

# SOVEREIGN FUND BOASTS ASSET VALUE OF \$ 803bn

## Significant gain in investment income

Portfolio expansion, return on direct investments, diversification key

**KUWAIT CITY, Aug 21:** Net investment income soared to 2.38 billion dinars, marking the highest three-month investment gain the nation has achieved in recent years. This is a notable surge in returns from its overseas investments during the initial quarter of this year, a substantial growth when compared to the final quarter of 2022, reports Al-Anba daily.

This positive performance can be attributed to a range of factors, prominently including the expansion of the financial portfolio, strong outcomes from direct investments, and the augmentation of assets across diverse business sectors. To provide context, Kuwait had attained around 2.3 bil-

lion dinars of investment income during the preceding quarter.

This growth in investment income has played a significant role in bolstering the trade balance, which achieved a surplus of 603 million dinars during the initial quarter of this year. During the ongoing period, Kuwait's current account exhibited a surplus of 4.1 billion dinars, with the goods and services account contributing 3 billion dinars.

The value of commodity exports reached 6.6 billion dinars, with oil exports constituting a majority at 6.18 billion dinars, while imports amounted to approximately two billion dinars. The data points towards an encouraging trajectory for the current account, underpinned by rising oil prices, increased production, and the stable flow of Kuwaiti investment revenues from abroad. These factors to-

gether contribute to the observed surplus.

Looking ahead, the medium-term outlook might be impacted by potential declines in oil prices, reduced output shares, and a forecasted slowdown in global economic growth. Ongoing challenges persist due to uncertainties linked to the global economy, including inflation trends, monetary policy adjustments, and geopolitical crises such as the Russian-Ukrainian situation.

In terms of the balance of payments for the first quarter, net direct investments reached 705.2 million dinars, while the net value of financial portfolio investments stood at 1.15 billion dinars, and other investments amounted to 749.2 million dinars.

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### Concerns mount

## Biden's 'AI' eye calls for control

WASHINGTON, Aug 21, (AP): When President Joe Biden has questions about artificial intelligence, one expert he turns to is his science adviser Arati Prabhakar, director of the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy.

Prabhakar is helping to guide the U.S. approach to safeguarding AI technology, relying in part on cooperation from big American tech firms like Amazon, Google, Microsoft and Meta.

The India-born, Texas-raised engineer and applied physicist is coming at the problem from a career bridging work in government - including leading the Defense Department's advanced technology research arm - and the private sector as a former Silicon Valley executive and venture capitalist.

She spoke with The Associated Press earlier this month ahead of a White House-organized test of AI systems at the DefCon hacker convention in Las Vegas. The interview has been edited for length and clarity.

**Question:** Does the president come to ask you about AI?

**Answer:** I've had the great privilege of talking with him several times about artificial intelligence. Those are great conversations because he's laser-focused on understanding what it is and how people are using it. Then immediately he just goes to the consequences and deep implications. Those have been some very good conversations. Very exploratory, but also very focused on action.

**Q:** Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer (who's pushing for AI regulations) says making AI models explainable is a priority. How realistic is that?

**A:** It's a technical feature of these deep-learning, machine-learning systems, that they are opaque. They are black box in nature. But most of the risks we deal with as human beings come from things that are not explainable. As an example, I take a medicine every single day. While I can't actually predict exactly how it's going to interact with the cells in my body, we have found ways to make pharmaceuticals safe enough. Think about drugs before we had clinical trials. You could hawk some powder or syrup and it might make you better or it might kill you. But when we have clinical trials and a process in place, we started having the technical means to know enough to start harnessing the value of pharmaceuticals. This is the journey we have to be on now for artificial intelligence. We're not going to have perfect measures, but I think we can get to the point where we know enough about the safety and effectiveness of these systems to really use them and to get the value that they can offer.

**Q:** What are some specific AI applications you're concerned about?

**A:** Some of the things we see are big and obvious. If you break the guardrails of a chatbot, which people do routinely, and coax it to tell you how to build a weapon, well, clearly that's concerning. Some of the harms are much more subtle. When these systems are trained off human data, they sometimes distill the bias that's in that data. There's now a fairly substantial, distressing history of facial recognition systems being used inappropriately and leading to wrongful arrests of Black people. And then privacy concerns. All of our data that's out in the world, each individual piece may not reveal much about us, but when you put it all together it tells you rather a lot about each of us.

**Q:** Seven companies (including Google, Microsoft and ChatGPT-maker OpenAI) agreed in July to meet voluntary AI safety standards set by the White House. Were any of those commitments harder to get? Where's the friction?

**A:** I want to start by just acknowledging how fortunate we are that so many of the companies that are driving AI technology today are American companies. It reflects a long history of valuing innovation in this country. That's a tremendous advantage. We also just have to be very, very clear that with every good intention in the world, the realities of operating in the market are, by definition, a constraint on how far these individual companies can go. We hope many more will join them and voluntary commitments will grow. We just have to be clear that's only one part of it. That's companies stepping up to their responsibilities. But we in government need to step up to ours, both in the executive branch and for the legislative branch.



In this image provided by the Iranian Revolutionary Guard via Tasnim News agency on Sunday, Aug. 20, 2023, a Revolutionary Guard speedboat moves near USS Bataan at the Strait of Hormuz, in the mouth of the Arabian Gulf. (AP)

### Newswatch

**KUWAIT CITY:** The Ministry of Foreign Affairs expressed on Sunday Kuwait's strong condemnation of the burning and vandalizing of churches and residence in Pakistan.

In a statement, the ministry hailed all efforts and procedures taken by Pakistani authorities in hindering such acts of violence, reaffirming Kuwait's unequivocal rejection of all forms of violence and actions that violate humanitarian and Islamic norms.

The ministry called for peace and tolerance between people of the world, discarding all forms of violence and extremism. (KUNA)

**MULTAN, Pakistan:** Authorities in Pakistan are promising 2 million rupees (\$6,800) in compensation for each of nearly 100 poor Christians who lost their homes when a Muslim mob angered over the alleged desecration of a Quran stormed their neighborhoods, burning at least 19 churches and damaging houses, officials said Monday.

Police said they have arrested dozens more rioters in ongoing raids, bringing the total number of detainees to 160.

Last week's attack was one of the most destructive in the country's history. The violence drew nationwide condemnation, with caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar ordering the arrest of all those linked to the rioting. (AP)

**SOUTH LAKE TAHOE:** President Joe Biden and first lady Jill Biden are traveling to Maui on Monday to comfort survivors of the devastating wildfires that ripped through the western part of the Hawaiian island earlier this month, as his administration responds to the devastation whose full scope is still unknown.

The Bidens are taking a detour from their weeklong vacation in the Lake Tahoe area for the day trip to Lahaina, a historic town of 13,000 people that was virtually destroyed by the flames. While there, the first couple will meet with first responders and be briefed by state and local officials about the ongoing response.

They will also view the damaged town, both from helicopters and on the ground, and the Democratic president will deliver remarks paying tribute to the victims of the wildfires, which have killed more than 100 people since they began on Aug. 8.

The president will also tap Bob Fenton, a regional leader at the Federal Emergency Management Agency, as chief federal response coordinator for the Maui wildfires, ensuring that someone from his administration will be responsible for long-term recovery efforts. (AP)

### Violence flares on West Bank

## Drive-by shooting claims Israeli woman

JERUSALEM, Aug 21, (AP): A suspected Palestinian attacker killed an Israeli woman and seriously wounded a man in the south of the occupied West Bank on Monday, Israeli authorities said, as violence continued to flare in the restive territory shortly after another shooting killed two Israelis.

The latest attack is part of a sharp escalation in the region in recent months involving Palestinian militants, Israeli security forces and radical Jewish settlers. It took place as Israeli forces were already on high alert and searching for the gunman who had killed the two Israelis in the northern West Bank on Saturday.

The combustible mix of armed Palestinians carrying out shooting attacks against Israelis as well as near-nightly - and often deadly - raids by the Israeli army to arrest militants has fueled the worst fighting between Israel and the Palestinians in the West Bank in nearly two decades.

