions, together accounting for the direct deaths of at least 35,000 people and the displacement of more than 2 million, as well as a humanitarian crisis with millions of people in dire need of foreign aid.

At least 1,500 people so far have been killed in the region this year in attacks by armed groups, according to the US-based Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project, or ACLED.

Yobe Deputy Gov. Idi Barde Gubana gave a much lower death toll of 34 from Sunday's attack. Contradictory statistics are a common trend in the security crisis, with the death toll from survivors' count often higher than the official figure.

The 34 dead cited by the deputy governor were the ones buried in a single village, said Zanna Umar, a community leader, who said they have so far confirmed 102 villagers killed in the attack. Most of the others were either buried before officials arrived, or their bodies were taken to other places for burial.

Search

"We are still working to search for more because many people are still missing," said Umar.

Sunday's attack is one of the deadliest in the last year in Yobe. The state is less frequently attacked than neighboring Borno, the epicenter of the war with Boko Haram.

Local media reported that the extremists claimed responsibility for the attack, saying it was in reprisal for villagers informing security operatives about their activities. A number of Boko Haram members were killed as a result of the information passed on by villagers, the militants were quoted as saying.

Reprisals are rampant in the northeast and villagers sometimes "pay the price" after military operations, said Confidence MacHarry with SBM Intelligence, a Lagos-based security firm.

"This is the first time our community has faced such a devastating attack," said Buba Adamu, a local chief, his voice mixed with grief and fear. "We never imagined something like this could happen here."

"There are some places (in the region) totally out of the control of the Nigerian army and villagers often live in fear of reprisals," MacHarry said.

Nigerian President Bola Ahmed Tinubu, who was elected last year on a pledge to end the conflict with Boko Haram, condemned the attack in a statement that tried to assure villagers of justice but was silent about security measures.

Also:

NAIROBI, Kenya: Ugandan Olympic athlete Rebecca Cheptegei has died at a Kenyan hospital where she was being treated after 80% of her body was burned in an attack by her partner. She was 33.

A spokesperson at Moi Teaching and Referral Hospital in Eldoret city, Owen Menach, confirmed Cheptegei's death on Thursday. Menach said the long-distance runner died early in the morning after her organs failed. She had been fully sedated on admission at the hospital.

Cheptegei competed in the women's marathon at the Paris Olympics less than a month before the attack. She finished in 44th place.

Her father, Joseph Cheptegei, told journalists at the hospital that he had lost a daughter who was "very supportive" and hopes to get justice.

Trans Nzoi County Police Commander Jeremiah ole Kosiom said Monday that Cheptegei's partner, Dickson Ndiema, bought a can of gasoline, poured it on her and set her ablaze during a disagreement Sunday. Ndiema was also burned and was being treated at the same hospital.

Menach said Ndiema was still in the intensive care unit with burns over 30% of his body but was "improving and stable."

Cheptegei's parents said their daughter bought land in Trans Nzoi to be near the county's many athletic training centers. A report filed by the local chief said the two were heard fighting over the land where her house was built before the attack.

The Uganda Athletics Federation eulogized Cheptegei on the social platform X, writing, "We are deeply saddened to announce the passing of our athlete, Rebecca Cheptegei, early this morning who tragically fell victim to domestic violence. As a federation, we condemn such acts and call for justice. May her soul rest in Peace."

KINSHASA, Congo: Families of those killed in what authorities called an attempted jailbreak in Congo's biggest prison are demanding answers from the government as activists denounce what they say are inhumane conditions in the nation's overcrowded penitentiaries.

Officials have said that 129 people died, including some who were shot by guards and soldiers, and others who died in a stampede trying to escape the Makala Central Prison in the capital of Kinshasa early on Monday. Justice Minister Constant Mutamba called the attempted jailbreak a "premeditated act of sabotage" and promised a "stern response."

But rights groups and the opposition called for an independent investigation, accusing the government of using excessive force and covering up the true death toll. One prominent activist said more than 200 were killed.

Everick Nzeu, a 25-year-old who died in the chaos, was arrested two months ago in the western part of Kinshasa, and transferred to Makal in a provisional arrest warrant, his mother Madeleine Mbalaka told The Associated Press - without trial or conviction.

"I visited my son on Sunday, he was fine," Mbalaka said. "But around 6 a.m., his roommates called us to tell us he was dead."

Her son left behind an 8-year-old daughter.



In this photo released by Xinhua News Agency, an aerial view shows boats docking near a harbor after the State Flood Control and Drought Relief Headquarters raised its emergency response for flood and typhoon prevention for Typhoon Yagi, in Haikou, south China's Hainan Province on Sept 4. (AP)

School, work suspended in parts of southern China as Typhoon Yagi edges closer

School and work were suspended Thursday in parts of southern China as Typhoon Yagi closed in on an island province with the potential to be the most powerful storm to hit the area in a decade.

The Hong Kong Observatory raised a No. 8 typhoon signal, the third-highest warning under the city's weather system, on Thursday evening. It

said the super typhoon, with maximum sustained winds of 210 kilometers per hour (130 miles per hour), would skirt around 300 kilometers (190 miles) southwest of the financial hub on Friday morning.

Kindergartens, special schools and evening classes were already canceled in the semi-autono-

mous city while the weather remained calm Thursday morning. The Education Bureau announced the city's schools would be suspended on Friday to ensure students' safety.

Dozens of flights were also canceled on Thursday and Friday in the city, with care centers for children and elderly residents closed. (AP)



Bodies of people killed by suspected Boko Haram Islamist extremists are transported for burial, in Tarmuwa, northeast Nigeria on Sept 3. At least 100 villagers were killed in northeastern Nigeria when suspected Boko Haram Islamic extremists opened fire on a market, on worshippers and in people's homes, residents said on Wednesday, the latest killings in Africa's longest struggle with militancy. (AP)



Castro



Bukele

Lat/Am

Honduras prez asked to resign: The head of an anti-corruption organization on Wednesday demanded that Honduran President Xiomara Castro resign after a video was released in which her brother-in-law allegedly received drug money.

"This request is based on the serious accusations of drug trafficking that have been presented against your family, whom you have appointed to work in the State," said Gabriela Castellanos, director of the non-governmental organization the National Anti-Corruption Council, in a public letter to Castro.

The demand comes after a rocky week for Castro, who won the presidency on an anti-corruption campaign.

The day before the letter was sent, a video recorded in 2013 was released purportedly showing drug traffickers currently imprisoned in the United States offering more than \$525,000 to the president's brother-in-law and congressional leader, Carlos Zelaya.

In this video published in an investigation by journalists at InsightCrime, Zelaya said "half of it will go to the commander," referring to his brother, former president Manuel Zelaya. Castro's husband and main adviser who was overthrown in a 2009 coup d'état.

But Zelaya told the press he was unaware the people who attended the meeting were related to drug trafficking.

Castro's brother-in-law Carlos Zelaya was among a few family members who resigned from their positions in government after he admitted to having met with a drug-trafficking group in 2013. (AP)

'End state of emergency': The Inter-American Commission on Human Rights urged El Salvador Wednesday to end the more than two-year state of emergency, which has suspended fundamental civil rights while the government pursued the country's powerful street gangs.

The regional human rights body noted that plunging rates of violence in El Salvador made clear that the state of emergency was no longer justifiable.

"They show the emergency situation has

Asia

'N.Korea again launches trash-carrying balloons'

Japan, Australia to increase army training

MELBOURNE, Australia, Sept 5, (AP): Japan and Australia agreed on Thursday to increase joint military training exercises as their government ministers shared concerns over China's recent incursions into Japanese airspace and territorial waters.

Japanese Foreign Minister Yoko Kamikawa and Japanese Defense Minister Minoru Kihara met for a regular summit with their Australian counterparts, Foreign Minister Penny Wong and Defense Minister Richard Marles in the Australian coastal town of Queensland.

They discussed greater security cooperation in the context of the ministers' shared support for peace and stability in the Taiwan Strait and concerns over China's increasingly aggressive territorial claims in the South and East China Seas, Wong said.

The ministers agreed on more engagement in training exercises involving the two air forces after F-35A Lighting II stealth fighters from both countries joined in combat training over Japan last year in Exercise Bushido Guardian, Marles said.

Participate

Next year, Australia will participate for the first time in Orient Shield, the largest annual field training exercise between the US Army and Japan Ground Self-Defense Force.

Australia and Japan also plan to involve the Japanese Amphibious Rapid Deployment Brigade, a marine unit of the Japan Self-Defense Forces, in annual training rotations of US Marines in the northern Australian city of Darwin.

China's increasingly assertive activity around Japanese waters and airspace has caused unease among Japanese defense officials, who are also concerned about the growing military cooperation between the Chinese and Russian air forces.

'N.Korea flying more balloons': North Korea is flying more trash-carrying balloons toward South Korea, officials said Thursday, in the latest

round of Cold War-style psychological warfare between the rivals.

Since May, North Korea has flown thousands of balloons toward South Korea to drop substances such as wastepaper, cloth scraps, cigarette butts and even manure, in what it described as retaliation against South Korean civilian activists who fly anti-North Korean propaganda leaflets across the border.

North Korea is extremely sensitive to any outside criticism of its authoritarian leadership and its third-generation ruler, Kim Jong Un.

US-Taiwan ties rock solid: The top US envoy to Taiwan on Wednesday said American support for the island is "rock-solid, principled, and bipartisan," and said Washington will continue to follow through on its commitments to ensure the island can defend itself against threats from China.

Claims

Raymond F. Greene's remarks Wednesday came at a time of uncertainty over China's intentions toward the island it claims as its own territory - to be taken by force if necessary - and amid conflicts in Ukraine and the Middle East that threaten to draw the US in further.

Greene made clear Taiwan was a top priority, especially the security of shipping in the crucial Taiwan Strait that divides the island and China.

Malaysia won't bow to demands: Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim said Thursday that Malaysia will not bow to demands by China to stop its oil and gas exploration in the South China Sea as the activities are within the country's waters.

Anwar said Malaysia would continue to explain its stance following China's accusations in a protest note in February to the Malaysian Embassy in Beijing that Kuala Lumpur had infringed on its territory. Malaysia's For-

eign Ministry said Wednesday it was investigating the leak of the diplomatic protest note that was published by a Filipino media outlet on Aug 29.

Indonesia deports Guo: Indonesia on Thursday deported a dismissed Philippine town mayor accused in Manila of helping establish an illegal online gaming and scam center and evading an investigation by the Philippine Senate.

Alice Guo, 34, will continue her legal process in Manila, according to a written statement from Indonesia's Law and Human Rights Ministry's Directorate General of Immigration.

Indonesian police arrested Guo Tuesday in the outskirts of Jakarta. In exchange, Indonesian authorities hope that the Philippines will repatriate Australian Gregor Johann Haas, one of Indonesia's most-wanted drug suspects, who was arrested in central Philippines in May.

Guo was scheduled to undergo a medical checkup at the police headquarters before being handed to the Philippine Senate.

Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos Jr thanked Indonesia for the arrest of Guo.

Maori king laid to rest: They came in their thousands in the freezing dawn, parking cars far away and winding down rural roads on foot, children riding on their shoulders. They arrived in mourning black with crowns of ferns and kawakawa leaves, bone carvings or wedges of deep green pouanamu -- New Zealand jade -- resting on their chests.

The mourners came to the North Island town of Ngāruawāhia on Thursday to pay final respects to New Zealand's Māori king, Tūheitia Pōtatau Te Wherowhero VII, who died six days earlier, and witness the ascension to the throne of his daughter, Ngā wai hono i te po.

The new queen, 27, is the second woman to become Māori monarch in a tradition dating back to 1858.

been overcome and thus a situation that justifies maintaining active the suspension of rights and protections in line with the American Convention no longer exists," the commission said in a report.

El Salvador's Congress granted President Nayib Bukele extraordinary powers to take on the gangs in March 2022 after a surge in gang violence. Since then, lawmakers have renewed the special powers every month,

including this Tuesday.

Human and civil rights organizations have argued that the gangs could be pursued without the suspension of such rights as access to a lawyer or being told why police are arresting you. They argue that there has been little due process in the more than 80,000 arrests made. (AP)

Mexico Congress passes bill: The lower house of Mexico's Congress passed contentious legislation Wednesday that would launch the most sweeping judicial overhaul of the century by requiring all judges to stand for election.

In a marathon session in which legislators were forced to meet in a gymnasium after protesters blocked the Congress building, the lower chamber approved the constitutional measure 359-135 in a party-line first vote just before the sun rose Wednesday morning. The measure, which requires a two-thirds majority, was passed in a second-round vote later that morning, and is now headed to the Senate, where it is expected to pass by a razor-thin margin.

Mexico's ruling party says judges in the current court system are corrupt, and wants the country's entire judicial branch - some 7,000 judges - to stand for election.

Critics say the constitutional changes would deal a severe blow to the independence of the judiciary, and they question how such massive elections could be carried out without having drug cartels and criminals field their own candidates. (AP)



Japanese Defense Minister Minoru Kihara, left, Australian Foreign Minister Penny Wong, second left, Japanese Foreign Minister Yoko Kamikawa and Australian Defence Minister Richard Marles, right, pose for a photo in Queensland, Australia on Sept 5. Japan and Australia agreed on Thursday to increase joint military training exercises as their government ministers shared concerns over China's recent incursions into Japanese airspace and territorial waters. (AP)

oil plunges

The price of Kuwaiti oil dropped by USD 3.24, settling at USD 74.64 per barrel on Wednesday, compared with USD 77.88 pb on Tuesday, said Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) on Thursday.

On a global scale, Brent crude futures' went down USD 1.05 to USD 72.70 pb, and West Texas Intermediate crude dropped by USD 1.14, settling at USD 69.20 pb.

In China - the world's largest oil consumer - data released on Monday revealed that new export orders dropped for the first time in eight months in July, while new homes prices in August increased at their slowest pace this year. (KUNA)

OAPEC Chief highlights Arab potential in low-carbon fuel production

Secretary General of the Organization of Arab Petroleum Exporting Countries (OAPEC) Jamal Al-Loughani said on Thursday that Arab countries have valuable opportunities to become global leaders in the production and export of sustainable and low-carbon fuel.

In a statement to KUNA, Al-Loughani highlighted OAPEC's newly published study about Sustainable Aviation Fuel (SAF), noting that Arab countries possessed the necessary infrastructure and financial resources for renewable energy projects.

The study also reviewed international and regional initiatives aimed at producing and consum-

ing SAF in an effort to reduce carbon emissions from the aviation sector, which was a major contributor to climate change.

Al-Loughani mentioned that global carbon emissions from aviation reached approximately 780 million tons in 2023, representing 2.5 percent of total global emission, he added that this could be triple by 2050, reaching around 2.6 gigatons annually due to the growing demand for air travel.

Despite the large reserves of oil and gas in most Arab countries, Al-Loughani emphasized that many of these nations were at the forefront of diversifying their energy mix and reducing carbon

emissions. He added that oil refineries in OAPEC member states can play a critical role in producing low-carbon aviation fuel by utilizing existing infrastructure, such as storage facilities and pipelines, to lower investment costs.

Al-Loughani acknowledged that the primary obstacle to producing SAF was its high cost, which can range from two to eight times the price of traditional aviation fuel, he stressed that significant political support was needed to bridge this price gap and incentivize the production of sustainable fuel. (KUNA)

Market Movements

05-09-2024

	Change	Closing pts		Change	Closing pts
DUBAI - DFMGI	+6.28	4,371.04	SAUDI - TASI	-28.65	12,099.49
PHILIPPINES - PSEi	+25.85	6,907.97	JAPAN - Nikkei 225	-390.52	36,657.09
EGYPT - EGX 30	+31.51	31,029.70			
PAKISTAN - KSE 100	+88.96	78,938.44			

Business



PR Academy trainees



PR Academy trainees



PR Academy team during the workshop.