Reprisals by fanatic Jewish settlers against Palestinians have also heightened tensions in the territory. Late on Sunday, Israeli settlers threw stones and firebombs at a Palestinian home south of Nablus near the site of Saturday's deadly attack, local officials reported, causing damage but no injuries.

Israeli security forces said the suspected Palestinian gunman opened fire at an Israeli car on Route 60, the main north-south road in the West Bank, near the major city of Hebron. The army said the apparent drive-by shooting killed an Israeli woman and seriously wounded a man as the two were driving.

The Israeli rescue service reported the two victims were in their 40s and that a 6-year-old girl who was also in the car was unharmed. The man, it said, was found semi-conscious and taken to the hospital.

A regional council representing settlements identified the woman killed as Batsheva Nigri, a mother of three and a kindergarten teacher, who resided in the Jewish settlement of Beit Hagai, near Hebron.

Images from the scene showed the victims' shattered sedan riddled with over a dozen bullet holes. The gunman fled, prompting Israeli security forces to embark on their second manhunt in three days. The military shut down all entrances to the Palestinian city of Hebron along with other towns to the south and east.

The Hamas militant group and Palestinian Islamic Jihad praised the attack as a response to Israel's expanding settlement enterprise in the West Bank, but stopped short of claiming responsibility.

The deadly shooting came just days after another Palestinian attack killed an Israeli father and son who were washing their car in the northern Palestinian town of Hawara, putting the West Bank on edge.

Nearly 180 Palestinians have been killed by Israeli fire in the West Bank since the start of this year, according to a tally by The Associated Press. Israel says most of the Palestinians killed were militants. But stone throwing youths protesting the incursions and those not involved in the confrontations have also been killed.

Some 30 people have been killed by Palestinian attacks against Israelis during that time.

Israel says the raids are meant to dismantle militant networks and thwart future attacks. Palestinians say the raids undermine their security forces, inspire more militancy and entrench Israeli control over lands they seek for a hoped-for future state. Israel captured the West Bank in the 1967 Mideast war, along with east Jerusalem and the Gaza Strip.



Israeli forces and Zaka Rescue and Recovery team members work at the site of a shooting attack near the West Bank city of Hebron, Monday, Aug. 21, 2023. Israeli authorities say that a suspected Palestinian attacker has killed an Israeli woman and seriously wounded a man in the incident. (AP)

### Counteroffensive handicapped

## Danes thanked for F-16s



Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy addresses the Danish people from the steps of Christiansborg palace, the seat of Danish Parliament, in Copenhagen, Denmark, Aug. 21, 2023. (AP)

COPENHAGEN, Aug 21, (AP): Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy thanked Danish lawmakers Monday for helping his country resist Russia's invasion, a day after Denmark and the Netherlands announced they will provide Kyiv with F-16 warplanes that could be delivered around the end of the year.

Zelenskyy told the lawmakers during a visit to Copenhagen that if Russia's invasion is successful, other parts of Europe would be at risk from the Kremlin's military aggression.

"All of Russia's neighbors are under threat if Ukraine does not prevail," he said in a speech.

Zelenskyy says Ukraine is defending Western values of freedom and democracy against tyranny. He has argued that Ukraine needs to be properly provisioned to fend off Russia's much bigger force.

Ukraine has been pressing its Western allies for months to give it American-made F-16s. Its armed forces are still using aging Soviet-era combat planes from the 1970s and '80s, and its counteroffensive against Russian positions is advancing without air support, which analysts say is a major handicap.

In downtown Kyiv on Monday, people welcomed the news about F-16s though they also expressed frustration that the decision hadn't been taken sooner.

"Finally," said 33-year-old Larysa Shymko, who is from a Russia-occupied area of the southern Kherson region. "I think every Ukrainian has been waiting for this for a long time."

Yurii Lymar, a 38-year-old lawyer, said Ukraine's Western allies "could approve such decisions a little faster, because every day in this ... war means lots of Ukrainian people dying."

Zelenskyy said on Telegram that Ukraine would get 42 jets. Denmark pledged 19 F-16s, which could be delivered around the end of the year when pilot training lasting four to six months is completed.

However, getting Ukrainian squadrons battle-ready could take much longer.

U.S. Air Force Gen. James Hecker, commander of U.S. air forces in Europe and Africa, said last week that he did not expect the F-16s to be a game-changer for Ukraine. Getting F-16 squadrons ready for battle could take "four or five years," he said.

While some training has already begun for Ukrainian pilots, Dutch Prime Minister Mark Rutte said Sunday it's just language lessons so far.

### Bonds issued

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 21, (KUNA): The Central Bank of Kuwait (CBK) announced Monday new bonds and related tawarruq valued at KD 240 million (around USD 792 million).

The securities bear a 4.375-percent return rate with a three-month maturity rate, according to a CBK statement received by KUNA.

### Life sentence for baby killer

LONDON, Aug 21, (AP): A former neonatal nurse convicted of murdering seven babies in her care and trying to kill six others at a hospital in northern England was sentenced Monday to life in prison with no chance of release by a judge who highlighted "the cruelty and calculation" of her actions.

Lucy Letby, who refused to appear in court to face her sentencing or to hear grieving parents share their anger and anguish, was given the most severe punishment possible under British law, which does not allow the death penalty.

Justice James Goss said the number of killings and attempts and the nature of the murders by a nurse entrusted with caring for the most fragile infants provided the "exceptional circumstances" required to impose a rare "whole-life order."





## OPINION OTHER VOICES



The remains of buildings destroyed during the earthquake are pictured in Antakya, southeastern Turkey and 10 other provinces in southern Turkey on the morning of February 6th. Over 50,000 people died, and Saturday, Aug. 5, 2023. Six months ago, a devastating 7.8-magnitude earthquake hit the Kahramanmaraş hundreds of thousands were left homeless, sheltering in tents and other temporary accommodation. (AP)

Turkey's preparedness is still uncertain

# Crevise in the learning curve

Dust and rubble fill the street as an excavator tears off chunks of concrete from an old apartment building. Bystanders and former residents watch from afar as construction equipment tears down the structure. Among the bystanders is Ibrahim Ozaydin, 30, a former resident. He watches the demolition not with worry, but with relief, as his building was marked by officials as unsafe months ago.

Ozaydin and his family were shocked to learn that the municipality deemed his building uninhabitable. "We decided to build our own house," he told The Associated Press as he watched his former home being torn down. "Instead of living in a poorly built house, let us take our own precautions."

The sight of construction vehicles demolishing buildings became engrained in Turkish minds six months ago, after a devastating 7.8-magnitude earthquake hit Kahramanmaraş and 10 other provinces in southern Turkey on the morning of Feb. 6.

Over 50,000 people died, and hundreds of thousands were left homeless, sheltering in tents and other temporary accommodation. The International Labor Organization estimates that some 658,000 people were left jobless. As for the material cost, some 300,000 buildings were damaged. Survivors needed to be rescued, rubble to be cleared and buildings on the verge of collapse torn down.

Yet this latest demolition is taking place in Istanbul, Turkey's largest metropolis, far away from the earthquake zone. This time the building wasn't torn down as part of search-and-rescue efforts, but to prevent such harrowing scenes in the future.

The building was occupied only by Ozaydin and his extended family, who also owned a shop on the ground floor. The family managed to relocate their shop and build a new, sturdier house at a different location, but theirs is an exceptional story in a city where hundreds of thousands of buildings are at risk and property prices are soaring.

Istanbul lies atop a major fault line, one which experts warn could break at any moment. In a bid to prevent damage from any future quake, both the national government and local administrations are racing against time to alleviate the pain of the February quake while also preparing their cities for potential disasters in the future.

However, even preparedness can fall victim to political rivalry: the authorities in opposition-held Istanbul municipality and the national government in Ankara cannot agree on the exact number of buildings at risk of crumbling in the event of an earthquake. But both put the figure at hundreds of thousands.