Review of Tam services.



Review of Tam services.

Workshop held for PR Academy participants

Tam demonstrates its latest innovative digital services and solutions

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 5: Tam Bank, the first Sharia-compliant digital bank in Kuwait, demonstrated its unique digital services and solutions tailored for customers of all segments, particularly the youth. This was during a workshop held for participants of the PR Academy by KFH program, aiming to educate undergraduate students and fresh graduates on the fundamental aspects of the public relations and media department at KFH.

During the workshop, the team addressed the preparation phase prior to the Tam digital bank launch, including selecting the name, logo, design and the brand that would attract the youth and cater to their aspirations as well as the innovative services and solutions. The team also talked about the social interaction the bank offers to its customers, the method of opening an account, in addition to the exceptional digital banking experience customers can enjoy under a single mobile

application based on cutting-edge technology.

The workshop also highlighted the significance of digital transformation and the Tam's advanced infrastructure, focusing on enriching the youth's banking experience through developed services and exclusive solutions.

On the digital banking front, Tam offers unlimited support to the youth segment at all levels. Customers are able to redeem their points in exchange for offers from famous brands. It also provides weekly offers from different Kuwaiti restaurants and coffee shops.

Customers can directly open an account and enjoy the various online benefits. To open a Tam account, customers must be at least 15 years of age and have a smart phone to download Tam application. When opening an account, customers will have access to a wider array of banking services, including (opening an ac-

count, transferring student allowance, tracking expenses, transferring funds), in addition to rewards program, points, offers and exceptional discounts that meet all their needs, as well as a 24/7 customer service.

It is worth noting that the PR Academy program included workshops and field visits, which are valuable additions to the students' learning journey. Some of the field visits were to KFH Capital, KFH Auto showroom, Coded Academy, Al-Salam Hospital, and the Kuwait Times newspaper, as well as a photography session with the renowned photographer Abdullah Al-Shaiji.

The program also provided students and fresh graduates with the opportunity to gain knowledge in public relations and media through updated and top-notch training methods, allowing them to make the most of their summer break.

Gulf markets tumble amid interest rate cut concerns

Bursa Kuwait loses 192 million dinars

By Mahmoud Shendi
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 5: Amid growing concerns over a potential interest rate cut, Gulf stock markets turned red, leaving investors wary and global market sentiment strained.

In Kuwait, the stock exchange mirrored these fears, as its General Index plummeted by 32.4 points, or 0.4 percent, closing at 7,156 points.

The trading activity saw 210.3 million shares exchanged through 14,992 transactions, with a total value of 46.9 million Kuwaiti dinars (approximately \$153.4 million).

The sharp decline wiped off 192 million dinars from the Boursa Kuwait's market value, reducing it to 42.313 billion dinars from the previous session's 42.505 billion.

This downward trend was driven by heavy selling pressure on most stocks, fueled by investor concerns over possible sharp drops in global markets, as well as apprehensions regarding significant interest rate reductions.

The main market index followed suit, shedding 30.6 points to settle at 6,058 points, after trading 120.6 million shares in 7,618 transactions, worth 18.9 million dinars (\$61.8 million).

This performance reflected broader global anxieties, particularly related to the U.S. economic outlook, which is facing fears of an impending slowdown.

Recent data from the Institute for Supply Management revealed that the U.S. manufacturing sector, while showing slight improvement in August, remained weak after touching an eight-month low in July. These concerns reverberated across Asian and European markets as well, deepening the overall market decline.

The Premier Market Index dipped 34.5 points, or 0.4 percent, closing at 7,793 points with 89.7 million shares traded in 7,374 transactions, totaling 28 million dinars (\$91.6 million).

Similarly, the Main 50 Index dropped 47.3 points, or 0.8 percent, to end at 5,825.5 points, with 71.3 million shares traded through 4,193 cash transactions, valued at 12.9 million dinars (\$42.2 million).

The trading landscape was weighed down by eight declining sectors, led by energy, which fell by 1.19 percent. In contrast, three sectors posted gains, with technology rising by 1.82 percent, while utilities and healthcare remained steady.

On the individual stock level, 74 shares saw their prices

decrease, with "Al-Safa" experiencing the largest drop at 5.58 percent. On the other hand, 38 shares posted gains, led by "Al-Rabita," which surged by 13.01 percent, while 20 shares remained stable.

One standout performer was "EVA," which held steady at 351 fil and dominated trading activity with 20.64 million shares across 1.24 thousand transactions. This performance followed the company's announcement that its Board of Directors had approved the payment of outstanding debts totaling 26.67 million dinars.

Among the top gainers were Al-Rabita, Oula Takaful, Tanzeef, and Osool, while Al Safat, Osos, Hotels, and Injazat were the most significant decliners.

This bearish trend was not limited to Kuwait; it spread across Gulf markets. Saudi Arabia's stock market index fell by 0.54 percent to 12,114.41 points, while Dubai's Financial Market index slid by 0.04 percent to 4,368.17 points.

Abu Dhabi's market index dropped 0.38 percent to 9,343.16 points, and Qatar's stock exchange index declined by 0.65 percent, closing at 10,315.92 points. Bahrain's stock exchange index also saw a dip, slipping by 0.20 percent to 1,944.41 points. The widespread losses in the Gulf markets underscored investor apprehensions over the future course of economic policies and their broader impact on the region's financial health.

Saudi Vision 2030 boosts Kuwaiti investment interest

Kuwaiti firms expand investments in Saudi

JEDDAH, Sept 5, (KUNA): Over recent years, many Kuwaiti companies have markedly proved their presence in the Saudi market by means of running investments in various sectors, contributing to the Saudi economic growth, diversification and prosperity.

Kuwaiti companies are generally active in such sectors as construction, transportation, logistics, food, technology and retail, thus enabling them to play a distinguished and pioneering role in the investment and economic development domain.

This development, in fact, is the outgrowth of recently adopted development and investment policies and measures in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia aiming at creating an effective and attractive economic atmosphere.

In this context, the decision made by the Kuwait Investment Authority (KIA) in June to open a representative office in the kingdom with a view to propping up economic and investment relations between both countries, showed the kingdom's economic development.

Speaking to KUNA, several Kuwaiti investors said that clear-cut insights and facilities offered to entrepreneurs and investors have greatly contributed to drawing investments to the Saudi market.

Abyat Company's CEO Mohammad Abul said the Saudi market has attracted

investors from everywhere, particularly Kuwait due to geographical proximity and close ties and firm bonds between Kuwait and Saudi Arabia.

Speaking highly of the Saudi economy as being the largest Gulf one, Abul said the kingdom's 2030 Vision has brought favorable benefits to the economy, chiefly a congenial legislative atmosphere, streamlined facilities, and investment incentives.

He underlined that Kuwaiti investors, including major companies and funds, are willing to enter the Saudi market in pursuit of investment openings in industrial, commercial, and service sectors.

The fact that Riyadh is set to play host to world events like Riyadh Expo 2030 and World Cup 2034, together with several international exhibitions and conferences, reflects the kingdom's vibrant economy, he said.

Abul pointed out that Abyat, which has been present in the Saudi market since 2012 with investments exceeding KD 50 million (about USD 160 million), intends to inject fresh investments in various domains in the Saudi market.

Aldhahiya Juice's Board Chairman Abdullah Al-Mefarrej said Kuwaiti investors have been interested in investment in Saudi Arabia since it launched an unequivocal, earnest and holistic vision in 2015 aiming at encouraging and

roping in Gulf and foreign investments.

He said that his company had thus decided to enter the Saudi market in 2017 following field visits to the capital, Riyadh to assess the restaurant and food market.

Since 2018, the kingdom has been drawing big investments from small and medium-sized firms of all sectors, leading to growing competition at the Saudi market, Abul remarked.

For his part, Ghaliyah Company's General Manager Abdularazaq Al-Mutawa commended the Saudi market as being promising and attractive at both Gulf and international levels.

He regarded the kingdom's economic growth and development as part of Gulf economic growth in general thanks to government interest in promoting the business environment and diversifying income sources.

The recent wide-scale reforms and steps taken by the Saudi leadership have placed the kingdom on the list of major countries that are able to draw foreign capital and investments, Al-Mutawa added.

The presence of Kuwaiti investors and businessmen in the Saudi market undoubtedly reflects the strong relationship between both countries' governments and peoples, along with continued partnership between both sides' private sectors, he remarked.

Non-performing loans coverage ratio reaches 245.7%

Kuwait's banking sector shows strong stability in financial metrics

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 5: Kuwait's banking sector has demonstrated notable stability in its financial metrics, according to recent reports, reports Al-Jarida daily.

As of the end of the first half of the year, the coverage ratio for non-performing loans (NPLs) reached an impressive 245.7 percent.

This comes as the ratio of non-performing loans to total loans stood at 1.7 percent, returning to levels seen in the third quarter of the previous year. This follows a decrease to 1.4 percent in the fourth quarter of 2023, a slight rise to 1.6 percent in the first quarter of 2024, and stabilizing at 1.7

percent in the second quarter of this year.

In addition, the net non-performing loans to net loans ratio has increased to 1.1 percent, up from 0.9 percent at the end of last year's fourth quarter. This metric highlights the proportion of troubled loans in relation to total net loans.

On the liquidity front, the sector's regulatory liquidity ratio stood at 21.4 percent, surpassing the minimum required threshold of 18 percent.

This ratio includes balances with the Central Bank of Kuwait, government treasury bills and bonds, and customer deposits in dinars.

The capital adequacy ratio for the sector was reported at 18.1 percent, while the ratio of Tier 1 capital to the capital base reached 84.3 percent, reflecting a robust capital position.

Official data also revealed that the net interest margin for the sector was 2.9 percent. The ratio of basic income to operating income improved to 83.4 percent, up from 81.6 percent in the previous quarter.

Moreover, the sector's net profit margin was recorded at 40.7 percent, with a return on average equity of 10.8 percent and a return on average assets of 1.4 percent.

Yellen says ending Biden tax incentives would be ‘historic mistake’ for states like North Carolina

Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen is warning voters in the battleground state of North Carolina that they could lose jobs if Republicans weaken a signature Biden administration law that encourages investments in manufacturing and clean energy.

Yellen says that Republican-dominated states like North Carolina are greatly benefiting from tax incentives under the 2022 Inflation Reduction Act and that eliminating them would be a "historic mistake," according to a draft of a speech she will give Thursday at a community college in Raleigh. The Treasury Department released the remarks ahead of the address.

North Carolina has emerged as a key battleground this election cycle between Republican former President Donald Trump and Democratic Vice President Kamala Harris, where Trump ultimately won North Carolina in the 2020 presidential election.

Yellen says Treasury data shows that 90,000 North Carolina households claimed more than \$100 million in residential clean energy credits and \$60 million in energy efficiency credits.

"Rolling them back could raise costs for working families at a moment when it's imperative that we continue to take action to lower prices," Yellen says in her speech. "It could jeopardize the significant investments in manufacturing we're seeing here and across the country, along with the jobs that come with them, many of which don't require a college degree. And it could give a leg-up to China and other countries that are also investing to compete in these critical industries."

"As we see clearly here in North Carolina, this would be a historic mistake," she says.

Some Republicans have called on their leaders to reconsider repealing IRA energy tax incentives.

A group of 18 House Republicans in August called on House Speaker Mike Johnson to reconsider efforts to eliminate them.

"Prematurely repealing energy tax credits, particularly those which were used to justify investments that already broke ground, would undermine private investments and stop development that is already ongoing," the letter reads. "A full repeal would create a worst-case scenario where we would have spent billions of taxpayer dollars and received next to nothing in return."

But Rep. Chip Roy, R-Texas, tweeted on social media site X that the lawmakers who signed the letter want to "preserve so-called 'green' handouts to Democrats' corporate cronies." (AP)

Higher prices squeeze more Americans

Even bargain chain stores see spending pullback

WASHINGTON, Sept. 5, (AP) Dollar Tree is slashing its full-year earnings and sales forecasts as its customers continue to struggle with higher prices and spend less.

Shares tumbled more than 20% Wednesday after hitting a 52-week low on the prior day. The biggest one-day sell-off for Dollar Tree shares in more than 20 years arrived less than a week rival bargain chain Dollar General reported a dismal quarter and suffered its largest single-day slump ever.

Dollar Tree has been trying to lure customers from other retailers using its rock-bottom prices, but juggernauts like Walmart and Target have also said their customers are under pressure and they're cutting prices, too.

That has left little leeway for bargain stores because huge chains like Target are cutting prices on groceries, a huge draw for customers who are likely to shop for other items at Target and skip an additional trip to a dollar store.

"Dollar stores have lost market share to larger retailers

that have broadened their offerings and gained customer loyalty through everyday low prices," said Jaronne Martis, director of consumer research, analytics and AI at LSEG.

And the economic headwinds that first hit low-income customers at Dollar Tree appear to be climbing upward to those who are better off, according to company executives.

"Dollar Tree has a broader customer base that includes more middle and upper-income households and beginning this quarter, we started to see inflation, interest rates, and other macro pressures have a more pronounced impact on the buying behavior of these customers," said Chief Operating Officer Mike Creden.

Dollar Tree now expects full-year adjusted earnings between \$5.20 and \$5.60 per share, down from a range of \$6.50 to \$7.

The Chesapeake, Virginia, company also projected annual sales in a range of \$30.6 billion to \$30.9 billion,

down from \$31 billion to \$32 billion. Both of those numbers fall short of Wall Street projections and it showed in the retailer's plunging stock Wednesday.

Dollar Tree's second quarter adjusted revenue was \$7.37 billion, short of the \$7.5 billion that analysts surveyed by Zacks Investment Research expected.

Dollar Tree earned \$132.4 million, or 62 cents per share, for the period ended Aug. 3. Stripping out certain items, earnings were 67 cents per share, 36 cents short of Wall Street projections.

Though inflation is slowing, Americans continue to struggle with sharply higher prices for such necessities as gas, food and housing compared with their pre-pandemic levels.

For the third quarter, Dollar Tree anticipates adjusted earnings between \$1.05 and \$1.15 per share, with revenue in a range of \$7.4 billion to \$7.6 billion. That, too, is shy of Wall Street expectations for per-share earnings of

\$1.31 and revenue of \$7.58 billion.

Dollar Tree is also wrestling with internal problems that have hampered growth.

In June the company said that it was looking at strategic options for the Family Dollar stores that it owns, including a possible sale.

Dollar Tree acquired Family Dollar nearly a decade ago for more than \$8 billion after a bidding war with Dollar General. But it's had difficulty incorporating Family Dollar into its business and recently announced that it would close nearly 1,000 stores, with most of them being Family Dollar locations.

"On the bottom line, net income is down by a third," said Neil Saunders, managing director of GlobalData. "The overall impression is that Dollar Tree has quickly moved from a company that was advancing to one that is simply treading water. Though, to be fair, most of this is because of the troubles at Family Dollar."

Not so for many looking for one

Americans who have a job are feeling 'secure'

WASHINGTON, Sept 5, (AP) Laid off by the music streaming service Spotify last year, Jovoy Arias figured he'd land another job as a software engineer fairly soon. His previous job search, in 2019, had been a breeze.

"Back then," he said, "I had tons of recruiters reaching out to me - to the point where I had to turn them down."

Arias did find another job recently, but only after an unexpected ordeal.

"I thought it was going to be something like three months," said Arias, 39. "It turned into a year and three months."

As Arias and other jobseekers can attest, the American labor market, red-hot for the past few years, has cooled. The job market is now in an unusual place: Jobholders are mostly secure, with layoffs low, historically speaking. Yet the pace of hiring has slowed, and landing a job has become harder. On Friday, the government will report on whether hiring slowed sharply again in August after a much-weaker-than-expected July job gain.

"If you have a job and you're happy with that job and you want to hold onto that job, things are pretty good right now," said Nick Bunker, economic research director for North America at the Indeed Hiring Lab. "But if you're out of work or you have a job and you want to switch to a new one, things aren't as rosy as they were a couple of years ago."

Since peaking in March 2022 as the economy accelerated out of the pandemic recession, the number of listed job openings has dropped by more than a third, according to the government's latest monthly report on openings and hiring.

Temporary-help firms have reduced jobs for 26 of the past 28 months. That's a telling sign: Economists generally regard temp jobs as a harbinger for where the job market is headed because many employers hire temps before committing to full-time hires.

In a roundup this week of local economic conditions, the Federal Reserve's regional banks reported signs of a decelerating job market. Staffing agencies have said that job gains have slowed "as firms are approaching hiring decisions with greater hesitancy," the New York Fed found. "Job candidates are lingering on the market longer."

The Minneapolis Fed said that a staffing agency reported that "businesses are getting a lot more picky" about whom they hire. And the Atlanta Fed found that "only a few" companies planned to step up hiring.

Job-hopping, so rampant two years ago, has slowed as workers have gradually lost confidence in their ability

to find better pay or working conditions somewhere else. Just 3.3 million Americans quit their jobs in July, compared with a peak of 4.5 million in April 2022.

"People are staying put because they're afraid they won't find new jobs," said Aaron Terrazas, chief economist at the employment website Glassdoor.

And the Labor Department has reported, in its annual revised estimates of employment growth, that the economy added 818,000 fewer jobs in the 12 months that ended in March than it had previously estimated.

In one respect, it's not at all surprising that the pace of hiring is now moderating. Job growth in 2021 and 2022, as the economy roared back from the COVID-19 recession, was the most explosive on record. Workers gained leverage they hadn't enjoyed in decades. Companies scrambled to hire fast enough to keep up with surging sales. Many employers had to jack up pay and offer bonuses to keep employees.

It was inevitable - and even healthy, economists say, in the long run - for hiring to slow, thereby easing pressure on wage growth and inflation pressures. Otherwise, the economy could have overheated and forced the Fed to tighten credit so aggressively as to cause a recession.

The post-pandemic jobs boom was a marked contrast to the sluggish recovery from the Great Recession of 2007-2009. Back then, it took more than six years for the economy to recover the jobs that had been lost. By contrast, the breathtaking pandemic job losses of 2020 - 22 million - were reversed in less than 2 1/2 years.

Still, the surging economy ignited inflation, leading the Fed to raise interest rates 11 times in 2022 and 2023 to try to cool the job market and slow inflation. And for a while, the economy and the job market appeared immune from higher borrowing costs. Consumers kept spending, businesses kept expanding and the economy kept growing.

But eventually the continued high rates began leaving their mark. Several high-profile companies, including tech giants like Spotify, announced layoffs last year in the face high interest rates. Outside of the economy's technology sector, though, and, to a lesser extent, finance, most American companies haven't cut jobs. The number of people filing first-time applications for unemployment benefits is barely above where it was before the pandemic struck.

Yet the same companies that are keeping workers aren't necessarily adding more.

US employment openings fall as demand for workers 'weakens'

7.7m open jobs in July, down from 7.9m

WASHINGTON, Sept 5, (AP) America's employers posted fewer job openings in July than they had the previous month, a sign that hiring could further cool in the coming months.

The Labor Department reported Wednesday that there were 7.7 million open jobs in July, down from 7.9 million in June and the fewest since January 2021. Openings have fallen steadily this year, from nearly 8.8 million in January.

Layoffs rose from 1.56 million to 1.76 million, the most since March 2023, though that level of job cuts is roughly consistent with pre-pandemic levels, when the unemployment rate was historically low. Layoffs have been unusually low since the economy's rapid recovery from the pandemic recession, with many employers intent on holding onto their workers.

Overall, Wednesday's report painted a mixed picture of the job market. On the positive side, total hiring rose in July, to 5.5 million, after it had fallen to a four-year low of 5.2 million in June. And the number of people who quit their jobs ticked up slightly, to about 3.3 million. The number of quits is seen as a measure of the job market's health: Workers typically quit when they already have a new job or when they're confident they can find one.

Still, quits remain far below the peak of 4.5 million reached in 2022, when many workers shifted jobs as the economy accelerated out of the pandemic recession. The spike in quits at that time helped drive up wage gains as companies jacked up pay to try to find or keep employees. The current lower level of quits suggests that wage increases will likely remain modest, which should help further cool inflation.

Stephen Stanley, an economist at Santander, noted that July's job openings are still about 7% above 2019 levels, when hiring was healthy.

"Labor demand is still solid, albeit moderating," he said.

Wednesday's figures indicate that fewer companies are seeking to add workers despite recent data showing that consumer spending is still growing. Last week, the government estimated that the economy expanded at a healthy 3% annual rate in the April-June quarter.

In July, job openings fell sharply in health care and state and local government and also dropped in warehousing and transportation. Openings rose in manufacturing and professional and business services, a category that includes legal services and engineering and accounting.

Even as openings have fallen for the past two years, there are still roughly 1.1 job openings for every unemployed person, Wednesday's report showed. That reflects the economy's continuing need for workers and marks a reversal from before the pandemic, when there were always more unemployed people than available jobs.



A construction worker installs a safety railing on a new building in Philadelphia, Tuesday, Sept. 3, 2024. (AP)

Nordstrom department store chain gets a \$3.76b bid from the Nordstrom family

NEW YORK, Sept 5, (AP) Members of the Nordstrom family with the help of a Mexican retail group are offering to take the century-old department store private for \$3.76 billion, months after first expressing interest in a buy-out.

In a letter to the board of directors dated Tuesday, Erik Nordstrom said the Nordstrom family members own about 33.4% of the company's outstanding common stock and is willing to pay investors \$23 for each share they own.

The Mexican retail group, called El Puerto de Liverpool, operates more than 300 stores in Mexico and is that nation's third-largest credit card issuer with over 7.2 million active accounts. It already owns approximately 9.6% of Nordstrom stock.

The offer represents a premium of nearly 35% to Nordstrom's stock since March 18 when media reports about the proposed transaction first emerged, shares have rallied this year and traded for just above \$23 on Wednesday.

"That the Nordstrom family have

made an offer to buy the department store chain comes as no surprise. What is interesting is the \$23 a share value which is pretty much the current price of the stock, said Neil Saunders, managing director of GlobalData. "The lack of any real premium would, under normal circumstances, make the offer unattractive. However, as a family-run firm the dynamics are slightly different, and it will be up to an independent committee to determine whether this is in the best interests of the company and its investors."

Nordstrom last month reported sales growth of 3.4% in the second quarter, as sales in stores open at least a year - a key metric of a retailer's health - rose 1.9%. But net income slipped nearly 11% to \$122 million. Adjusted earnings per share totaled 96 cents, and overall results beat analyst estimates. Besides its namesake upscale stores, the company also operates discount Nordstrom Rack stores, which have become a strength.

Sales at Nordstrom Rack jumped

8.8% in the most recent quarter and its comparable sales rose 4.1%.

"The offer comes at a time when Nordstrom is getting back on track after a long period of poor performance," Saunders said. "However, the business remains one of two halves. The department store division has various structural challenges, while the off-price Rack division is starting to produce some good growth. This mixed outlook will limit the amount any party is willing to pay."

Erik B. and Peter E. Nordstrom are the fourth-generation leaders of the retailer, which was founded in 1901 as a shoe store. Erik is the company's chief executive and Peter is president. In the regulatory filing the family cited the health of their late father Bruce Nordstrom as one impetus behind the proposed transaction. Former chairman Bruce Nordstrom died in May at 90 years old.

The Nordstroms and their partner say they have commitments for \$250 million in new bank financing.

British competition watchdog clears Microsoft's hiring of AI startup's staff

LONDON, Sept 5, (AP) British regulators on Wednesday cleared Microsoft's hiring of key staff from startup Inflection AI, saying the deal wouldn't stifle competition in the country's artificial intelligence market.

The Competition and Markets Authority had opened a preliminary investigation in July into Microsoft's recruitment of Inflection's core team, including co-founder and CEO Mustafa Suleyman, chief scientist Karen Simonyan and several top engineers and researchers.

The watchdog said its investigation found that the hirings amounted to a "merger situation" but that the "transaction does not give rise to a realistic prospect of a substantial lessening of competition."

Big technology companies have been facing scrutiny on both sides of the Atlantic lately for gobbling up talent and products at innovative AI startups without formally acquiring

them.

Three U.S. Senators called for the practice to be investigated after Amazon pulled a similar maneuver this year in a deal with San Francisco-based Adept that sent its CEO and key employees to the e-commerce giant. Amazon also got a license to Adept's AI systems and datasets.

The U.K. watchdog said Microsoft hired "almost all of Inflection's team" and licensed its intellectual property, which gave it access to the startup's AI model and chatbot development capabilities.

Inflection's main product is a chatbot named Pi that specializes in "emotional intelligence" by being "kind and supportive."

However, the CMA said the deal won't result in a big loss of competition because Inflection has a "very small" share of the U.K. consumer market for chatbots, and it lacks chatbot features that make it more attractive than rivals.

that could explode in value if he's elected and gets the power to push through legislative and regulatory changes long sought by crypto advocates.

"Taking a pro-crypto stance is not necessarily troubling; the troubling aspect is doing it while starting a way to personally benefit from it," said Jordan Libowitz, a spokesperson for the government watchdog group Citizens for Responsibility and Ethics in Washington.

Trump's crypto business could create more conflicts if he's elected president

WASHINGTON, Sept 5, (AP) Donald Trump is promising to make America the "crypto capital of the planet" if he returns to the White House. Fulfilling that promise would likely pay off for him personally.

Amidst his run for president, Trump has launched a new venture to trade cryptocurrencies that he's promoting on the same social media accounts he uses for his campaign. His two eldest sons, Donald Jr. and Eric, are also posting

about their new platform, called World Liberty Financial, as is his daughter-in-law, Lara Trump, who is married to Eric and also serves as co-chair of the Republican National Committee.

Trump has long melded his political and business interests, promoting his hotels and golf courses in the White House while selling sneakers, Bibles and shares in his social media company during his current campaign. Now, Trump has launched a new moneymaking venture

that could create more conflicts if he's elected and gets the power to push through legislative and regulatory changes long sought by crypto advocates.

"Taking a pro-crypto stance is not necessarily troubling; the troubling aspect is doing it while starting a way to personally benefit from it," said Jordan Libowitz, a spokesperson for the government watchdog group Citizens for Responsibility and Ethics in Washington.

"The success of this could be very tied to American economic policy," Libowitz said.

Cryptocurrencies are forms of digital money that can be traded over the internet without relying on the global banking system. They are commonly traded on exchanges, which are marketplaces that can be used to buy, sell and trade cryptocurrencies. Exchanges often charge fees for withdrawals of Bitcoin and other currencies.



Photos during the promotion.

LuLu Hypermarket launches 'Let's Eatalian 2024' promotion

LuLu Hypermarket has launched the 'Let's Eatalian 2024' promotion, celebrating Italian 'bellavita' or the 'beautiful life', with special offers and discounts on all Italian branded products and authentic Italian foods.

The promotion, which takes shoppers on a gastronomic journey to the heart of Italy, runs from 4-10 September at all outlets of the hypermarket.

Inauguration of the Italian festival was held at the

LuLu Hypermarket Qurain outlet, with the esteemed presence of the Italian Ambassador H.E. Lorenzo Morini. Displays of iconic Italian monuments created a captivating ambience that transported shoppers to the picturesque streets of Italy, while the sounds of Italian music filled the air, adding to the festive atmosphere.

The promotion offers a unique opportunity for food enthusiasts to discover the sterling flavors of Italian

cuisine. From classic pizzas and pastas to regional specialties, the Italian food street stalls offer a wide selection of original dishes. LuLu Hypermarket has also curated a special selection of Italian branded food products, offering shoppers the opportunity to taste Italy's delicacies at irresistible prices. Also on offer were gourmet ingredients and household essentials at incredible prices, allowing shoppers a wide selection of

products that cater to their preference.

The week-long journey through Italy's piquant culinary world not only tickled the taste buds of shoppers but also deepened their appreciation for Italian cuisine. With each dish savored and new products discovered, shoppers have truly experienced a slice of Italy, right in Kuwait. Until next time, 'ciao' to a gastronomic voyage that has brought the essence of Italy closer to home.

Bank supports Kuwaiti talents with e-sports card benefits

Warba Bank honors Kuwait's first female to win E-Sports Arab Cup in Saudi Arabia

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 5: Warba Bank celebrated the achievement of Kuwaiti player Awdah Saleh Al-Shalayhi, who secured a historic victory by winning first place in the "Tekken" competition at the latest edition of the Arab E-Sports League held in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. The event featured nearly 50 players from 18 Arab countries, competing for valuable prizes totalling 100,000 Saudi Riyals.

Warba Bank emphasized the capabilities of Kuwaiti youth in achieving significant milestones in various e-sports tournaments. Al-Shalayhi's win marked the first of its kind for Kuwait in Arab participation in the game.

Warba Bank remains committed to recognizing national sports talents, reflecting this dedication by honoring Al-Shalayhi during her visit to the bank. The award was presented by Ahmed Al-Qatami, Chief Retail Banking Officer Retail Banking Group.

Warba Bank continues its support for athletes and champions who achieve distinguished positions in global competitions, elevating Kuwait's presence on international platforms. In celebration of this achievement, Mohannad Eissa Borhamah, Director Products & Segments Retail Banking Group at Warba Bank, expressed pride in Al-Shalayhi's historic victory, highlighting the outstanding performance that brought great honour to Kuwait.

Warba Bank has recently launched a special "Game Edition" card tailored for e-sports enthusiasts. The special



Ahmed Al-Qatami honors Awdah Al-Shalayhi.

edition card offers exclusive benefits, including discounts with gaming platforms and electronic sports competitions, along with various promotional offers through the eSports store. The card also provides users with easy top-up and withdrawal options, seamless registration with digital wallets such as Apple Pay, and secure transactions in the world of eSports.

Borhamah noted that the card's functionality extends beyond secure and convenient financial transactions in the world of electronic sports. It can also be used internationally, enhancing its value for travel and online shopping

at global retailers.

Warba Bank remains dedicated to supporting Kuwaiti talents and aims to maintain its leadership in providing innovative digital Islamic banking services to individuals, cementing its role as a key player in the local market. Warba Bank is among the leading banks that have achieved significant success in recent years, especially in the field of digital Islamic banking services for individuals. This is one of the bank's most distinguished achievements, reflecting its commitment to being close to all members of the community.

Bank promotes financial security and fraud prevention tips

NBK advises vigilance, asking customers to verify chalet booking sites before making any payments

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 5: National Bank of Kuwait (NBK) remains steadfast in its support of the "Let's Be Aware" campaign, an initiative launched by the Central Bank of Kuwait (CBK) in collaboration with Kuwaiti banks and Kuwait Banking Association (KBA). This campaign aims to foster banking culture within the community and improve financial literacy.

The bank is ramping up its efforts to spread educational materials and awareness content through various communication platforms and through its extensive digital channels. This includes sharing videos, text messages, and practical tips. Additionally, NBK is republishing Central Bank of Kuwait's messages to enhance awareness across all segments of society, educating them about different fraud methods and effective prevention strategies.