After the February tragedy, the Istanbul municipality headed by Mayor Ekrem Imamoglu, a prominent figure in the opposition to President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, earmarked for demolition 318 buildings housing over 10,000 people.

Bugra Gokce, an official with the Istanbul municipality overseeing the demolition, said, "We are identifying buildings at risk of collapse and fortifying others, all to reduce the potential loss of life."

During a heated election campaign right before his re-election to

a third decade in power, Erdogan pledged to construct 319,000 new homes within the year. He attended many groundbreaking ceremonies as he persuaded voters that only he could rebuild lives and businesses.

"It's easy to say, 'we are building this many square meters atop a hill' or '5,000 residences are being built somewhere,'" adds Gokce, in an apparent jab at the national government's urban transformation programs. "We are also doing that. But if you're not also reducing the risk to existing buildings in the city, it is nothing more than urban expansion."

Both experts and Erdogan critics argue that the sheer scale of February's destruction was due to the president's weak enforcement of building codes amidst a construction boom that helped drive economic growth.

Ankara launched several programs aimed at inspecting damaged buildings both in and outside the 11 provinces hit by the earthquake. Meanwhile victims have been offered both financial aid and a chance to resettle in public housing projects built by the Housing Development Administration of Turkey, or TOKI.

Although many promises were made by both the ruling party and the opposition in the leadup to the elections in May, those still in the earthquake-affected provinces are demanding faster action.

Lawyer Mehmet Ali Gumus in Hatay province, one of the worst hit by the earthquake, told The Associated Press that people were starting to lose hope. He said there were no signs of reconstruction in Hatay, and that the emergency shelter situation in Antakya, Hatay's most populated city, was deteriorating by the day.

People are living in metal shipping containers and tents in sweltering heat that can reach up to 42 degrees Celsius (107 Fahrenheit) without any access to air conditioning. Residents must also contend with flies, snakes and other wildlife while living outdoors, according to Gumus.

Another health risk is the rubble from collapsed buildings, which is being dumped on farmland, shores, and even right outside encampments where survivors are staying. "Everyone around me says that we survived the earthquake, but they'll be dealing with cancer in 5-10 years because of the asbestos (from the rubble)," adds Gumus.

In a social media post on July 15, the Hatay governor's office stated that levels of asbestos in the rubble are safe and below the "regulatory limit." Results showing low amount of asbestos taken from samples collected in debris dumping grounds were also posted.

While Hatay residents deal with the elements and other environmental hazards, their future remains uncertain.

"There were concrete statements before the elections, but afterwards we stopped hearing anything concrete," continues Gumus, claiming that the government has not committed to securing new houses for victims or even to fortifying their existing residences. "Six months after the disaster we should be talking about newly built residences, not lines of people waiting for water," he adds.

Another Hatay resident, Bestami Coskuner, was leaving for the

western province of Izmir because of the power cuts and water shortages in his hometown.

"Tap water is not potable, but people use it to wash. Pipes burst daily, and power is cut two or three times a day," Coskuner told The Associated Press. He said water was rationed, and some who drank from the tap came down with serious illnesses.

"You can't easily drink water. In a place where you can't easily drink water, how are you going to make any decisions? Even bottled water tastes bad in Hatay," he added.

Victims of the earthquake have already had to deal with the aftermath of a disaster, the worst cost of living crisis in decades, and a highly polarizing election. They'll have only had a brief break from politics as Turkey heads to hotly contested municipal elections in March. Erdogan, fresh off his victory in national elections last May, has vowed to take back the metropolitan cities he lost in 2019.

One of Erdogan's campaign strategies had been a focus on providing housing and aid in the earthquake regions. The government made sure to provide amenities, shelter, and financial aid for earthquake victims.

His perceived support for the victims was one of the factors that enabled Erdogan's party to hold on to power in most of the provinces hit by the earthquake, despite accusations of being responsible for the devastation with his lax enforcement of building codes and the perception of poor emergency response by the government.

Experts like professor Naci Gorur, a geologist and member of the Science Academy, have been warning of a potential earthquake in Istanbul and other provinces for years. He told the Associated Press that the "steps taken were far outweighed by those not taken," and that Istanbul is not ready for a potential earthquake with the current state of structures and building codes.

Gorur described the soil in the affected regions as causing buildings to "resonate," making it even more difficult for such structures to stay intact during earthquakes. The quake occurred in a seismically active area known as the East Anatolian fault zone, which has produced damaging earthquakes in the past, such as the 7.4 magnitude quake near Istanbul in 1999, in which an estimated 18,000 people died.

"We could have prepared the whole of Turkey for an earthquake, not just Istanbul, if we had started working with the ministry to make our at-risk provinces earthquake-resistant. If we had distanced ourselves from politics, if policies were not left to the whims of new administrations, and if there had been a serious budget and determination," said Gorur.

"I have no doubts as to government's good intentions, but if you are going to do something, do it properly. You don't rush things like these," he said, adding that instead of rushing permanent buildings, the government should have focused on maintaining temporary residences while conducting proper studies for the building of permanent structures which comply with "scientific principles." (AP)

editor's choice





## Prayer Timings

Fajr .....	03:55	Asr .....	15:26
Sunrise ..	05:19	Maghrib ..	18:23
Zohr .....	11:51	Isha .....	19:44

# Local

**Expected weather for the next 24 hours:**  
**By Day:** Very hot and relatively humid over coastal areas with light variable wind to light to moderate southeasterly wind with speeds of 08-32 km/h.  
**By Night:** Hot to rather hot with light variable wind to light to moderate southwesterly wind with speeds of 08-28 km/h.

Station	Max Exp	Min Rec
Kuwait City	45	34
Kuwait Airport	46	32

Weather		
Abdaly	48	33
Jahra	49	33
Salmiyah	39	34
Ahmadi	40	34
Nuwaib	46	30
Wafra	47	31

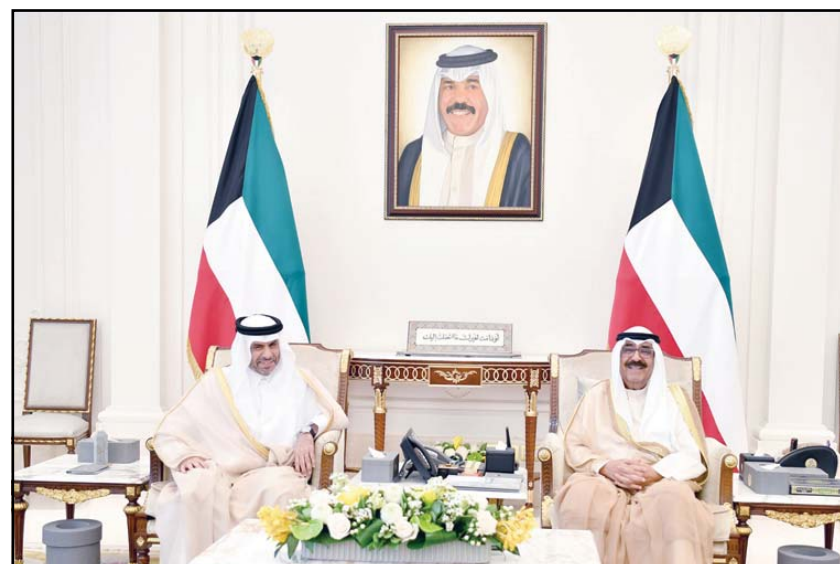
BIOMETRIC/FINGERPRINT APPOINTMENT: <https://meta.e.gov.kw/En/>

## Iraqi tyrant countered with literature, art: Dr Sheikhha Suad

### 'Pen mightier than sword'... Kuwaiti intellectuals' stance during invasion

# Big pay expat hiring slammed

MP criticizes KAC CEO, seeks dismissal



KUNA photo  
His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah receives the invitation extended to His Highness the Amir of the country from the Amir of Qatar to participate in the opening of the exhibition (Expo Doha 2023).

## Kuwait Amir receives invitation

His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received on Monday at Bayan Palace, an invitation directed to His Highness the Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, from the Amir of Qatar Sheikh Tamim Al-Thani to attend the opening ceremony of Doha Expo 2023 (Green Desert, Better Environment).