Through this campaign, NBK highlights the deceptive tactics used by fraudsters to access customer data or steal money through fake reservations for hotel apartments or chalets. Unscrupulous companies often lure customers by showcasing videos of luxurious chalets with stunning sea views on social media at unrealistically low prices. They require a substantial advance payment to secure the reservation, only for customers to discover later that the reservation was made through a fictitious company or for a completely different property than what was advertised.

NBK warns against engaging with unreliable companies and websites



Diraya Logo

- NBK warns customers not to be tempted by enticing offers and low prices for chalet rentals advertised on social media.
- The bank maintains its commitment to offering advice and guidance through its most widely followed digital channels in Kuwait.
- Scammers use AI techniques to send bank payment links from outside Kuwait, making them appear as if they come from local numbers.

for booking hotels and chalets. The bank emphasizes the importance of verifying the credibility of any company, site, or broker involved in the rental process. Customers are advised to inspect the property directly before finalizing the reservation and making any payments to avoid falling victim to fraud.

The bank urges caution before clicking on payment links, as fraudsters often send bank links from outside the country using numbers that appear local, employing advanced artificial intelligence (AI) techniques to deceive

victims.

NBK plays a crucial role in educating diverse segments of society about financial literacy and maximizing the use of its services. The bank utilizes its extensive network of branches and its highly engaged online channels to lead in educating and informing customers, setting a benchmark among Kuwaiti banks.

NBK's commitment to customer education is a cornerstone of its strategy. The bank emphasizes the importance of adhering to general security guidelines to prevent electronic fraud, including regularly updating passwords and not sharing them with anyone claiming to be from the bank.

The "Let's Be Aware" campaign stands as the region's largest initiative dedicated to elevating banking and financial literacy among customers. It tackles crucial topics such as preventing fraud, understanding high-risk investments, optimizing the use of banking services, and fostering a culture of savings and investment.

NBK is a key supporter and partner in all Central Bank of Kuwait (CBK) campaigns and initiatives focused on enhancing financial awareness and banking education across society. As the largest financial institution in Kuwait and the region, NBK actively organizes a range of events aimed at educating the community on vital banking issues and offers numerous training courses to its employees to strengthen their expertise in fraud prevention and combating financial crimes.

Barrio Fiesta 2024 set in November

Pinoy Arabia ME celebrates 10th anniversary with 'Thanksgiving Night' event

By Michelle Fe Santiago

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 5: Pinoy Arabia ME, the leading and only Filipino online radio station and only Filipino social media platform duly licensed by the Kuwait Ministry of Information held its "Thanksgiving Night - A Decade & Beyond" on August 28, 2024 at the Grand Majestic Hotel in Kuwait City to kickstart the series of events to mark its 10th anniversary celebration this year.

The event was graced by Philippine Ambassador to Kuwait Jose Cabrera III, Philippine Labour Attache Atty. Manuel Dimaano, Consul Alex Vallespin, Vice Consul Aaron Erick Lozada, Vice Consul Jordan Ysabel Morales, Assistant Labour Attache Cathrine Duladul, Welfare Officer Genevieve Ardiente, Welfare Officer Emmanuel Santiago Diaz and Philippine Embassy Protocol Officer Nong Villar.

"We would like to congratulate Pinoy Arabia on its 10th anniversary. We are glad to be partners of Pinoy Arabia and we would like this to continue through the next few decades with all your support," stated Cabrera.

Plaques of recognition and appreciation were presented by Pinoy Arabia ME Media Director Maxxy Santiago to the partners and supporters of Pinoy Arabia ME for the past decade that have helped the community online radio in providing a venue of pure entertainment, verified news and information to the Filipinos in Kuwait and the expatriate community. Santiago thanked all those who have supported Pinoy Arabia since its establishment in 2014.

Present also during the occasion were members of the Pinoy Arabia team namely Mark the Spark, Red, Kris, Erika, Neil, Julie, Rosie and Denzil while Ben Garcia is on leave.

The event also featured the heart-warming intermission numbers of Filipino singers Ivy Laughton and Denzil Buenaventura. The audience was also treated to a captivating serenata by



The Pinoy Arabia team with Philippine Ambassador to Kuwait Jose Cabrera III (6th from left), Consul Alex Vallespin (7th from right), Labour Attache Atty Manuel Dimaano (5th from left), Assistant Labour Attache Cathrine Duladul (4th from left) and PAG-IBIG Kuwait Representative Mac Khalil (6th from right).



PAG-IBIG Fund Kuwait Representative Mac Khalil with Consul Alex Vallespin and Assistant Labour Attache Cathrine Duladul.



Editha Hael, owner of Yazzeemir International Manpower Services.



Power couple Janete Bruha Eve and Jaill Marvin.



The Pinoy Ambulance Nurses in Kuwait (PANIK).

violinist Nancy Alsafadi. Some guests also had fun having their caricature drawn by multi-awarded Filipino artist Buboy Aguilar as a souvenir.

The Thanksgiving Night is a prelude to the grand 10th anniversary celebration - the Pinoy Arabia Barrio Fiesta 2024 which is set on November 8, 2024 with the full details to be announced later. One of the event's highlights will be the DJ Quest 2024.

Now on its 10th year, Pinoy Arabia ME continues to sizzle and conquer the airwaves with its new programs to inform and entertain its over almost half a million organic followers.

Pinoy Arabia ME, since its launch on October 30, 2014 at Marina FM,

has generated a sensational following and a great number of listeners not only in Kuwait but in the GCC countries and beyond.

Pinoy Arabia ME fully supported by the Philippine Embassy in Kuwait and Filipino community organizations, plays Filipino and English current and old hits with regular guests from the

Philippine Embassy and other visiting Philippine government officials as well as known personalities and dignitaries in Kuwait. It caters to Filipino community events and other vital announcements. Pinoy Arabia has become one of the trusted sources of information among the Filipino community especially at the time of the COVID-

19pandemic.

Pinoy Arabia ME has carved its niche as a reliable source of information for Overseas Filipinos and a venue of pure entertainment.

Pinoy Arabia ME's core value is public service at its finest - the heart that propels Pinoy Arabia ME to do what it does best.

Netflix's 'Rebel Ridge' is sharp, tense thriller with fresh twist

By Mark Kennedy

Rebel Ridge" opens with a shot of a lanky, muscular stranger riding into a small, corrupt Southern town - a scene we've all seen plenty of times. Except this stranger isn't in a truck or on a horse. He's on a bicycle.

It's one of many ways that writer-director Jeremy Saulnier both honors and has fun with movie conventions on his way to making clearly one of the best things on Netflix.

The tight, taut and tension-filled "Rebel Ridge" is the story of a former Marine who arrives in Shelby Springs, Louisiana, to post his cousin's bond and gets sucked into taking on its shady law enforcement department.

The last time a relative came to help his cousin from the clutches of less-than-ideal small town Southern legal system it was a comedy with Joe Pesci and a hero named Vinny. If you ever needed a hint that this isn't that movie, the opening sequence is scored to Iron Maiden.

The movie stars Aaron Pierre as our former Marine, Terry Richmond, a man with mad martial arts and survival skills (he catches fish with his bare hands), and, on the opposite side, Don Johnson as the courtly but deadly chief of police, as venal as Richmond is noble. Both seem absolutely to adore their gun-slugging, testosterone-filled roles.

Saulnier - who dealt with frontier justice and lawlessness in his previous "Blue Ruin" and "Green Room" - has given this action-thriller loads of social context: racism, opioid addiction, the cash bail system, small-

town funding and militarized cops.

Like its leading man, "Rebel Ridge" is a lean, muscular movie with few over-the-top special effects, save for Pierre's spectacular eyes. It's a triumph of small-budget, naturalistic filmmaking, where cars on a gravel road kick up choking clouds of dust and arm bones crack when pressure is applied.

Contest

The script is spare - allowing for some homespun poetry like "You know the thing about a pissing contest? Everybody gets piss on their boots" - and without an ounce of fat. So if a bottle of coconut water is brought up in one scene, it's going to be used in another. There are interesting camera angles, like the backseat of a speeding car or a tense cell phone call inside an old-fashioned phone booth.

There's also great use of dramatic underscoring by Brooke and Will Blair, who build discordant waves that grow slack, only to reappear like a shark. The score - including "Wayfaring Stranger" by Neko Case or "Right Brigade" by Bad Brains - are heard only on car radios or headphones or playing in restaurants. Distant thunder sounds often.

Our ex-Marine - described by one officer as "unarmed but considered dangerous" - forges an unlikely ally in a court clerk, played winningly by AnnaSophia Robb, and there's a plumb role for James Cromwell, too.

"Rebel Ridge" has whiffs of all kinds of other movies, from "First Blood" to spaghetti Westerns, while the script even humanizes the bad

guys - "Just because you was right doesn't make us wrong," the chief says to our hero.

There's a conspiracy at the heart of the town and you likely won't be able to turn off the movie before finding out if one well-trained stranger can save the day, as things gloriously escalate. "It's gotten out of hand. Real soup sandwich," says our hero. That's not what ended up on your TV screen, though - it's the very opposite of a mess.

"Rebel Ridge," a Netflix release that begins streaming on Friday, is rated TV-MA for "language, smoking and violence." Running time: 131 minutes. Three and half stars out of four.

Also:

LOS ANGELES: Emma Stone gives a performance (and interpretive dance) worth watching in "Kinds of Kindness," her latest collaboration with Yorgos Lanthimos fresh on the heels of her Oscar-winning turn in "Poor Things." The film currently streaming on Hulu, is a triptych with a big ensemble cast including Willem Dafoe, Jesse Plemons (who won a prize for his performance at Cannes), Hong Chau, Margaret Qualley, Mamoudou Athie and Joe Alwyn. Jocelyn Noveck, in her AP review, described it as "a meditation on our free will and the ways we willingly forfeit it to others - in the workplace, at home, and in religion." Noveck wrote that the "Stone-Lanthimos pairing... is continuing to nurture an aspect of Stone's talents that increasingly sets her apart: Her fearlessness and the obvious joy she derives from it." (AP)

Film

Variety



This image released by Paramount Pictures shows director Ridley Scott, center, Paul Mescal on the set of 'Gladiator II.' (AP)

Film

Filmmaker shows no signs of slowing down at 86

Scott rebuilds Rome for 'Gladiator II'

NEW YORK, Sept 5, (AP) - An inevitable fact of interviewing Ridley Scott is that, whatever movie he's about to release, you'll find him already knee-deep in his next project.

Scott, Hollywood's perpetual rolling stone even at age 86, may be preparing to unveil "Gladiator II," one of his biggest epics yet, but at the moment he's got the Bee Gees on the brain. Scott is developing a biopic on the Gibb brothers. On a recent Zoom call from his office in Los Angeles, he was surrounded by meticulously plotted storyboards.

Scott is enthusiastic about the project. "I think the word is beyond talented. They were gifted," he says - even if the Bee Gees brand of music seems quite distant from the no-nonsense British director.

"I'm not a disco guy," Scott says. "I dance like a (expletive) plowman."

Scott is on more familiar turf in "Gladiator II," which Paramount Pictures will release Nov. 22. He's back in ancient Rome, among sandals, swords and glistening biceps, for a sequel to his best picture-winning "Gladiator," with Russell Crowe and Joaquin Phoenix. "Gladiator II" is set a couple decades after that film. It focuses on the grandson of former emperor Marcus Aurelius - a minor character in "Gladiator" now played by Paul Mescal - who's mentored as a gladiator by a former slave with aspirations of seizing Rome, Macrinus (Denzel Washington). Pedro Pascal co-stars as the Roman general Marcus Acacius.

"Sequels are always kind of suspect," says Scott. "But to begin with, we had a good logical stepping stone into who next, who survived and where did he go."

Aside from numerous "Alien" films, Scott has largely eschewed sequels throughout his career. "Gladiator II" had been in development, off and on, for two decades, though. And it ultimately swelled to one of Scott's most massive projects - which is saying something for a filmmaker who just released a 3 1/2-hour cut of his 2023 epic, "Napoleon." Some reports have pegged the budget for "Gladiator II" at above \$300 million.

But Scott believes in the movie so much that he's called it his best. Why?

"It's to frighten the others," he says, chuckling. "And I think I might be right. I don't want to count my chickens. But it's pretty (expletive) good."

Part of Scott's confidence comes from his belief in his cast, particularly Mescal, the Irish actor who broke out on the series "Normal People" before starring in acclaimed films like "Aftersun" and "All of Us Strangers."

"Eighteen months ago I found a show, 'Normal People.' I think for me it looks a bit suburban, et cetera, et cetera. I watch one, then I watch another. I say, 'Who is this guy?' Both the guy and the girl were absolutely interesting. From that, I cast Paul Mescal," Scott says. "You know, Paul has got that harsh profile with the nose. And then a little bit of Albert Finney. There's a bit of Finney about him."

Canvases

Scott, who paints as a hobbyist, has seemingly been drawn to bigger and bigger canvases as he's grown older. "Napoleon," he says, required 900 personnel; "Gladiator II" took 1,200. He is, himself, a commander of armies. In Malta, Scott and his regular production designer, Arthur Max, erected enormous sets.

"We built Rome," says Scott. "I discovered that you can have a lot of access, nice costumes and all blue screen. But in every shot you take - whether it's (Scott holds his hands up for wide shots, over-shoulder shots and close-ups) you're investing money on the blue. It's more expensive to do that than to build it. So I built the Colosseum 40% full scale. It was cheaper to do that than blue screen."

Far smaller productions have worn down other filmmakers who don't match half the pace of Scott. But Scott, a self-described "war baby" born in 1937 whose father was a senior officer in the Royal Engineers, has showed no signs of slowing down, nor of fading ambition. Asked where he gets his drive, Scott responds: "DNA."

"My mum was ferocious," Scott says. "You have to stay kind of fit. And I embrace stress. If you don't em-

brace stress, do not do the job. People get very stressed and frightened and I don't. I've grown to it over the years to just embrace it and walk in and say, 'Right, everybody over here. We're going to do this.' And they listen. Bearing in mind that I'm artistically driven and I'm blessed with a very good eye, the decision is everything. Make the bloody decision. Do not discuss it with everybody including the window cleaner where you're going to put the camera."

To Scott, his most formative training came in commercials. He and his brother, Tony Scott, started out with their film and commercial production company Ridley Scott Associates. Particularly in television, Scott got accustomed to shooting with multiple cameras rolling simultaneously. He didn't make his first feature, 1977's "The Duelist," until he was 40. Now, on movies like "Gladiator," Scott might have eight or 10 cameras rolling for a single scene.

"So I got used to scale," says Scott. "By that time I had probably done 2,500 commercials. And when you're doing a commercial for yourself, the company, you're on your own clock. After 5 o'clock, you pay. So you're constantly against time. I learned that better than any film school could teach you. On every second hand is a dollar sign."

That kind of scale also comes with risk, of course. "Gladiator II" will open in theaters against Universal Pictures' "Wicked," another highly anticipated movie although one, like the "Barbie" and "Oppenheimer" showdown, with different and possibly complementary target audiences. Mescal has teased the moviegoing weekend as "Glicked."

Scott remains optimistic about the movie business - even if his main concern is what it'll mean for the next mammoth project he undertakes.

"There have been a few combustions of big box office this year that gives a certain kind of movie a promise for financial return," Scott says. "But the financial return - au courage d'autres - encourages the others. Because greed will always be in the front, right? Maybe the investors will say, 'Maybe it can me.' That's what we always hope for because I just love making movies. And the bigger the better."