Qatar's ambassador to Kuwait Ali Al-Mahmoud delivered the invitation to His Highness the Crown Prince.

The meeting was attended by Head of the Crown Prince Diwan Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Sabah, Minister of Amiri Diwan Affairs Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah, Undersecretary of the Amiri Diwan and Director of His Highness the Amir's office Ahmad Al-Fahad, Director of His Highness the Crown Prince Office Jamal Al-Theyab, Undersecretary of His Highness the Crown Prince Diwan for Foreign Affairs Mazen Al-Essa. (KUNA)

## Scattered rain, high winds warned

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 21, (KUNA): The Kuwait Meteorological Department said Monday, that the country is affected by scattered rains, sometimes thundery, accompanied by wind activity that may reach speeds of more than 60 kilometers per hour.

The winds would lead to a decrease in horizontal visibility in some areas, and sea waves rise of more than six feet, the department added in weather warning.

Last Friday, the country witnessed sporadic rain, sometimes thundery, accompanied by hail, with strong winds.

## Other Voices

# Our MPs and prohibition of receiving UK bank interests

By Ahmad alsarraf

Each morning, we encounter "posts" that feature images of deputies' faces, often defying description and frequently accompanied by unkempt, lengthy beards. These posts carry suggestions and opinions aimed at steering the country toward a path reminiscent of Taliban-era Afghanistan.

It's as if the entire world, with its population of eight billion people, including numerous Islamic nations, has veered off course, and only this small group of fewer than thirty deputies possesses the correct perspective.

They seem to believe that they alone possess exclusive insights, and they are determined to compel us, even forcibly, into alignment with their faith-based beliefs and visions.

All of this unfolds as the government members seem to stand with wide open mouths, either unable or unwilling to counteract this wave of religious fervor, extremism, and an alarming shift towards overindulging citizens with promises of benefits, grants, raises, and wealth.

Their narrative implies that all citizens must merely wait for the religious state to materialize, led by these deputies. Such developments are spurred on by the approaching time for these deputies' votes on critical decisions, and they are fully aware of this. Consequently, they are intent on imposing their bleak visions upon us, even if it pushes the state into financial ruin.

Five deputies have proposed a revision of fuel prices to pre-2016 levels. Representatives Al-Azmi, Nayef, Al-Obeid, and Al-Tamar have put forth a proposal to prohibit mixing in both universities and applied institutions, including private schools.

Al-Nayef, Al-Mutair, Shuaib, and others have submitted a proposal for a law that stipulates a 400-dinar increase in the salary of every employee, soldier, firefighter, retiree, and even recipients of employment support. This translates to an annual expenditure of three billion

dinars for raises?! In another proposal of similarly audacious nature, representatives have advocated for the establishment of an organization to manage the financial assets of state leaders – an idea unprecedented in the history of parliamentary systems worldwide.

Nearly all deputies seem to be in a race, suggesting a draft law that allows 20% of the Future Generations Reserve's returns to be distributed to the 800,000 citizens who have reached the age of majority. This would equate to spending over two billion dinars on rather imprudent contributions! And they've gone further by proposing a monthly allowance of 600 dinars for each married housewife.

Others have urged for loans to be provided to "widows and divorced women," subsidized building materials, an increase in rent allowances, doubling the student stipend, setting the children's allowance at 100 dinars without any limit on the number of children, enhancing the social allowance for housewives to 800 dinars, raising the minimum retirement pension to 1500 dinars, abolishing insurance-based salary replacements, and compensating those affected by real estate fraud to the tune of no less than 20 billion dinars.

Representatives Al-Tasha, Al-Matar, Fahad, Al-Damkhi, and Al-Otaibi have additionally called for the eradication of interest on citizens' loans, along with the state foregoing interest on its deposits in local banks. However, what about its interest in foreign banks?

The last proposition reminded me of an incident from the past, when shortly after the founding of the National Bank in 1952, a fatwa was issued by religious authorities in either Iraq or Iran, prohibiting individuals from earning interest on their deposits from national banks but permitting it from foreign banks (such as the British Bank at the time). This distinction was made due to the perceived harm caused to the non-Muslim entity.

Is the deputies' silence about the government's ongoing receipt of interest on its deposits in foreign banks, amounting to billions, attributed to a desire to "harm the infidel banks"? With deputies of this nature, it seems we require no enemies, either from within or outside our borders.

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By Saeed Mahmoud Saleh  
Arab Times Staff

**KUWAIT CITY, Aug 21: MP Hamdan Al-Azmi has submitted a proposal to grant six months leave with full salary to public sector employees who accompany patients for overseas treatment.**

If the patient is the first degree relative of the employee, the full salary leave will continue until the completion of treatment, the lawmaker added.

MP Marzouq Al-Hebeini submitted a proposal to include the scholarship students nominated by the Public Authority for Applied Education and Training (PAAET), Civil Service Commission (CSC) and other public institutions to the beneficiaries of the decision that the Council of Ministers issued on Nov 21, 2021 for the Ministry of Higher Education to coordinate with the Finance Ministry to increase the allowance of scholarship students by 50 percent in order to cover their expenses in light of the rising inflation rates.

On the other hand, MP Shuaib Sha'aban urged Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Oil, State Minister for Economic and Investment Affairs, and acting Minister of Finance Saad Al-Barrak to dismiss the chief executive officer (CEO) and Board of Directors of Kuwait Airways Corporation (KAC).

Sha'aban criticized the recent press conference of the CEO, stating it was held to defend the decisions of the Board of Directors including the appointment of an expatriate consultant with a salary of more than KD 6,000. He argued that Kuwait has several experts who can manage the national carrier; adding the CEO should have explained the reasons behind the frequent delay of Kuwait Airways flights and high prices of plane tickets, instead of defending futile decisions. He stressed the need for Al-Barrak to take action; otherwise, he will bear political responsibility.

Moreover, MP Mubarak Al-Tasha has forwarded queries to Al-Barrak about the oil spill in an area measuring 29.7 square meters at the Gulf water opposite Kuwaiti shores. He asked if the Environment Public Authority (EPA) has recorded pollution of the Gulf water. If yes, he wants to know the level of pollution, causes and effect on fish resources; and if the oil spill is due to leakage from oil trucks passing through the Arabian Gulf.

MP Marzouq Al-Hebeini forwarded queries to Minister of Electricity, Water and Renewable Energy and acting Minister of Education Jassem Al-Ostad about the criteria for the academic accreditation of foreign educational institutions. He inquired if the cultural offices at Kuwaiti embassies allow Kuwaiti students to enroll in educational institutions not accredited by the National Bureau for Academic Accreditation and Education Quality Assurance, if the bureau rejected the certificates of Kuwaiti graduates even if they obtained approval from the cultural offices to enroll in unaccredited universities, if the bureau issued the equivalent academic certificates as per the court decisions, rationale behind the refusal to grant the equivalent certificates prior to the issuance of court decisions in favor of the students, if a court decision was issued in the case of a graduate from a certain university, and if the bureau continues to refuse to issue the equivalent certificates in similar cases unless ordered by the court decisions citing decision number 20/2014 issued by the bureau on the accreditation of South Korea Maritime University.

He added a ministerial decision was issued in 2017 to suspend the enrollment of Kuwaiti students in this university without affecting those who enrolled prior to the issuance of the decision. He went on to say the graduates, who enrolled at the university before the issuance of the ministerial decision, were surprised when the bureau refused to grant equivalent certificates after their graduation in academic year 2019/2020. He wants to know if these graduates' certificates have been accredited and reasons for non-accreditation if the answer is "no".

MP Muhannad Al-Sayer asked Minister of Justice and State Minister for Housing Affairs Faleh Al-Raqaba if Kuwaiti consultants were appointed at the Ministry of Housing Affairs and Public Authority for Housing Welfare in line with the Kuwaitization policy.

## HH PM presides over weekly Cabinet meet

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 21, (KUNA): On Monday, August 21, 2023, the Council of Ministers convened its regular weekly meeting at Seif Palace, under the leadership of His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmed Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah. Following the session, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs and Minister of State for National Assembly Affairs, Issa Ahmed Al-Kandari, made the following announcements:

The Cabinet expressed its deep appreciation and gratitude to His Highness the Amir of Kuwait, Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, and His Highness the Crown Prince, Sheikh Mishaal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, for their issuance of four new laws. These laws include:

1. Law No. 71 of 2023, amending Article 2 of Law No. 114 of 2014, pertaining to health insurance for retired citizens.
2. Law No. 118 of 2023, concerning the establishment of companies tasked with constructing and economically developing cities or residential areas.
3. Law No. 119 of 2023, amending specific provisions of Law No. 14 of 1973, which established the Constitutional Court.
4. Law No. 120 of 2023, addressing the process of electing National Assembly members.

The Cabinet highlighted that these legislations are the outcomes of fruitful collaboration and ongoing coordination between the government and the National Assembly during the previous session of the seventeenth legislative term. The Cabinet also commended the efforts of the Parliamentary Government Coordinating Committee in this collaborative process.

Furthermore, Dr. Ahmad Abdel-Wahhab Al-Awadi, the Minister of Health, presented the latest updates regarding the epidemiological situation in Kuwait to the Council of Ministers. He indicated that the health situation remains stable in the country despite the emergence of the new sub-mutant of Covid EG.5 (EG.5).

This variant was identified in Kuwait through epidemiological investigations and genetic sequencing tests. Dr. Al-Awadi emphasized that no extraordinary measures are required at present, but individuals experiencing symptoms of respiratory infection are advised not to interact with others. He also stressed the importance of adhering to preventive measures for medical staff and visitors to healthcare facilities.

In addition, the Council of Ministers reviewed the recommendation of the Ministerial Committee for Legal Affairs regarding a draft decree that amends Decree No. 94 of 2018, defining the ten electoral districts for Municipal Council membership.



Martyr Fayege Abduljalil



Taleb Al-Refaei



Waleed Al-Rujaib

By Dalal Sharar/Mishal Al-Sarheed

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 21, (KUNA): Kuwaiti intellectuals have proven the truth of the adage "the pen is mightier than the sword" through various works of literature that defied the aggressors during the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait.

Speaking on the occasion, a number of Kuwaiti intellectuals pointed out that the fight against the Iraqi invasion was not only physical; the written word had also an important role in defying those committing this heinous crime.

Intellectual Dr. Sheikhha Suad Al-Sabah affirmed, during an interview with KUNA, that literature and arts were a haven for many during Kuwait's darkest hours.

Whether written, drawn, acted, or sung, the arts played a crucial role in defending the homeland, she affirmed.

Dr. Sheikhha Suad indicated that she had published a book under the title "Will you allow me to love my country" and many literary works during the invasion to highlight Kuwait's justice cause regionally and internationally.

Her publishing company Dar Suad Al-Sabah for Culture and Creativeness also opened its doors for the youth to exert their poetic and story-telling outputs during the invasion.

She affirmed that literature could be considered a type of soft power for the tremen-

dous impact of words on people.

On his part, Taleb Al-Refaei, another Kuwaiti intellectual, stressed the importance of literature in fighting against injustice.

Kuwaiti intellectuals fought against the Iraqi invasion since its onset, said Al-Refaei naming several intellectuals including late poet Fayege Abduljalil who was killed by the Iraqis, novelist Ismail Fahad Isamil and others for their patriotic stance against the Iraqis.

Intellectuals had exposed the brutal nature of the invasion, which affected all sectors of society and even the environment was not safe, he added.

Providing a similar input, intellectual Waleed Al-Rujaib affirmed that literature could be considered as a historical document that could provide insight into happenings in certain eras including the Iraqi invasion.

He asserted that most literary works were produced by individuals within Kuwait during the invasion, saying that individuals like Layla Al-Othman, Thuraiya Al-Baqasami, Sulaiman Al-Shatti, and others all put their lives on the line for their works during the invasion.

The Iraqis had targeted cultural icons and tried to distort the educational system to wipe out Kuwait during their heinous crime, but they failed due to the brave stance of the Kuwaiti people and intellectuals, Al-Rujaib said.

## 'China will remain reliable friend'

# 'Kuwait first country to grant loan'

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 21: The Chinese Ambassador to Kuwait Zhang Jianwei praised the Chinese-Kuwaiti relations that preceded Chinese relations with the Gulf states, reports Al-Qabas daily.

In a press statement, he revealed that Kuwait was the first country to grant Beijing loans, and its partnership is strategic, affirming that his country will continue to expand the policy of openness with the Arab and Gulf countries.

The ambassador said the call for peace, development, cooperation, mutual benefit, and non-interference in internal affairs of other countries is the most important characteristic of the Chinese foreign policy.

He affirmed that China will remain a reliable friend and strategic partner for Kuwait in various fields, and cooperation between the two countries will serve common interests.

Ambassador Jianwei expressed appreciation for Kuwait's support towards his country, as it is the first country to provide government loans to China, and the first Gulf country to establish diplomatic relations with his country, due to which "we will continue to expand the cooperation relations between the two sides in various fields."

He also highlighted his country's support for the Palestinian cause since ancient times, affirming that his country stands with the Palestinians.

The ambassador said, "Our position is clear and firm, and therefore, the Chinese people have won the admiration and accept-

ance of the Arab countries. In recent years the Chinese-Arab and Gulf relations have developed rapidly, because we consider them an important partner for our country and we are keen to enhance development opportunities with the Gulf countries."

Regarding the date for establishing a free trade zone between China and the Gulf states, Ambassador Jianwei said, "We need more negotiations, consultations and time to reach an agreement with the Gulf states in this regard. The Gulf region is very important to us and we will exchange visits and international conferences. An international conference will be held in China in the coming months, and we welcome the participation of the Gulf countries."

He called on Kuwaitis to visit his country and enjoy tourism and the picturesque nature, adding, "China is open to tourists from all countries of the world. We welcome Kuwaiti tourists to our country. Travel agencies have resumed group trips for Chinese citizens to 138 countries, including five Gulf countries, except for Kuwait, which was not part of the list of countries as a tourist destination."

He also highlighted his country's support for the Palestinian cause since ancient times, affirming that his country stands with the Palestinians.

The ambassador said, "Our position is clear and firm, and therefore, the Chinese people have won the admiration and accept-

## 'Grave violations fines not at airport'

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 21: The General Traffic Department at the Ministry of Interior has advised all those fined for speeding or parking in areas designated for people with special needs to pay the fines at the Violations Department before they travel, reports Al-Rai daily quoting sources.

Sources explained that fines for grave traffic violations cannot be settled through the electronic payment system or the designated offices at the land and sea ports and Kuwait International Airport shortly before

departure, as the concerned individuals must complete the process at the Violations Department.

Sources revealed the General Traffic Department has activated the registration of violations through the violations system within six minutes of issuing the citations and notifications are sent to the concerned individuals through the Sahl platform to ensure the collection of fines when completing any government transaction, when traveling or residency renewal for expatriates.

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# Al-Mubarakiya largest remaining historical area in the city: NCCAL

Observations, recommendations laid out

**KUWAIT CITY, Aug 21: The National Council for Culture, Arts and Letters (NCCAL) has affirmed the status of the Mubarakiya area as a significant urban heritage zone, with a considerable portion of it registered in the National Register of Heritage Buildings, earning a top rating of 1, reports Al-Qabas daily.**

Dr. Muhammad Al-Jassar, the Acting Secretary-General of the Council, conveyed in a letter addressed to the Municipality, and as reported by Al-Qabas, that the Mubarakiya district is subject to Amiri Decree No. 11 of 1960, which pertains to the Kuwaiti Antiquities Law.

He emphasized the necessity of safeguarding the remaining sections of mud walls and coastal rocks that were uncovered after a site visit on June 21, 2023 (these sections are integrated into some shops). These elements should remain undisturbed, serving as a testament to the Mubarakiya fire incident and evidence of various historical architectural periods in the region due to distinct construction materials and techniques.