Features

ARABIC TIMES
FRIDAY-SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 6-7, 2024

LOS ANGELES: Anna Sorokin, the con artist who was convicted of swindling banks, hotels and friends in 2019 after falsely building a reputation as a wealthy German heiress named Anna Delvey, has found her newest venture: "Dancing With the Stars."

Described as the "notorious ankle bracelet fashionista" in a press release, Sorokin was announced Wednesday on "Good Morning America" along with the likes of former NBA star Dwight Howard, actor Tori Spelling and Jenn Tran, "The Bachelorette" lead whose season ended in heartbreak just Tuesday night. Tran, the first Asian American "Bachelorette," was a contestant on Joey Graziadei's season of "The Bachelor" - and he, too, will be vying for the trophy.

Complicating Sorokin's latest starring role is the ankle bracelet she's worn since October 2022, when she started her house arrest - though the show appears to be leaning into it with a promo image of Sorokin in a glittering dress and an ankle monitor on her leg. While she was released from prison in February 2021, immigration authorities picked her up shortly after she got out, claiming she overstayed her visa and must be returned to her native Germany. The "Inventing Anna" inspiration was in ICE custody for over a year before a judge cleared the way for her to switch to home confinement in October 2022 while she fights the deportation case.

Immigration and Customs Enforcement has not returned requests for comment regarding changes to Sorokin's house arrest conditions to accommodate filming in the Los Angeles area. Sorokin's spokesperson, **Juda Engelmayer**, confirmed Tuesday that she could travel within 70 miles (112 kilometers) of her home base and anywhere in the five boroughs of New York City under previous house arrest conditions, but could not comment on any changes to those rules. (AP)

SANTA FE, N.M.: A prosecutor has asked a New Mexico judge to reconsider the decision to dismiss an involuntary manslaughter charge against **Alec Baldwin** in the fatal shooting of a cinematographer on the set of a Western movie, according to a court filing made public Wednesday.

Special prosecutor **Kari Morrissey** said there were insufficient facts to support the ruling in state district court and no violation of Baldwin's due process rights. Judge **Mary Marlowe Sommer** dismissed the case against Baldwin in July - half-way through a trial - based on the withholding of evidence by police



Sorokin



Baldwin

and prosecutors from the defense in the 2021 shooting of cinematographer **Halyna Hutchins** on the set of the film "Rust."

Baldwin, the lead actor and co-

producer on "Rust," was pointing a gun at cinematographer **Halyna Hutchins** during a rehearsal when it went off, killing her and wounding director **Joel Souza**. Baldwin has said he pulled back the hammer - but not the trigger - and the revolver fired.

The case-ending evidence was

ammunition that was brought into the sheriff's office in March by a man who said it could be related to Hutchins' killing. Prosecutors said they deemed the ammo unrelated and unimportant, while Baldwin's lawyers alleged that they "buried" it and filed a motion to dismiss the case. (AP)

People & Places

Social Media

Latest vocabulary

Viral 'very demure' seeking trademark

NEW YORK, Sept 5, (AP): "Very demure, very mindful" has become the latest vocabulary defining the internet's summer. And TikTok creator **Jools Lebron** is working to trademark uses of her now-viral words.

Lebron filed to trademark "very demure very mindful" for various entertainment and advertising services, including the promotion of beauty products, last week with the US Patent and Trademark Office. Two filings dated Thursday are under her legal name, a representative for Lebron confirmed to The Associated Press.

Social media's love for "very demure" content started in early August, when Lebron took to TikTok to describe the hair and makeup she was wearing to work.

Her delivery took off and she kept going, with "mindful" and "cutesy" flooding the internet as scores of fans, including big name celebrities, shared their own playful takes to describe just about any detail of day-to-day life.

Content creators can make meaningful income after gaining social media fame through avenues like direct brand sponsorships and viewer donations. And for Lebron, who is a transgender woman, her viral moment allowed her to finance the rest of her transition.

Trademarks, on the other hand, can help secure rights to maintain certain business down the road. Lebron's own trademark filings are still pending, and it could be a while before there's a final determination. But the move is particularly notable after several other individuals with no known connection to Lebron separately tried to register demure-related trademarks in an apparent effort to capitalize on the success of those phrases, much to the dismay of Lebron's fans.

The saga, while unfinished, has spotlighted the complex process of filing trademarks that capture a viral moment - and the battle that social media content creators face to both get credit and find protections to monetize off the trends they popularize.

Connection
Here's what you should know. Yes. But in the US, there needs to be an attached commercial use.

"It's not just coming up with a phrase ... (or) using it on social media and making it go viral," said Alexandra J. Roberts, a professor of law and media at Northeastern University, explaining that there must be a connection to the sale of concrete goods or services. She calls trademarks a "source indicator," as they help consumers understand who is producing what they're buying now, but not necessarily who came up with a name in the first place.

The law is complicated, and trademarks are often determined on a case-by-case basis. Applications are specific to certain uses, allowing multiple brands to operate under similar names - like Dove chocolate and Dove soap, or Delta Faucet and Delta Airlines. Courts greenlight this when it's assumed that consumers will easily be able to distinguish between such different products or services.

But a phrase or name that's strongly associated with a particular individual can sometimes supersede that. "Simplistically, the entire reason the trademark exists is to prevent consumer confusion," said Casey Fiesler, an associate professor of information science at the University of Colorado Boulder. "And if (someone else) created a social media marketing service and called it 'very demure, very mindful social media marketing,' that would confuse consumers because they're gonna think it's associated with (Jools Lebron)."

Trademarks should not be mixed up with copyright. Anyone who has ever made a unique TikTok, for example, owns the copyright to that video, Fiesler explains. But there are still limitations to what's copy-rightable, and short phrases themselves almost never apply.

In today's ever-digitized world of online trends, creators are increasingly expressing concerns about getting credited for their work. And for something like trademark rights, experts stress it's a battle of both getting there first and having resources to see it through.

It's not uncommon to see a handful of trademark applications bubble up in the midst of a viral moment. Earlier this year, for example, a handful of trademark applications were filed after Hailey Welch, also now known as "Hawk Tuah Girl," became famous for using the phrase in a street interview.

Still, some phrases have been determined to be used too pervasively, making it harder for consumers to recognize it as a brand indicator. It can also be difficult when credit isn't given to the creator who starts a trend in the first place - and experts note the consequences of that haven't been felt equally in the past.

Historically, young women of color who start a viral trend or put a new phrase on the map have often seen their work get appropriated online - and potentially "get scooped" on trademark rights from someone with more resources, like connections to a lawyer, Roberts explained.

Monetizations

"There are a lot of stories of members of minoritized groups, and particularly women, coming up with new slang ... and then seeing that get co-opted by somebody else - often a white guy, but not always ... (who) gets out there as the first to register and really make money off it," Roberts said.

Beyond trademark-specific disputes, Fiesler added that creators seeing their work stolen and reposted in other platforms for monetization continues to be a "huge problem" today, but she hopes the tide is starting to turn. That includes with Lebron, who has been so widely-credited for the "very demure" trend.

"I hope to continue to see there being very strong social norms that are enforcing this," Fiesler said. Three applications that were submitted before Lebron's Thursday filings are still listed as live in the USPTO's records - which would essentially make her "fourth in line" in consideration, Roberts said.

But it's possible that others might later suspend their filings. And one of the applicants told NBC said that she filed in efforts to help Lebron hold on to trademark until she could transfer it.

Lebron's legal team could potentially fight off rival filings or strengthen her own by negotiating with other applicants and updating her filing to reduce any overlap. She could also oppose a rival application down the road on the grounds of false association.

The trademark process could outlast the trend itself, taking anywhere between six to nine months, and sometimes closer to a year. And that can drag out even further with a legal battle or requested extensions.



Lebron



Lady Gaga poses for photographers upon arrival for the premiere of the film 'Joker: Folie A Deux' during the 81st edition of the Venice Film Festival in Venice, Italy, on Wednesday, Sept. 4. (AP)

Music

Mozart's Figaro gets unique twist

Costanzo shines in 7-role Figaro

NEW YORK, Sept 5, (AP): Anthony Roth Costanzo gives a truly inside look at one of Mozart's most loved operas.

Singing seven different roles in a madcap presentation of "Le Nozze di Figaro (The Marriage of Figaro)" at New York's Little Island, the countertenor labors through the Countess' "Dove sono" aria with a steel laryngoscope down his throat while a video recording of his throbbing vocal chords is displayed on screens.

"After the first part of the opera in which I've torn my voice to shreds essentially going through all of these hijinks and she has been carried offstage in a stretcher, she comes back in a hospital gown and she has this nightmare of her husband, the Count, giving her a laryngoscopy, which of course has all kinds of sexual innuendo," Costanzo said.

A 42-year-old Grammy Award winner who is among the world's top countertenors, Costanzo sang Cherubino for his Opera Santa Barbara debut in 2000. He adds Figaro, Susanna, the Count, Countess, Antonio and Barbarina, stretching his voice 3 1/2 octaves in an invigorating and entertaining 95-minute reinvention of a work that premiered in 1786.

"When was the last time you went to an opera that wasn't 'Tristan' thinking: Is he going to make it?" said Zack Winokur, Little Island's producing artistic director.

Performance

The 18-performance run, a highlight of Little Island's first season, started Friday at the 700-seat amphitheater built in Manhattan above the Hudson River and extends through Sept. 22.

"We just really want to tell the story of 'The Marriage of Figaro,' show people who maybe don't necessarily come to the opera a good time, kind of test the limits of what opera purists will tolerate," director Dustin Willis said.

Costanzo's concept developed after "Only an Octave Apart," his concert performance with Justin Vivian Bond that reopened Brooklyn's St. Ann's Warehouse in 2021 following the pandemic closure and then went on tour. Staged by Winokur, the show mixed pop and classical, including "Crudel! Perché finora," a third-act aria of the Count and Susanna, as a comic number.

"It stopped being a gag and started being just excellent, and I was like: 'Can you do the rest of this?'" said Winokur, who staged the concert.

Winokur was hired to open Little Island's first season in June. He had a slot available when a planned staging of Britten's "Peter Grimes" fell through, and in January, participated in a "Nozze" workshop with Costanzo, Wills, dramaturg Jacob Mallinson Bird and music director Dan Schlosberg.

"It is such divine music and such mad-cap bananas storytelling," Winokur said. "It's very funny. It's incredibly precise physically, and it is a kind

The 'War on Drugs' drops live album ahead of National tour

LOS ANGELES, Sept 5, (AP): For many musicians, a live album is an afterthought - a way to quickly appease insatiable fans or make some easy money.

But when Adam Granduciel, the frontman of the anthemic rock band The War on Drugs, set out to make their newest live album announced Wednesday, it was a labor of love that is anything but quick or easy.

"For 'Live Drugs Again,'" out Sept. 13, Granduciel wanted to do justice to the ways in which the band has grown, both literally (they've added a member since their first live album was released in 2020) and figuratively as musicians who have honed their sound. So he combed through about 100 hours of recordings from their shows and even spliced different parts of the same songs together.

The album comes in tandem with the start of their co-headlining tour with The National, which kicks off Sept. 12 in New Hampshire. Granduciel spoke with The Associated Press about how performing a song live changes it, whether the band has new music in the pipeline and how he came to play guitar on Beyoncé's "I'll Most Wanted."

The interview has been edited for clarity and brevity.

AP: Talk about what went into making this live record.

Granduciel: I think we used maybe like 50 shows total. There are a few songs where it's four shows spliced together, and part of that too is just having fun with the process. You know, you go into it remembering specific nights, like there are a few songs from a show in Bentonville, Arkansas, which is a town we had never been to in 20 years of being a band. And we kind of rolled into this town and it was this really beautiful little young artist student community. It was incred-

ible. We had an amazing day and the show at night was outdoors, and it was just one of those memorable nights.

You kind of start there, and then you get so deep into the process of mixing versions and maybe doing a little post-production, like all great live records do. I just wanted to put as much work into it as myself and the band put into our live show, you know, just the amount of time it takes to sort of hone a set, it's years really. And we wanted to kind of put that into the record.

AP: You're a bit of a gearhead. Did you use anything interesting for this album?

Granduciel: Well, unlike our first live record, we used a lot of the actual ambient mics that we recorded. Sometimes it can be tricky with phase and all this stuff. But for this one, we used a lot of the actual just source ambient mics so all the crowds are real to that moment. I think most live records these days are just going to be sort of put into digital spaces. You just have more control over everything. But this one, I think we had like 12 different ambient mics throughout the stage and the venues.

AP: Does the anticipation of performing your music inform your songwriting process at all? Do you factor in how it will sound live or do you just think about that part after?

Granduciel: Definitely after. I think these are just naturally progressing. And they sort of end up in a whole new place once the audience is part of the equation, you know? I mean, if we went back and made a re-recorded "Under the Pressure" the way we play it, it probably wouldn't be the same thing on a record. But whenever you come off a touring cycle and things reach that next tier from the band dynamically, it always informs the next thing you do.

Costanzo's amplified voice in the outdoor space.

He was joined by actors who mimed roles alongside him: Daniel Liu (Countess), Ariana Venturi (Count), Christopher Bannow (Figaro) and Emma Ramos (Susanna). They open dressed as a union work crew and wind up donning costumes to accomplish needed tasks, then are given microphones for the fourth-act finale. Each sang a few words, revealing Costanzo's superiority in all tessitura.

Ryan Shinji Murray, who mouthed the small part of the gardener Antonio, did somersaults on a trampoline during the concluding ensemble after the Countess pardons the Count.



This image released by Little Island shows Anthony Roth Costanzo during a performance of 'The Marriage of Figaro' in New York on Aug. 30, 2024. (AP)

Variety

NEW ORLEANS: Sybil Haydel Morial, a civil rights activist, widow of New Orleans' first Black mayor, **Dutch Morial**, and mother to former Mayor, **Marc Morial**, has died at age 91.

Her family announced her death Wednesday in a statement issued by the National Urban League, which Marc Morial serves as president and CEO. Details on the time and cause of death were not released.

"She confronted the hard realities of **Jim Crow** with unwavering courage and faith, which she instilled not only in her own children but in every life she touched," the statement says.

Sybil Morial met **Ernest Nathan "Dutch" Morial** in the summer of 1954. She supported him as he ran for the legislature and the mayor's office while she worked as a teacher and raised their five children.

Morial also was a leader in her own right. She founded the Louisiana League of Good Government, which helped Black people register to vote, and held numerous positions at Xavier University, one of the historically Black institutions in the city.

She also championed the building of a pavilion dedicated to the African American experience at the 1984 World's Fair in New Orleans and helped produce a documentary about desegregation in the city. (AP)

LONDON: Brian May, the lead guitarist of British rock band Queen, revealed Wednesday that he had a "minor stroke" last week, which caused him to temporarily lose control over his arm.

May, 77, said in a video on his website that he was doing "OK" but that he was "grounded" and advised not to drive, fly or do any activity which raises his heart rate too high.

"I'm here to bring you first of all some good news, I think, good news is that I can play guitar after the events of the last few days," he said. "And I say this because it was in some doubt because that little health hiccup that I mentioned, happened about a week ago, and what they called it was a minor stroke and all of a sudden, out of the blue, I didn't have any control over this arm."

May said the experience was "a little scary" but praised the "fantastic care" he received from his local hospital in Surrey, southwest of London.

"I really don't want sympathy," he said. "Please don't do that because it will clutter up my inbox and I hate that!" (AP)

THOMASTON, Maine: A Rembrandt discovered in an attic sold for \$1.4 million.

The 17th century painting, "Portrait of a Girl," by Dutch artist **Rembrandt Harmenszoon van Rijn** was discovered by art appraiser and auctioneer **Kaja Veilleux** in an attic in an estate in **Camden, Maine**. A label on the back of the frame noted that it was loaned to the Philadelphia Museum of Art for an exhibition in 1970.

"On house calls, we often go in blind, not knowing what we'll find," he said in a statement. "The home was filled with wonderful pieces but it was in the attic, among

stacks of art, that we found this remarkable portrait."

Rembrandt, born in 1606, was a prolific artist who focused on a variety of subjects, from portraits to landscapes to historical and biblical scenes.

"Portrait of a Girl" was painted on an oak panel and mounted in a hand-carved gold Dutch frame, said Veilleux. (AP)

NEW YORK: Noel E. Parmentel Jr., an



Morial



May

essayist, pundit, filmmaker and man about town who satirized politicians across ideology, dated and helped promote a young **Joan Didion** and otherwise charmed and infuriated New York's literary elite, has died at age 98.

Parmentel's longtime partner, **Vivian Sorvall**, told The Associated Press that he had been in failing health in recent weeks and died Saturday at the West Haven VA Medical Center in Connecticut. (AP)

Triple treatment: Diet, walking, and mounjaro

Recovery from type 2 diabetes is possible, says Dr. Bou Abbas

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 5: Dr. Youssef Bou Abbas, founder of the Kuwait Obesity Association and a renowned endocrinology and hormone consultant, has emphasized that recovery from diabetes is achievable, particularly for those who have been diagnosed with the disease for less than a decade, reports Al-Jarida daily.

Dr. Bou Abbas explained that a patient can be considered completely cured if their cumulative sugar levels are 6 or lower and they have ceased diabetes treatment for a minimum of three months.

Dr. Bou Abbas highlighted that significant weight loss, typically ranging from 10 to 15 kilograms, plays a crucial role in overcoming diabetes.

He advocates a "triple treatment" approach that includes a balanced diet, daily walking and exercise, and the use of weekly injections like "mounjaro," which is noted for its effectiveness in



Dr. Bou Abbas

Boost your fitness by pairing new habits with daily tasks

NEW YORK, Sept 5, (AP): As simple as it sounds, Lindsay Kee's revamped exercise routine began with standing up to take the dog out.

She decided to do a few standing stretches before leaving, and did some squats or jumping jacks when she got back home. Over time she added to the routine, and now it's been over a year that she consistently exercises around the dog walk.

"Adding it to something I was already doing, it just took so much pressure out of it," said Kee, an executive coach in Portland, Oregon. "I've found it to be really effective in helping me be consistent with things that I really

weight loss. This holistic approach not only helps in managing diabetes but also shields individuals from severe complications and reduces the substantial finan-

do want to do."

What Kee was doing is called habit stacking, a term coined by author S.J. Scott in his 2014 book of the same name. It also goes by habit pairing or piggybacking. The premise is intuitive: Attach a behavior you want to start doing to something you already do automatically every day.

A classic example is flossing after brushing your teeth, though it can apply to many aspects of daily life. Kee, for instance, also places vitamins next to the coffee machine to help her remember to take them every morning.

Fitness experts say pairing habits is particularly helpful if you're trying to

cial burden on the healthcare system.

Dr. Bou Abbas pointed out that addressing diabetes effectively can save governments millions, even billions, in

increase your time spent exercising. Dana Santas is a mobility expert who has trained more than 50 professional sports teams. She said that while using an electric toothbrush, she does squats or lunges or works on her balance by standing on one leg.

"The cool thing about an electric toothbrush is that it has a timer for two minutes, and it should buzz every 30 seconds for you to change your quadrant," said Santas, who also does 22 push-ups before every shower. "So you can switch your exercise at the buzz. It's perfect."

Though two minutes of exercise won't get you in shape, every little

treatment costs.

The renowned consultant also addressed the global prevalence of type 2 diabetes, noting that over 462 million

bit helps, experts say. The Centers for Disease Control recommends 150 minutes of moderate aerobic activity (like brisk walking) per week, or 75 minutes of vigorous aerobic activity per week (like jogging), plus two days of strength training.

Habit pairing is hardly a magic bullet, and most people find maintaining new habits difficult.

But Gretchen Rubin, author of "Better Than Before: Mastering the Habits of Our Everyday Lives," said pairing is among the best ways to start and maintain new habits. That's because it can remove the barrier of deciding when or if to do something.

"Decision fatigue is the enemy of habit formation," said Rubin, who added that when she was in college, she allowed herself to shower only if she had exercised that day.

She recommended pairing the new behavior with something you have to do or deeply want to do. "So you have to do the shaky habit before you get to the strong habit," she said. "If I want to listen to a podcast, I have to be on the treadmill."

Or try a technique recommended by Lisa Jung, author of "Running That Doesn't Suck."

"If you have an errand to run, why not run it?" she said. "Literally, run it."

people worldwide are affected by the condition. With numbers expected to rise, medical research forecasts that around 800 million individuals could be living with diabetes by 2045. This underscores the urgent need for effective treatment and prevention strategies to combat the growing epidemic.

Thresholds for AI models eyed

When is AI too powerful? Regulators do the math

NEW YORK, Sept 5, (AP): How do you know if an artificial intelligence system is so powerful that it poses a security danger and shouldn't be unleashed without careful oversight?

For regulators trying to put guardrails on AI, it's mostly about the arithmetic. Specifically, an AI model trained on 10 to the 26th floating-point operations per second must now be reported to the US government and could soon trigger even stricter requirements in California.

Say what? Well, if you're counting the zeroes, that's 100,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000, or 100 septillion, calculations each second, using a measure known as flops.

What it signals to some lawmakers and AI safety advocates is a level of computing power that might enable rapidly advancing AI technology to create or proliferate weapons of mass destruction, or conduct catastrophic cyberattacks.

Those who've crafted such regulations acknowledge they are an imperfect starting point to distinguish today's highest-performing generative AI systems - largely made by California-based companies like Anthropic, Google, Meta Platforms and ChatGPT-maker OpenAI - from the next generation that could be even more powerful.

Critics have pounced on the thresholds as arbitrary - an attempt by governments to regulate math.

Legislation

"Ten to the 26th flops," said venture capitalist Ben Horowitz on a podcast this summer. "Well, what if that's the size of the model you need to, like, cure cancer?"

An executive order signed by President Joe Biden last year relies on that threshold. So does California's newly passed AI safety legislation - which Gov. Gavin Newsom has until Sept. 30 to sign into law or veto. California adds a second metric to the equation: regulated AI models must also cost at least \$100 million to build.

Following Biden's footsteps, the European Union's sweeping AI Act also measures floating-point operations per second, or flops, but sets the bar 10 times lower at 10 to the 25th power. That covers some AI systems

already in operation. China's government has also looked at measuring computing power to determine which AI systems need safeguards.

No publicly available models meet the higher California threshold, though it's likely that some companies have already started to build them. If so, they're supposed to be sharing certain details and safety precautions with the U.S. government. Biden employed a Korean War-era law to compel tech companies to alert the U.S. Commerce Department if they're building such AI models.

AI researchers are still debating how best to evaluate the capabilities of the latest generative AI technology and how it compares to human intelligence. There are tests that judge AI on solving puzzles, logical reasoning or how swiftly and accurately it predicts what text will answer a person's chatbot query. Those measurements help assess an AI tool's usefulness for a given task, but there's no easy way of knowing which one is so widely capable that it poses a danger to humanity.

"This computation, this flop number, by general consensus is sort of the best thing we have along those lines," said physicist Anthony Aguirre, executive director of the Future of Life Institute, which has advocated for the passage of California's Senate Bill 1047 and other AI safety rules around the world.

Floating point arithmetic might sound fancy "but it's really just numbers that are being added or multiplied together," making it one of the simplest ways to assess an AI model's capability and risk, Aguirre said.

"Most of what these things are doing is just multiplying big tables of numbers together," he said. "You can just think of typing in a couple of numbers into your calculator and adding or multiplying them. And that's what it's doing - ten trillion times or a hundred trillion times."

For some tech leaders, however, it's too simple and hard-coded a metric. There's "no clear scientific support" for using such metrics as a proxy for risk, argued computer scientist Sara Hooker, who leads AI company Cohere's nonprofit research division, in a July paper.

Humans infecting animals infecting humans

Preventing pandemics requires protecting all species: research

By Anna Fagre, Colorado State University and Sadie Jane Ryan, University of Florida

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

When the World Health Organization declared COVID-19 a pandemic on March 11, 2020, humans had been the only species with reported cases of the disease. While early genetic analyses pointed to horseshoe bats as the evolutionary hosts of SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19, no reports had yet surfaced indicating it could be transmitted from humans to other animal species.

Less than two weeks later, a report from Belgium marked the first infection in a domestic cat - presumably by its owner. Summer 2020 saw news of COVID-19 outbreaks and subsequent cullings in mink farms across Europe and fears of similar calls for culling in North America. Humans and other animals on and around mink farms tested positive, raising questions about the potential for a secondary wildlife reservoir of COVID-19. That is, the virus could infect and establish a transmission cycle in a different species than the one in which it originated.

Transmission

Researchers have documented this phenomenon of human-to-animal transmission, colloquially referred to as spillback or reverse zoonotic transmission, in both domestic and wild animals. Wildlife may be infected either directly from humans or indirectly from domestic animals infected by humans. This stepping-stone effect provides new opportunities for pathogens to evolve and can radically change how they spread, as seen with influenza and tuberculosis.

For example, spillback has been a long-standing threat to endangered great apes, even among populations

India issues guidelines after bird flu outbreak

NEW DELHI, Sept 5, (Xinhua): Authorities in India's eastern state of Odisha have issued an advisory urging restricted supply of chickens after an outbreak of avian flu near the state capital Bhubaneswar, officials said Thursday.

"We received the information regarding the spread of bird flu near Bhubaneswar. So, Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) issued an advisory, wherein it has been strictly instructed that no poultry or related items will be allowed inside the city

with infrequent human contact. The chimpanzees of Gombe National Park, made famous by Jane Goodall's work, have suffered outbreaks of measles and other respiratory diseases likely resulting from environmental persistence of pathogens spread by people living nearby or by ecotourists.

We are researchers who study the mechanisms driving cross-species disease transmission and how disease affects both wildlife conservation and people. Emerging outbreaks have underscored the importance of understanding how threats to wildlife health shape the emergence and spread of zoonotic pathogens. Our research suggests that looking at historical outbreaks can help predict and prevent the next pandemic.

Our research group wanted to assess how often spillback had been reported in the years leading up to the COVID-19 pandemic. A retrospective analysis not only allows us to identify

limits," Bhubaneswar Mayor Sulochana Das told media.

"We have also requested the people in Bhubaneswar to avoid procuring and consuming chicken for a few days."

Das said the move was aimed at containing the spread of the avian flu.

"Health department has also issued an advisory and their officials are carrying out checks," she said. "People need not to worry as such precautionary steps are necessary to prevent the spread of the outbreak."

specific trends or barriers in reporting spillback events but also helps us understand where new emergent threats are most likely.

We examined historical spillback events involving different groups of pathogens across the animal kingdom, accounting for variations in geography, methods and sample sizes. We synthesized scientific reports of spillback across nearly a century prior to the COVID-19 pandemic - from the 1920s to 2019 - which included diseases ranging from salmonella and intestinal parasites to human tuberculosis, influenza and polio.

We were also interested in determining whether detection and reporting bias might influence what's known about human-to-animal pathogen transmission. Charismatic megafauna - often defined as larger mammals such as pandas, gorillas, elephants and whales that evoke emotion in people - tend to be overrepresented in wildlife epidemiology and conservation ef-

ports. They receive more public attention and funding than smaller and less visible species.

Complicating this further are difficulties in monitoring wild populations of small animals, as they decompose quickly and are frequently scavenged by larger animals. This drastically reduces the time window during which researchers can investigate outbreaks and collect samples.

The results of our historical analysis support our suspicions that most reports described outbreaks in large charismatic megafauna. Many were captive, such as in zoos or rehabilitation centers, or semi-captive, such as well-studied great apes.

Pathogens

Despite the litany of papers published on new pathogens discovered in bats and rodents, the number of studies examining pathogens transmitted from humans to these animals was scant. However, small mammals occupying diverse ecological niches, including animals that live near human dwellings - such as deer mice, rats and skunks - may be more likely to not only share their pathogens with people but also to be infected by human pathogens.

In our historical analysis of spillback prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, the only evidence we found supporting the establishment of a human pathogen in a wildlife population were two 2019 reports describing H1N1 infection in striped skunks. Like coronaviruses, influenza A viruses such as H1N1 are adept at switching hosts and can infect a broad range of species.

Unlike coronaviruses, however, their widespread transmission is facilitated by migratory waterfowl such as ducks and geese. Exactly how these skunks became infected with H1N1 and for how long remains unclear.

Shortly after we completed the analysis for our study, reports describing widespread COVID-19 infection of white-tailed deer throughout North America began surfacing in November 2021.

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Clark makes 100th 3, finishes with triple-double as Fever beats Sparks

Boston had 24 points and 14 rebounds

INDIANAPOLIS, Sept 5, (AP): Caitlin Clark became the fastest player in WNBA history to reach 100 3-pointers in a season and finished with 24 points, 10 rebounds and 10 assists for her second career triple-double as the playoff-bound Indiana Fever beat the Los Angeles Sparks 93-86.

Clark connected on her second 3 of the game and 100th of the season midway through the third quarter and added two more to reach 102 and finish 4 of 10 from

BASKETBALL

long range. The No. 1 overall draft pick is the first rookie with 100 3s.

She also became the first rookie and fifth WNBA player with multiple triple-doubles in a season, joining Alyssa Thomas, Courtney Williams, Sabrina Ionescu and Candace Parker.

Aliyah Boston had 24 points and 14 rebounds for the Fever (18-16), who secured a playoff spot Monday night when Atlanta and Chicago lost. Indiana has won five straight for the first time since 2015 and is 10-1 at home since June 1.

Clark made two free throws with 16.4 seconds left for a seven-point lead. Kia Nurse was long on a 3-pointer at the other end and Clark grabbed the rebound to complete the triple-double.

"Of course I knew, but honestly, like, we were just trying to get stops," Clark said in a courtside interview.

Clark also made a key defensive play when she poked a pass away in the paint and found Boston for a layup and a 91-84 lead with 25.2 seconds left.



Players fighting for the ball during the friendly encounter.

Al-Tadamon defeats Al-Arabi as teams prepare for Zain Premier League return

By Hassan Musa

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 5: Al-Tadamon edged Al-Arabi 3-2 in a friendly match at Sabah Al-Salem Stadium. Both teams are utilizing the international break to prepare for the return of the Zain Premier League, with the fourth round set to begin on September 13.

Al-Arabi has secured maximum points from the first three rounds, earning nine points and sharing the

Kelsey Mitchell added 18 points for Indiana, coming two points shy of her eighth straight 20-point game. NaLyssa Smith scored 13 points.

lead with Kuwait SC. Meanwhile, Al-Tadamon has managed only one point so far.

SOCCER

In other news, Algerian professional Imad Al-Din Boubaker parted ways with Al-Arabi after agreeing to terminate his contract. Boubaker, who signed with the club in January for a season and a half, failed to impress coach Nasser Al-Shatti and the

Odyssey Sims led Los Angeles (7-26) with 20 points. Dearica Hamby and Rae Burrell each scored 16, and Azura Stevens had 13 points and 11

rebounds.

The Sparks have lost five in a row on the road and 15 of 17 away from home this season.

BEIJING, Sept 5, (Xinhua): World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) Vice President Yang Yang warned that the increasing politicization of sports, including the use of long-arm jurisdiction, could significantly damage the global sporting community.