A proposal to rebuild the shops using local materials is feasible, but the aforementioned parts must be preserved with an iron frame and glass protection, ensuring their visibility and preventing concealment through decorations or false ceilings.

Al-Jassar stressed that a method exists to protect these remnants by enclosing them with iron frames and glass, and their surroundings can be constructed with materials matching the region's character while respecting its architectural heritage.

In terms of signage, Al-Jassar recommended referring to historical images and archives to accurately replicate the shop advertisements' appearances in each area. The proposed height for the shops contradicts the area's heritage essence, as historically, shop heights did not exceed 3 meters. Therefore, the suggested "attic" concept needs reevaluation, establishing guidelines for its proper utilization that poses no threat to the site. Careful attention must be paid to color intensity, favoring a light, earthy shade.

## Architectural value

Regarding the proposal to mimic wooden appearances for the iron umbrellas, Al-Jassar advised against disguising architectural elements in the area, preserving their architectural value. The proposed museum's design must be treated as a new addition rather than a part of the reconstruction, so as not to alter the area's historical narrative and the legacy of its past structures.

Al-Jassar reported that a team from the Council conducted a site visit and compiled a report. This visit occurred in conjunction with discussions with the National Council's representative for the project and various stakeholders, confirming the commitment to heritage preservation and its pivotal role in the project due to the site's historical and archaeological significance. The following observations and recommendations emerged:

■ Legal clauses and regulations are essential to manage the treatment of antiquities discovered during construction and development projects. Such archaeological findings, exemplified by the arms market in the Mubarakiya area and the adjacent hill at Musharraf Palace, are crucial to enhancing Kuwait's historical narrative.

■ The fire unveiled vital historical lay-

ers spanning multiple eras of traditional mud construction and transitional building methods. This discovery allows insights into the era of construction and the techniques employed. Establishing a historical narrative museum accessible to visitors based on these findings is an opportunity to explore the building methods of the past.

■ The urban evolution in Kuwait experienced stages of abandonment, leading to a fragmented urban fabric. Preserving the historical elements within the Mubarakiya market is critical due to the scarcity of continuous historical layers in a single location.

■ The archaeological discoveries at the site extend Kuwait's historical reach and offer evidence of human settlement in the region. These findings are highly valuable in the context of cultural tourism and international cultural ties.

■ Given the rarity of such discoveries, amendments to the project schedule are recommended to enable archaeologists to conduct thorough excavations in the region.

■ The site forms an integral part of the overall story of archaeological and historical elements discovered within the reconstruction project area. Relocating these discoveries to another site is not advisable, as it disrupts the cumulative historical layers and interconnectedness of these elements.

■ Recognizing the Mubarakiya market fire as a historical milestone, a proposal to preserve and restore one of the fire-affected shops while retaining fire traces is recommended. This approach maintains a living connection to this historical event, while the proposal's execution can align with the market's development as a tourist attraction.

## Other Voices

### Restrictions on movement: Deep dive into the Mol's new mandate

By Dr. Fawaz Khaled Alkhateeb  
Attorney and Visiting Professor at  
Kuwait International Law School

The Ministry of Interior's recent directive, necessitating every foreign resident in Kuwait to clear outstanding traffic violations before exiting the country, has spurred a wave of legal and constitutional dialogues. Effective August 19, 2023, this decision is anchored in the provisions of Decree No. (1959/17) related to the Foreigners Residency Law and Decree Law No. (1976/67) concerning traffic.



Dr Alkhateeb

At first glance, the initiative seems a straightforward move to recover state dues. However, it unearths a plethora of legal and constitutional difficulties. Freedom of movement, a sacred constitutional right, now seems entwined with traffic violation clearance. A scrutiny of the invoked decrees reveals neither grants explicit authority to restrict exit based on these infringements.

The regulation raises questions about an individual's right to self-defence, particularly when disagreements emerge over fines. A sturdy legal system offers its members the

right to challenge and defend. Genuine debt recovery should be commanded through legitimate channels like judicial verdicts or formal orders from investigative bodies.

Another crucial aspect is the just application of laws. Article 29 of our Constitution mandates unbiased, uniform law application. Traffic indiscretions, being commonplace, are not bound by nationality or residency. Policies hinging on nationality risk bordering on discrimination.

The potential fallout from such a policy is significant. Kuwait's esteemed reputation as a humanitarian state might be jeopardised by perceived differential treatment. The economic and social tapestry of Kuwait, intertwined with the mobility of its residents, could be adversely affected. Hindrances to this fluidity might inadvertently deter the progress of sectors reliant on this movement.

In conclusion, while the intent behind the directive might lean towards administrative efficacy and fiscal consolidation, it is vital to operate within a lucid, equitable, and transparent legal ambit. Striking a balance between state priorities and individual liberties, though challenging, is imperative. It ensures the ethos of justice, equality, and movement freedom remains inviolate, reflecting the notions of Article 7 of Kuwait's Constitution.



Fawaz@tahergp.org



Health Minister receives (WHO) Assistant Director-General for Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR).



Dr. Hanan Balkhi during her visit to the National Bank of Kuwait Hospital.

WHO commends Kuwaiti children hospital

### 'Kuwait to enhance cooperation with WHO'

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 21, (KUNA): Kuwait is keen to enhance joint cooperation with The World Health Organization (WHO) in all health services, Health Minister Dr. Ahmad Al-Awadhi said Monday.

During his meeting with (WHO) Assistant Director-General for Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR) Dr. Hanan Balkhy, Al-Awadhi said in a statement that the two sides discussed means of cooperation in many fields.

The statement added that the two officials also tackled Kuwait's capability in retorting health challenges and comprehensive panning for attentiveness to medical emergencies.

Al-Awadhi pointed out to Balkhy's admirations of Kuwait efforts to provide the necessary support and its ongoing quest in saving lives of millions of people during global humanitarian crises as a partner to (WHO) and as part of Kuwait's moral obligation to the United Nation's charter.

Balkhy's made a visit yesterday to National Bank of Kuwait Children



Dr. Hanan H. Balkhy, WHO Assistant Director-General for Antibiotic Resistance.



KUNA photos  
Dr. Sondos Al-Sherida, Head of the Department of Hematology, Pediatric Cancer, and Stem Cell Transplantation.

hospital and praised the scale of medical services and high professionalism.

A World Health Organization official has commended medical services

provided by the National Bank of Kuwait Specialized Hospital for Children and the qualified cadres whom Kuwait is proud of.

Dr. Balkhy made the statement to KUNA on Sunday after visiting the hospital.

She lauded performance of the national medical cadres namely treatment, psychological and social care for children, as well as the cooperation with the State of Kuwait that succeeded in working out a national plan for resisting antibiotics.

On campaigns to boost awareness of the antibiotics' harmful effects, she indicated that national plans in this respect are based on social awareness, expanding knowledge and data, tacking and research plus using antibiotics soundly.

Meanwhile, Sondos Al-Sherida, the head of the blood, children cancer and cells transplants at the hospital, said Dr. Balkhy's visit aimed at examining the services at the hospital, indicating a plan to build the therapeutic apheresis ward for children soon.



# August

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# diwaniya ديوانية

A DIGEST OF PUBLIC OPINION

## 'National Assembly and absence of parliamentary diplomacy'

"I WOULD like to commence by addressing the role of the Speaker of the Council and the Bureau members in upholding the parliamentary function, which was established in the early sixties by the late Abdulaziz Al-Saqer during his tenure as the Speaker of the Council. This approach was harmoniously aligned with the late Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad, who was the Minister of Foreign Affairs at that time. This collaboration aimed to coordinate their roles while drawing on the directions of Kuwaiti diplomacy as endorsed by the executive authority, represented by the Kuwaiti government," columnist **Abdullah Bishara** wrote for *Al-Qabas* daily.