Since April, reports from The New York Times, Germany's ARD, and other media outlets have focused on a 2021 contamination case involving Chinese swimmers, which intensified scrutiny and created challenges for the athletes during the Olympic Games.

"WADA conducted a very thorough evaluation and ultimately endorsed the China Anti-Doping Agency's (CHINADA) conclusion of contamination," Yang said.

She emphasized that WADA functions as a technical organization, using scientific research, investigations, and intelligence to assess cases from various angles. In this particular instance, WADA evaluated not only the evidence provided by CHINADA but also considered other sources of information. In response to the media reports, WADA convened meetings of its Executive Committee and Foundation Board, and an independent prosecutor reviewed WADA's handling of the case, concluding that there was no "favoritism or deference, or in any way favored" the Chinese swimmers.

Despite these conclusions, WADA continues to face ongoing criticism from some media outlets.

Yang shared with Xinhua that three days after the news broke, WADA's president Witold Banka and secretary-general Olivier Nigli traveled to Washington to be interviewed by four media outlets, including The Washington Post, to

present the accurate facts. However, none of these reports were published.

"For me, this was not surprising. We are accustomed to such hegemonic attitudes, but for my colleagues from other countries, it was shocking. Our voices were completely silenced, which was very frustrating for several months," she recalled.

Yang also mentioned that she has been personally targeted due to her affiliations.

"My name appeared in these reports, often in a derogatory and defamatory context," she said.

During the Paris Olympics, WADA engaged with numerous National Olympic Committee presidents and sports officials from various countries to address questions about the incident, while also maintaining regular communication with athletes to ensure they were well-informed.

"This fight is not over. There are many challenges ahead, but I believe in our resolve, in the power of sport, and in our commitment to protect the integrity of sport and the rights of clean athletes," Yang stated.

One of the challenges Yang highlighted is the increasing trend of politicization in sports. In the case of the Chinese swimmers, the U.S. invoked the Rodchenkov Anti-Doping Act, aiming to exert long-arm jurisdiction by directly participating in the investigation and even imposing penalties.

"If such a law were also adopted by other countries, it would result in the fragmentation of sports. Today, sport is one of the few ways the world can come together, and this law is highly destructive," she added.

Kuwait takes on Bahrain, Saudi Arabia meets Qatar

By Khaled Al-Enezi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 5: The Kuwait basketball team was facing a crucial match at 7:30 pm against Bahrain in the semi-finals of the 17th Gulf Championship. Earlier, Saudi Arabia will take on Qatar in the other semi-final. The winners of both matches will advance to the final, scheduled for Saturday.

In the third round of the preliminary stage, Qatar defeated Kuwait 76-72, while Bahrain narrowly

beat Saudi Arabia 88-87. As a result, Bahrain topped the standings with five points, followed by Saudi Arabia in second due to their head-

BASKETBALL

to-head record. Qatar placed third, and Kuwait finished fourth.

Meanwhile, Kuwait's national youth team was eliminated from the Asian Cup finals in the first round, following a 51-62 loss to India in its final Group Two match.



A Kuwaiti prepares to shoot.

Scaloni backs Alvarez to shine at Atletico Madrid

BUENOS AIRES, Sept 5, (Xinhua): Argentina manager Lionel Scaloni has expressed confidence that Julian Alvarez will soon rediscover his scoring form following his move to Atletico Madrid from Manchester City.

Alvarez, 24, has made an inauspicious start to his spell in Spain, having yet to score or provide an assist in his first four La Liga appearances.

"These are personal decisions," Scaloni told a news conference ahead of Argentina's double header of World Cup qualifiers against Chile and Colombia.

"He left a great club to join another great club. We hope it goes well for him because if he does well, it benefits the national team. The decision is his, and we don't interfere." Alvarez is not the

only Albiceleste player to have changed clubs during the recently closed European summer transfer window. Nico Gonzalez moved to Juventus from Fiorentina while Gio Lo Celso returned to Real Betis after leaving Tottenham Hotspur.

"They're just getting used to their new clubs, getting to know their coach, and some haven't even played yet," Scaloni said. "That could affect us, but in two or three months, it will be a different story." Argentina will play Chile in Buenos Aires on Thursday and Colombia in Barranquilla five days later.

The reigning World Cup and Copa America champions currently lead the 10-team South American qualifying zone with 15 points from six games.

Imane image is practically everywhere

Khelif's Olympic gold inspires Algerian girls to take up boxing

AIN TAYA, Algeria, Sept 5, (AP): In the weeks since Algeria's Imane Khelif won an Olympic gold medal in women's boxing, athletes and coaches in the North African nation say national enthusiasm is inspiring newfound interest in the sport, particularly among women.

Khelif's image is practically everywhere, featured in advertisements at airports, on highway billboards and in boxing gyms. The 25-year-old welterweight's success in Paris has vaulted her to national hero status, especially after Algerians rallied behind her in the face of uninformed speculation about her gender and eligibility to compete.

Amateur boxer Zougar Amina, a medical student who's been practicing for a year, called Khelif an idol and role model.

"Since I've been boxing, my personality has changed: I'm more confident, less stressed," she said, describing the sport as "therapy to fight shyness, to learn to defend myself, to gain self-confidence."

In Ain Taya, the seaside town east of Algiers where Amina boxes, what

idly that her gym won't be able to handle it.

"We're getting calls from parents wanting to sign up their daughters," she said. "I'm the only coach and our gym is small."

Algerians from all walks of life flocked to squares in the country's major cities to watch Khelif's matches broadcast on projectors. Khelif's story endeared her to the majority of the conservative country's population, although a few prominent imams and Islamist politicians have criticized the example she sets by wearing her boxing uniform and not a headscarf.

Still, Amina Abassi, another amateur boxer at the same gym unrelated to her coach, said she believes the deep well of support for Khelif will overwhelm any criticism.

"I'm convinced that even conservative families will allow their daughters to take up boxing," she said. "Imane has broken through the wall

of false modesty and hypocrisy."

Noureddine Bouteldja, a former amateur boxer and sports journalist, said Khelif has transcended boxing and become a "social phenomenon" throughout Algeria thanks to her personal story and the scrutiny she faced from famous people around the world who - unlike Algerians - saw her advancing in the Olympics as part of the culture war over sex, gender and sport.

Algerians rallied behind Khelif in the face of criticism from Donald Trump, Elon Musk, J.K. Rowling and others who falsely claimed she was transgender. They largely interpreted attacks on her as attacks on their nation itself. And unlike much of the international community that coalesced behind Khelif, on social media most couldn't register the thought of a transgender athlete from Algeria.

"It's the victory of a woman who has shown extraordinary resilience and phenomenal strength of character

in the face of the campaign to denigrate her gender," Bouteldja said.

Boxing coaches and administrators said Khelif's rise from a poor child in rural central Algeria to worldwide fame has made her an inspirational figure. Mourad Meziane, head of the Algerian Boxing League, expects a huge spike in registration among young women at the start of this school year in mid-September.

Algeria currently has 30 regional boxing leagues and 10,000 athletes participating nationwide, he said.

"The impact is inevitable and will only be very positive for women's boxing in Algeria," Meziane said.

Civil society figures and activists said the impact is also sure to reverberate far beyond the boxing ring.

Attorney Aouicha Bakhti said Khelif's story will have a lasting impact on Algerian culture and be a counterweight to strands of society that discourage women's participation in sports.



Girls train for boxing at Ahmed Qayed school, where Olympic boxer Imane Khelif trained as a child, in Tiaret, Algeria. (AP)

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Americans edge British in close race as sailing resumes at America's Cup

BARCELONA, Spain, Sept 5: (AP): NYAC American Magic won a nailbiter against INEOS Britannia as sailing resumed at the 37th America's Cup on Thursday after bad weather.

The matchup between the oldest rivals in the 173-year-old regatta featured lead changes right up to the finish.

Britannia looked set to win when

American Magic fell off its foils when they both spun through the final turn at the same time. But American Magic made up the difference on the run to the finish line to win by 13 seconds.

The point kept the team representing the New York Yacht Club out of trouble in the standings, pulling level with Britannia at 3-2.

Luna Rossa Prada Pirelli stayed per-

fect at 5-0 after beating France's Orient Express Racing Team, which is 1-5.

Alinghi Red Bull Racing of Switzerland is 1-4.

The opening double round-robin stage of the competition will eliminate the lowest-scoring yacht by Sunday.

The remaining four boats will enter two-round playoffs to decide which one will take the Louis Vuitton Cup

and earn a place in the America's Cup match, where it will face holder Emirates Team New Zealand.

New Zealand is participating in the opening phase, but its races don't count.

Racing was abandoned on Tuesday after lightning struck near a boat. No races were held on Wednesday due to more thunderstorms.

Kids impressive performances delight the spectators

IBAK coaching driven by genuine passion for sport

By P.F.X. Fernandes

Arab Times/AI-Seyassah Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 5: Uncovering and nurturing talent in sports is always a challenge, but Indian Badminton Association of Kuwait (IBAK) coaching excels at it with remarkable flair.

Renowned for producing exceptional players who progress to compete at state and national levels in badminton, IBAK coaching is driven by a genuine passion for the sport.

Throughout the year, IBAK hosts various tournaments, with the Assessment Tournament being one of the most eagerly anticipated by its students.

On August 30, IBAK held its Coaching Assessment Tournament in Salwa, offering students a platform to showcase the skills they've developed over the year.

BADMINTON

The event saw enthusiastic participation from all coaching kids, and their impressive performances delighted the spectators in attendance, including a large number of parents, adding a special touch to the event.

Competitors, ranging from as young as 5 years old, participated in various categories such as U10 Boys Singles, U13 Boys Singles, U13 Girls Singles, U13 Girls Singles - Advanced, U16 Boys Singles, U16 Boys Singles - Advanced, U16 Girls Singles, and U16 Girls Singles - Advanced. Outstanding performers were recognized, and winners received trophies, medals, and certificates.

Heartfelt thanks goes to IBAK Chairman Dr. Manimaran Chozhan, along with all IBAK Committee members, coordinators, and dedicated coaching staff for their crucial roles in making this tournament a resounding success.

U10 Boys Singles -- Winner: Nahyan Manoli; Runner-up: Aaron Santhosh; Semifinalist 1: Musa Ismail; Semifinalist 2: Leyon Titto

U13 Boys Singles -- Winner: Aaron Santhosh; Runner-up: Leyon Titto; Semifinalist 1: Umair Muhammad; Semifinalist 2: Musa Ismail

U13 Girls Singles -- Winner: Aaliya Chawniwala; Runner-up: Adelyn



Participants display their certificates at the end of the coaching course.

Prashant; Semifinalist 1: Prayanshi Charday; Semifinalist 2: Advika Ram

U13 Girls Singles (Advance) -- Winner: Angel Subin; Runner-up: Aaliya Chawniwala; Semifinalist 1: Prayanshi Charday; Semifinalist 2: Jeeha Joan

U16 Boys Singles -- Winner: Raihan Mohibi; Runner-up: Avner Antony; Semifinalist 1: Steve Sobin; Semifinalist 2: Pranav Sriram

U16 Boys Singles (Advance) -- Winner: Liyan Titto; Runner-up: Aaditya Anil; Semifinalist 1: Hariharan Jayaraj; Semifinalist 2: Alan Santhosh

U16 Girls Singles -- Winner: Prisha Achar; Runner-up: Jeevika Shree; Semifinalist 1: Riyola Riyola; Semifinalist 2: Nynieshia Elizabeth

U16 Girls Singles (Advance) -- Winner: Angela Tony; Runner-up: Zoya Kareem; Semifinalist 1: Prisha Achar; Semifinalist 2: Angel Subin

Outstanding Performers -- Kevin Jerry Alwyn, Raihan Shahid Mohibi, Taseen Mohammed, Zoya Kareem, Prayanshi Charday and Jeeha Joan



Left-right: Some of the winners on the podium.



Xiao ends Bebe dream of third straight Paralympic Games gold

Rehm continues dominant run

PARIS, Sept 5, (AP): Italian fencing star Bebe Vio had to be content with the bronze medal at the Paralympic Games after China's Xiao Rong ended her dream of a third consecutive gold in wheelchair fencing.

Vio cried after losing 15-9 to Xiao in the semifinals, then again after beating another Chinese fencer, Su Kang, 15-7 in their repechage round 4 bout to reach the bronze medal decider in women's foil category B.

But Vio screamed with delight after beating Cho Eun Hye of South Korea 15-2 in the bout for bronze. She stood on chairs using her prosthetic legs to celebrate with Italian flag-waving supporters in the stands. Her fans had sung "We love you Bebe" at the Grand Palais as she surged into a comfortable lead.

PARALYMPICS

Category B is for fencers who have a disability that prevents voluntary movement of their trunk. Vio contracted meningitis when she was 11 years old. Doctors were able to save her life but had to amputate all four of her limbs to do so.

Xiao, who won the bronze at the last Games in Tokyo, went on to lose the gold medal bout 15-11 to Saysunee Jana of Thailand.

Britain's Sarah Storey extended her own record to 18 Paralympic gold medals in the C5 individual time trial.

Tatyana McFadden, one of the most decorated U.S. Paralympians, settled for silver in the T54 100 final after finishing behind Belgium's Lea Bayekula, who set a Paralympic record by winning in 15.5 seconds.

It's McFadden's third silver in the event and her 21st medal overall. She still holds the world record of 15.35 set in Indianapolis in 2016.

The T54 category is for competitors with spinal cord injuries who use wheelchairs to race and have no leg function along with normal hand and arm function.

Jessica Long, the second most decorated Paralympian in U.S. history, clinched gold in the women's 400 freestyle in the S8 classification for athletes with physical impairments.

It took her career tally to a whopping 30 Paralympic medals, now including nine gold, in swimming since she was the youngest athlete at 12 years of age on the 2004 U.S.

'This season will be defining one'

Soccer players' union publishes study on workload that supports cases against FIFA

GENEVA, Sept 5, (AP): Julian Alvarez was picked in 83 match-day squads last season. Darwin Nunez, Luis Diaz and Phil Foden played in 72 games. Cristian Romero traveled more than 160,000 kilometers for international games.

In comparison, Erling Haaland had a summer break without a national-team tournament and has started the season fresh with a flurry of goals for Manchester City.

The physical and psychological demands on elite soccer players last season were detailed on Thursday by their global union FIFPRO, which is challenging governing body FIFA in two legal cases.

FIFPRO published its annual Player Workload Monitoring report that surveyed about 1,500 players. It aims to back legal arguments that too much is being asked of the union's members without proper consultation about constant expansion of international competitions.

"This season will be the defining season," FIFPRO board member Maheta Molango said of a congested 2024-25 calendar that ends with the first 32-team Club World Cup, organized by FIFA in the United States.

A FIFPRO online briefing about the report included officials from player unions in England and France who filed a claim against FIFA in June at the Brussels Court of Commerce. It seeks a referral to the European Court of Justice in Luxembourg, which ruled last year on the Super League case.

In a separate legal case, FIFPRO's European division is teaming up with domestic leagues to file a complaint at the European Commission in Brussels against how FIFA decides to expand its competitions, including the first 48-team men's World Cup in 2026.

"The gap between those who plan and schedule complex international competitions and those who play and experience them has never been bigger," FIFPRO policy director Alexander Bielefeld said.

The union has targeted FIFA and not European soccer body UEFA, which also has added more games starting this season to the Champions League and Europa League.

"Lots of people tell us, 'Why don't you also attack UEFA?'" French union official David Terrier acknowledged. "The difference is we have had discussions with UEFA. There is a will to find solutions together. That hasn't been the case with FIFA."

The new Club World Cup, which will be played every four years, was a tipping point for the expansion of international competitions, the union said.