Bishara

"During the summer work hiatus, the parliament capitalized on the opportunity to set forth a foreign tour program. This initiative included visits to both Arab and non-Arab capitals to elucidate Kuwait's concerns and realities. The program also highlighted Kuwait's developmental priorities, as well as its regional and global contributions to security, peace, and conflict resolution through dialogue. The goal was to foster an environment conducive to solutions, avoiding provocative rhetoric that could impede progress.

"The understanding between these two parties centered with the parliamentary role of presenting Kuwait's genuine narrative and its constructive approach toward viable solutions. The parliament showcased its commitment to defending Kuwait's objectives within the Arab region and on the international stage. These dialogues aimed to reinforce Kuwait's identity while endeavoring to address challenges and differences in a spirit of goodwill and cooperation.

"Kuwait's message was one of peace, optimism, and genuine intentions, devoid of deception or duplicity. It was underpinned by a dedication to equitable resource sharing, a characteristic present in the developmental programs of Arab and other developing nations. This approach was championed by leaders who believed in the potential for magnanimous human relationships between countries.

"The unique reliance on magnanimity stands as an exceptional feature, encapsulating kindness, reassurance, tranquility, and the essence of pure diplomacy, in contrast to coercive measures like armies, alliances, and threats.

"From 1961 to 1990, these were the defining characteristics of Kuwait's national diplomacy. The National Assembly played an active role in advocating for this diplomacy through its Arab and international tours, which effectively bolstered the Kuwaiti state's efforts.

"I recall observing the late Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad's engagement in the Foreign Committee meetings of the National Assembly. He participated constructively, expressing his satisfaction with the members' grasp of the necessity of these efforts. He believed that Kuwait thrived in an atmosphere marked by goodwill and trust, employing continuous communication as a means to dispel pessimism and emphasizing the use of peaceful methods and ongoing dialogue.

"This synergy between Kuwaiti diplomacy and parliamentary diplomacy flourished harmoniously. Kuwait relentlessly assessed its strengths and weaknesses, all the while progressing in alignment with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' perspec-

tive. This ministry became an integral component of Kuwait's security framework, leveraging diplomacy to ensure the effectiveness of this system.

"The invasion brought about changes that challenged established perceptions in Kuwaiti diplomacy. One of the most notable shifts was the realization that integrating chivalry into diplomatic strategies was a grand illusion. The exposure of deceit within Iraq's neighboring policies shattered this notion. Consequently, Kuwait's diplomacy shifted to align with global norms.

"This approach entailed deterrent mechanisms, led by a professional army with rigorous training and unwavering morale, fueled by deep patriotism. Kuwait also solidified alliances with historical partners whose interests aligned with their shared goals. Historical events underscored their promptness in contributing to Kuwait's security.

"It's my belief that the understanding between the Council and Kuwait's diplomatic corps necessitates coordination to enable the Council to uphold its role in shaping Kuwait's contemporary diplomacy. The Council must account for the reasons behind the shift from reliance on pure diplomacy to embracing comprehensive dual approaches that merge the gentle with the assertive.

"Amidst these transformations, the Council's current priorities lean towards decisions that address rising prices, enhance citizens' lives, and extend state services to reach all corners and citizens. This takes place in an atmosphere of trust in the existing security mechanisms Kuwait relies on.

"However, the Kuwaiti security dossier has not become a significant concern for deputies. This tranquility can be attributed to the security arrangements that are currently in place.

"It's crucial for the deputies, especially the president and members of his office, to acknowledge the dues of the strategic security partnership encompassing Kuwait, Britain, and the United States. Maintaining security-related communication with these partners entails a myriad of values and considerations that necessitate a constructive approach. These considerations align with the principles enshrined in Kuwait's Constitution, which emphasizes human rights, the rule of law, equality, political rights, freedom, and human dignity.

"These values do not pose any conflict, but it's evident that there's a fracture in the National Assembly's commitment to engaging in parliamentary diplomacy. This role emerged from discussions between the Council and the political leadership, hinging on the principles of Arab countries' negotiation methods characterized by mutual understanding and trust in intentions.

"Speaker Ahmed Al-Saadoun is well-aware of the importance of communication with both Britain and the United States. Despite the government's ongoing openness, there remains a pivotal role for the Council to foster connections with these two allies who share Kuwait's defense responsibilities."

**Also:**

"On April 27, 2021, during an interview broadcast in Saudi Arabia to mark the 5th anniversary of the launch of "Vision 2030," Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman characterized the year 2015 as a "very difficult" period," columnist **Abdullah Al-Afasi** wrote for *Al-Rai* daily.

"He highlighted that within the Kingdom, the second tier of ministers, including

deputy ministers, was largely absent. Leadership within ministries was scarce, and administrative work had become routine and strategic initiatives to achieve future goals were lacking.

"In offering this assessment, Prince Mohammed bin Salman was not criticizing a specific generation or blaming one era for the state's weakened position. Instead, he signaled the commencement of a transformative journey for the Kingdom -- a journey towards substantive reform through a clear and supportive public policy.

"In Kuwait, the echoes of the year 2015 are still apparent within ministries and government institutions. This is not due to a dearth of competencies, but rather because of the growing gap in administrative leadership. The inability to make decisions in the absence of substantial leadership has expanded considerably.

"From this perspective, it's challenging to construct a robust central state body capable of formulating policies and strategies, fostering collaboration among different entities, and assigning each sector a well-defined role for effective implementation. Development isn't solely the responsibility of ministers; it necessitates an administrative body comprising leaders who can translate the vision into tangible reality.

"While the government has made strides in bolstering optimism among citizens and deputies about a more promising future, where the state transforms into a dynamic center for development, crucial indicators still lack a vital driver -- filling leadership vacancies.

"Without effective leaders, the state's standing remains fragile, and achieving significant progress becomes an uphill battle. Ministries and government agencies, akin to stagnant water, cannot be set in motion unless there are capable leaders guiding the way. Proxy leadership often leads to tentative decisions, as they are made with hesitant hands wary of temporary liability.

"Even ministers and the government in general, regardless of the competence of their members, serve as the architects of development policies. They outline the overarching direction and general strategy for development. Yet, the onus of translating these plans and strategies into tangible results lies with leaders across various agencies.

"Persistent leadership gaps impede progress, leaving development endeavors stuck in routine and deemed as "progress at your own pace". This is despite the fact that there is no concerted strategic action to realize future goals and desired advancements. The government's efforts to correct its course and complete crucial transformative projects remain incomplete.

"For the government to genuinely achieve development, it must assemble a proficient team within all ministries and government agencies. This team should assist ministers in fulfilling the aspirations of the people, serving as the primary vehicle for realizing authentic development.

"Should the vacancies gap persist without the prompt influx of national talents capable of translating development aspirations and high ambitions into tangible outcomes for both the people and the state, our efforts would resemble spinning a wheel with a needle incapable of producing the comprehensive development required across various levels."

— Compiled by **Mai Elsoukary**

## GTD collects KD 66,000 in traffic fines 24 hrs after decision issued

33,569 travel ban orders registered in 6 months

By **Jaber Al-Hamoud, Munaif Nayef**  
Al-Seyassah Staff and Agencies

**KUWAIT CITY, Aug 21: In just 24 hours after the decision was issued by the General Traffic Department has collected 66,000 dinars in traffic fines from dawn Saturday until the dawn of Sunday, reports Al-Rai daily.**

According to well-informed security sources, these fines were collected from expatriates and citizens of Gulf Cooperation Council countries which were collected at land, air, and sea ports.

The daily added approximately 70 expats -- 50 men and 20 women -- who

### Al-Shammari elaborates on advantages

## Crisis continues in recruitment of female domestic workers: official

**KUWAIT CITY, Aug 21:** In light of the continued cessation of most of the countries from where domestic workers are recruited to work in Kuwait, the crisis continues in this sector for all labor recruitment offices, particularly in the employment of women, reports *Al-Rai* daily.

Although Kuwaiti laws in the field of labor rights are considered the best in the world, other Gulf countries and Jordan overcame the crisis years ago by adhering to their laws regarding the recruitment of domestic workers.