FIFA's consistent defense that national team games account for a small fraction of total games compared to club soccer was "a misleading perspective," the union said.

The latest player workload report switches focus from the numbers of games and minutes actually played toward time spent on work duty. This included selection in match-day squads and for national team training camps which added the same stresses on travel and preparing for games, the union said.

SOCCER

Players who went to the 2024 European Championship spent 17% of their working time last season with national teams, the report suggested, adding those players had as little as 42 days rest and recovery over the year.

Haaland did not play at Euro 2024 because Norway did not qualify, noted Molango, CEO of the players' union in England, and was fully rested to start the Premier League. He has seven goals in three games for Manchester City.

"Now you see the result. He is back to being the machine that we saw when he first joined," Molango said.

He also highlighted Mohamed Salah's fast start at Liverpool after playing no offseason tournament with Egypt.

The report also compared Real Madrid star Jude Bellingham playing many more games at the same age - 21 - than Wayne Rooney, a previous teenage star for England.



Top and above winners display their trophies.



England capt Buttler out of series

LONDON, Sept 5, (AP): England white-ball captain Jos Buttler was ruled out of the Twenty20 series against Australia because of a right calf injury on Thursday and might also miss the one-day series between the teams, too.

Buttler has been replaced in the T20 squad by Jamie Overton, while Phil Salt will take over as captain.

The three-match T20 series begins on Wednesday.

The five-match ODI series starts on Sept. 19 so Buttler has two weeks to recover. Batter Jordan Cox has been added to the ODI squad as cov-

er in case Buttler doesn't make it.

England T20 squad: Phil Salt (captain), Jofra Archer, Jacob Bethell, Brydon Carse, Jordan Cox, Sam Curran, Josh Hull, Will Jacks, Liam Livingstone, Saqib Mahmood, Dan Mousley, Jamie Overton, Adil Rashid, Reece Topley, John Turner.

England ODI Squad: Jos Buttler (captain), Jofra Archer, Gus Atkinson, Jacob Bethell, Harry Brook, Brydon Carse, Jordan Cox, Ben Duckett, Josh Hull, Will Jacks, Matthew Potts, Adil Rashid, Phil Salt, Jamie Smith, Reece Topley, John Turner.

Best of the Rest

Veretout joins Lyon: France midfielder Jordan Veretout has signed a two-year deal with Lyon in a transfer from French league rival Marseille.

Lyon said in a statement late Wednesday that the deal is worth four million euros (\$4.4 million), with bonuses of up to three million euros and a 25% capital gain in the event of a future transfer.

Veretout was not part of new Marseille coach Roberto De Zerbi's plans. The club wanted to get rid of Veretout during the transfer window but could not seal a deal before deadline day.

He was signed by Lyon as a joker and the seven-time French champion can register him for the Europa League. French rules allow clubs to sign an extra player outside the regular transfer window as long as they

are playing domestically. (AP)

are playing domestically. (AP)

Fans involved in a brawl: Police in Germany are investigating violent clashes involving up to 300 soccer fans following a friendly between local team Schalke and Dutch club NAC Breda.

Police said there were "mass clashes" involving up to 200 Schalke fans and around 100 from Breda on Wednesday night at Schalke's reserve stadium, and officers used their batons to intervene.

"Several people" were hurt but they left the scene, police said.

There was no word on whether any suspects were detained, though police said they identified some people who they believed to be involved. (AP)

team in Athens.

Long also has the 100 butterfly to come on Saturday.

Six-time world champion Markus Rehm, known the "Blade Jumper," won his fourth consecutive gold

medal in men's long jump, though he didn't jump as far as he wanted to.

The 36-year-old German was targeting his own world record of 8.72 meters from last year but had to settle for a jump of 8.13 at Stade de France. It was still enough for gold - ahead of Americans Derek Loccident and Jarryd Wallace, who claimed silver and bronze, respectively.

Noelle Malkamaki of the U.S. broke her own world record in women's shot put F46 by throwing a distance of 14.06 meters, and Iran's Saeid Afrooz beat his world-best mark by throwing a distance of 41.16 meters to take gold in the men's javelin F43.

Also at Stade de France, Tunisia's Raoua Tlili won her third consecutive gold medal in women's discus F41, and Canada's Greg Stewart won gold in the men's shot put F46.



China's Rong Xiao looks on during her women's foil wheelchair fencing Category B Gold Medal against Thailand's Saysunee Jana at the 2024 Paralympics in Paris, France. (AP)



Spectators display Palestinian flags for the national anthem during the Asian qualifier Group B match for 2026 World Cup between South Korea and Palestine at Seoul World Cup Stadium in Seoul, South Korea. (AP)

Sports

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Sinner eliminates Medvedev

Pegula upsets Swiatek to reach first Grand Slam semifinal

NEW YORK, Sept 5, (AP) — The questions wouldn't stop for Jessica Pegula: Why was she 0-6 in Grand Slam quarterfinals heading into her U.S. Open match against No. 1 Iga Swiatek? What could Pegula do to change that?

Came up during her on-court interview after winning in the previous round. And again at the news conference that followed. And again during a brief TV interview right before striding onto the court at Arthur Ashe Stadium on Wednesday night.

If that all weighed on Pegula, the 30-year-old American hid it well, pulling off a big upset by easily beating Swiatek 6-2, 6-4 at Flushing Meadows and earning a debut trip to the semifinals at a major.

"There have been so many freaking times, and I just kept losing," said Pegula, who has won 14 of her past 15 matches, all on hard courts. "I know everyone keeps asking me about it, but I was like, 'I don't know what else to do. I just need to get there again and, like, win the match.' So thank God I was able to do it. And finally - finally! - I can say, 'Semifinalist.'"

She will face unseeded Karolina Muchova of the Czech Republic on Thursday for a berth in the final.

Muchova, the runner-up to Swiatek at the 2023 French Open, made it to the final four in New York for the second consecutive year with a 6-1, 6-4 victory over No. 22 seed Beatriz Haddad Maia earlier Wednesday. Shortly after losing to Coco Gauff in last year's semifinals, Muchova had surgery on her right wrist, then was off the tour for about 10 months until returning this June.

That was the latest in a series of injuries for Muchova, who called it "one of the worst ones that I had."

"Doesn't seem to matter how many matches she's really gotten in; she seems to have good results no matter what. It's cool to kind of see her back, because I think she's really great for the game and the way she plays is really fun," said the No. 6-seeded Pegula, who defeated Muchova at the Cincinnati Open last month. "She's good, so talented, so skilled as a tennis player. Like, so complete. Doesn't have a ton of weaknesses."

The other women's match Thursday night also will feature an American making her major semifinal debut, No. 13 Emma Navarro, against No. 2 Aryna Sabalenka, who won the past two Australian Open titles. Sabalenka lost to Gauff in the 2023 final in New York; Navarro ended Gauff's title defense in the fourth round.

TENNIS

The lopsided nature of Pegula's win was surprising, but she did not think this day would ever arrive.

"I knew I could do it," she said. "I just had to go out and execute my game and not get frustrated."

Swiatek served poorly in the first set and her forehand was a real problem, with 22 of her 41 unforced errors coming on that side. Pegula made only 22 unforced errors in all and used terrific defense to keep forcing Swiatek to hit an extra shot.

"It's never easy to play against Jess. She has a tricky ball because it's pretty low and pretty flat," Swiatek said. "I just made too many mistakes."

Pegula also kept breaking serve against Swiatek, who counts the 2022 U.S. Open among her five Grand Slam titles and has led the WTA rankings for most of the past 2 1/2 years.

Entering Wednesday, Swiatek had lost just a pair of service games across four matches in the tournament, both in the first round - and she didn't even face a single break point in any of her most recent three contests. That's all part of why the 23-year-old from Poland was listed as a -350 money-line favorite against Pegula, according to BetMGM Sportsbook.

But Pegula, whose parents own the NFL's Buffalo Bills and NHL's Buffalo Sabres, didn't have much trouble in that department, especially at the outset, breaking in each of Swiatek's initial two service games, which both ended with double-faults, and three of the first six.

It helped that Swiatek was unable to properly calibrate her first serves early, putting just 2 of 12 - 16.7% - in play at the start, only 36% for the opening set.

"I didn't really understand why my serve wasn't working," Swiatek said.

Even as the games kept going in her favor, Pegula didn't show much perceptible emotion, whether grabbing a 4-0 lead just 21 minutes in or taking up that set, which was greeted with a slight shake of her left fist as she walked to her sideline seat.

Swiatek didn't hide her thoughts that well. She smacked her racket against the top of the net. She slapped her right thigh after a forehand flew wide to get broken yet again and trail

Bahrain stuns Australia, Palestinians hold Koreans in World Cup qualifying

Japan thrashes China 7-0

SEOUL, South Korea, Sept 5, (AP) — Australia fell to a shock 1-0 loss to Bahrain at home in the opening game of the third round of Asian World Cup qualifying on Thursday.

Meanwhile, South Korea was held to 0-0 by the Palestinians in Seoul. Despite losing all six previous games against Australia, Bahrain won thanks to an own goal from Harry Souttar with a minute remaining on the Gold Coast.

Abdulla Al-Khalasi's cross from the left side of the area hit the defender and flew past goalkeeper Mat Ryan.

Australia dominated the game but was reduced to 10 men when Kusini Yengi was red-carded after 77 minutes for a reckless tackle.

SOCCER

"It's not the way that we want to start our campaign, a loss at home, but we have to go away and improve," Australia winger Craig Goodwin said. "We have to look at the positives. This is the first game, there are nine games to go."

Bahrain is second in Group C behind Japan, which thrashed China 7-0 in Saitama.

First-half headers from midfielder Wataru Endo and winger Kaoru Mitoma put Japan in control by the break.

Then Takumi Minamino scored twice in quick succession and Junya Ito, Daizen Maeda and Takefusa Kubo also found the target to make it a painful evening for China.

The 18 teams remaining in Asian qualification have been divided into three groups of six. The top two from each qualify automatically for the 2026 World Cup while the six teams that finish in third and fourth will advance to the fourth round where there are two more places on offer.

South Korea last missed out on the World Cup in 1982 and got off to a poor start in Group B due to the Palestinians.

South Korea missed chance after chance - captain Son Heung-min hit the post - but could not find a way through a determined defense from a visitor that has never reached this stage before.

The Palestinians almost snatched what would have been a stunning victory in added time. Through on goal, Wessam Abou Ali's shot was saved by Jo Hyun-woo.

4-3 in the second set.

Top-ranked Jannik Sinner used an aggressive, net-rushing style to reach the U.S. Open semifinals for the first time by getting past 2021 champion Daniil Medvedev 6-2, 1-6, 6-1, 6-4.

Sinner - a 23-year-old from Italy who was cleared in a doping case less than a week before the U.S. Open started after testing positive twice for trace amounts of an anabolic steroid in March - will go up against No. 25 Jack Draper of Britain on Friday for a berth in the title match.

After Week 1 exits by Novak Djokovic and Carlos Alcaraz, Sinner took over as the title favorite and now is the only man remaining in the field with a Grand Slam trophy. He won his first at the Australian Open in January by beating Medvedev in the final in



Bahrain's Mahdi Abduljabbar Mahdi Darwish Hasan, front left, competes with Australia's Harry Souttar for a high ball during their World Cup 2026 qualifying match at the Gold Coast, Australia. (AP)

Petrovic 'takes' charge of Al-Qadisiya amidst Zain Premier League struggles

By Hassan Musa
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 5: Al-Qadisiya has appointed Montenegrin coach Zeljko Petrovic to replace Mohammed Al-Mishaan, who resigned last week. Despite leading the team to victory in the Amir Cup last season, Al-Mishaan's departure follows a disappointing start to the new season, with two losses in the Zain Premier League.

Petrovic is expected to arrive today to finalize his contract and observe Al-Qadisiya's friendly match against Al-Nasr tomorrow. He will officially take charge of training on

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Sunday.

Petrovic brings a wealth of experience, having played for the Montenegrin national team and managed several European clubs, including Boavista (Portugal), RKC (Serbia), Hamburg (Germany), West Ham (England), Urawa Reds (Japan), Sunderland (England), ADO Den Haag (Netherlands), Utrecht (Netherlands), Botev Plovdiv (Bulgaria), Inter Zapresic (Croatia), and Feyenoord (Netherlands). He has also coached the Iraqi national team and

the UAE's Al Shaab. Most recently, he served as an assistant coach for Turkey's Adana Demirspor in 2023 and managed Zrinjski Mostar in Bosnia this year.

Al-Qadisiya has also revamped its football administration, appointing former star Musesad Neda as team manager. The club hopes these changes will help turn the season around and reignite its pursuit of the league title, which has eluded the club for several years.

five sets after dropping the first two.

As reflected by the accurate-as-can-

be score, this matchup was unusually topsy-turvy as they took turns domi-



Jannik Sinner, of Italy, returns against Daniil Medvedev, of Russia, during the quarterfinals of the U.S. Open tennis championships, Wednesday, Sept in New York. (AP)

Special Oly MATP training kicks off in Kuwait with international experts

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 5: The regional training course for the Special Olympics Motor Activities Training Program (MATP) will commence tomorrow in Kuwait, hosted by Special Olympics Kuwait and overseen by Special Olympics International for the Middle East and North Africa region. The course will welcome coaches from GCC and Arab countries.

The training will feature lectures from Dr. Niamh Morton, Director of the Motor Activities Program at Special Olympics International; Dr. Eleni Rossidis, Technical Advisor for the Motor Activities Program at Special Olympics International; and regional experts including Dr. Emad Mohi El-Din, Head of the Sports and Training Sector; Dr. Sherif El-Foly, Head of the Games and Competitions Sector; and Noha Jaballah, Director of the Players Leaders and Activities Program.

Spanning three days, the course will cover both theoretical and practical components. The theoretical sessions will be held at the Costa del Sol Hotel, which will also host the opening and closing ceremonies. Practical training will take place at the Youth Sports Club swimming pool in the Ahmadi area, while player medical examinations

will be conducted at the Association for the Care of the Disabled in Sabahiya.

Rehab Bursali, National Director of Special Olympics Kuwait, stated that hosting this international training course aligns with the organization's commitment to staying updated with the latest training techniques and enhancing the skills of coaches. This initiative aims to advance the sports and movement opportunities for individuals with intellectual disabilities.



Rehab Bursali

ning a set at a time.

First, it was Sinner who was superior. Then that role was played Medvedev, the runner-up at Flushing Meadows to Djokovic last year and to Rafael Nadal in 2019. Then Sinner regained the upper hand in the third. In the fourth, from 3-all, Sinner surged, saving a pair of break points, then breaking Medvedev to lead 5-3.

"We know each other quite well. ... We knew it was going to be very physical," said Sinner, who lost to Medvedev in five sets at Wimbledon in July. "It was strange the first two sets, because whoever made the first break then started to roll."

The key: Sinner won the point on 28 of his 33 trips to the net, including 9 of 11 on serve-and-volley approaches.

"We tried to work really hard on this aspect of the game," Sinner said. "Trying just to mix up the game."

Medvedev was particularly uneven. He only had one fewer winner than Sinner but finished with 19 more unforced errors. Friday's other semifinal will be No. 12 Taylor Fritz vs. No. 20 Frances Tiafoe in the first all-American men's match at this stage at a major in 19 years.

The 22-year-old Draper reached his first Grand Slam semifinal - and became the first British man to get that far at the U.S. Open since Andy Murray won the 2012 trophy - by overwhelming No. 10 Alex de Minaur 6-3, 7-5, 6-2.

Draper has won all 15 sets he's played so far, but things figure to get tougher against Sinner.