Al-Shammari

A specialist in domestic labor affairs **Bassam Al-Shammari** elaborated on the advantages of Kuwaiti laws, which do not exist in the laws of neighboring countries.

He explained that there are three additional items that distinguish them from others, which are:-

- 1 - One-month paid leave after 11 months of work.
- 2 - End-of-service remuneration, at the rate of one month for each year of work.
- 3 - Payment of double wages for additional working hours per day.

He described the three additions as "unfair to the employer, since the civil labor law does not provide for them."

Al-Shammari highlighted that the failure to fully implement the laws related to the employment sector is what prompted the addition of those provisions, which doubled the burden on employers and made some of them reluctant to seek new

workers.

He said, "The number of domestic workers increased to about 780,000 during the first six months of the year 2023 compared to about 613,000 in 2022, due to the increase in the employment of men to work as cook, driver, etc and who can be recruited without problems.

The actual numbers will become clear after December, as the contracts for female workers are almost suspended, and the contracts of a large segment of female workers will begin to expire, which will lead to a deepening of the crisis."

Al-Shammari appealed to the concerned authorities to find quick solutions and intervene in dissolving the terms of reference between government agencies, which may cause an increase in difficulties and damage to all parties in light of the current situation in the domestic labor sector.

He stressed the need to spread cultural awareness regarding employment laws among the parties to the equation, who are sponsors, workers, owners of recruitment companies and offices, and workers in government agencies specialized in civil and domestic employment.

Al-Shammari also stressed the need to benefit from the experiences of neighboring countries, especially the Bahraini model, which is closest to Kuwait. He called on the government to work on signing memorandums with countries from which domestic workers are recruited in line with the plan to adjust the demographics and their needs, instead of relying on a specific country, and to search for new countries that export workers at an acceptable level that commensurate with the nature of the Kuwaiti family.

### Significant gain

Continued from Page 1

Kuwait Investment Authority sovereign fund, which ranks second globally, possesses assets valued at approximately \$803 billion. The fund's annual returns are estimated to be around 3%, with alternative investments constituting 15% of the portfolio.

In the broader context, Kuwait's external position has significantly improved due to recovering oil prices, and this positive trend is expected to persist throughout the remainder of 2023.

Meanwhile, remittances from expatriates in Kuwait witnessed consistent growth during the first quarter of 2023, with total remittances amounting to 1.22 billion dinars, in contrast to 1.16 billion dinars during the final quarter of 2022.

had committed serious violations such as speeding, crossing the red traffic light and parking in places reserved for physically challenged people had to cancel their travel plans because such fines cannot be paid at border points. This is addition to people who had travel bans slapped on them and orders had been issued to impound their vehicles. The daily added a significant number of these violators were Asians.

Furthermore, the GTD has implemented a swift system for recording and issuing violations in a matter of 6 minutes from the moment the violations are identified. Notifications are then transmitted through the "Sahel" application to the respective violators. This approach is expected to enhance the collection of fines, whether during government transactions, travel preparations, or foreign resident permit renewals.

The security sources also highlighted that the rapid issuance and recording of violations within the system will safeguard public funds and contribute to a reduction in careless behavior. This connection between the General Traffic Department and various government entities will serve to curtail the recurrence of violations and foster a greater sense of responsibility on the roads.

### Violations

Meanwhile, the General Traffic Department at the Interior Ministry continues to collect fines for traffic violations from departing expatriates, including other Gulf nationals, in line with the decision to link departure with the payment of fines.

According to the Ministry of Justice, a total of 33,569 travel ban orders were registered during the first half of 2023 -- the largest among the procedures at the Execution Department. This is in addition to lifting the travel ban imposed on 21,954 people after paying a total of KD 4,427,000 through the airport office, so they could travel within the same period.

The semi-annual statistics issued by the Department of Statistics and Research revealed that the total number of procedures completed by the Execution Department reached 3,726,000 in the first half of the year. The procedures for requesting executive arrest of a debtor increased remarkably constituting 45 percent of the total, followed by the procedures for executive arrest of a debtor at 20.7 percent, while the procedures for opening the adjustment of alimony are the lowest at 0.1 percent.

On the travel ban, the statistics showed that the number of procedures in travel ban departments reached 72,758; the travel ban orders reached 33,569 or 46.1 percent, and the procedures for lifting the travel ban reached 30.2 percent.

Meanwhile, security sources revealed that the General Traffic Department collected a total of about KD 10,000 traffic fines at Kuwait International Airport on the first day of implementing the decision to link travel and payment of fines.

Sources disclosed that a female Gulf national canceled her trip due to unpaid traffic fines estimated at KD 7,000. She was directed to the Traffic Violations Investigation Department in the Capital to pay the accumulated fines.

### Al-Mojaddi: The bees use a mental map to return to the hive

Beekkeeping expert and director of **Mujezat Al-Shifa** Company, **Muhammad Qasim Al-Majdadi**, confirmed that bees use a mental map to return to the hive, according to **Dr. Randolph Menzel**, professor of neuroscience at the University of Berlin,



in addition to that German scientists have proven that honey bees tend to find their way home. Based on roads, field edges, and other features, through a study whose results were published in the scientific journal *Frontiers*.

He reported that the scientists found that bees store information about the location of canals and other landmarks in memory. It turned out that the insects were guided by these channels while studying the terrain, and the artificial intelligence algorithms showed that the irrigation channels were the most useful for predicting the flights of bees from hives A and B, because the bees relied on remembering the landscape around their original hive.

### PP orders detention renewal of accused

## Securitymen unravel mystery behind death of 2 expatriates

**KUWAIT CITY, Aug 21:** Securitymen have unraveled the mystery behind the death of the two expatriates whose bodies were found at a farm in Abdally recently, reports *Al-Rai* daily.

It has been reported earlier that one of the expats sustained stab wounds, while the other was mutilated. Investigations revealed the two had a fight, during which they stabbed each other and this led to their death.

According to a security source, the brother of the owner of the farm reported that the two bodies were found inside a room.

The investigators could not establish the motive behind the killings and there was no suspect; hence, the conclusion that the two attacked each other.



**Tampering of bills:** On Thursday, the Public Prosecution's investigations into the case of tampering with the Ministry of Electricity and Water bills revealed a surprise, as an official in the ministry confirmed that some forgery operations had been uncovered by the Ministry of Electricity and Water in 2019, and it had been trying to uncover the tampering mechanism since then, reports *Aljarida* daily.

According to informed sources, the official provided the Public Prosecution with all the operational texts for the employees who are allowed to enter the billing system and collect them, and give orders to restore electricity or

fresh water supply to the sites from where they were cut off, after the bills were paid.

The Public Prosecution requested the ministry to prepare an integrated list of all the buildings, houses and private holdings for which the bills were paid during the recent period, and to provide evidence that the payment was made in a regular manner without any manipulation. It stated that, in the event of lack of evidence in this regard, the prosecution will be informed immediately.




The sources revealed that the Ministry of Electricity and Water has already begun listing all the sites that dealt with the gang.

They explained that the Public Prosecution, after completing the investigations, will refer the case to the Money Crimes Prosecution to investigate the bills, which were written off by the gang, and to summon all those involved for investigation.


The prosecution heard the statements of the Moroccan suspect, who was recently arrested. He confessed to participating with the gang in tampering with bills.

The suspect revealed that their ninth accomplice who fled the country was the mastermind, and was the one who was communicating with the building owners or their delegates to write off the bills, while the rest of the individuals were carrying out the transactions only with the help of the security employee.

At the end of the investigations, the Public Prosecution ordered the renewal of the detention of the accused pending the case.

RECALL INFORMATION



Mercedes-Benz Cars  
MODEL: S-Class - 223  
Model year: 2020-2021

RECALL REASON


Mercedes-Benz AG has determined in certain vehicles of the model series S-Class (model series 223) that the voltage converter software of the secondary on-board electrical system may not correspond with the specifications. In this case, the secondary on-board electrical system battery may discharge over time after the use of a diagnostic tool during a workshop visit, the ESP and ABS functions may be impaired as a result. This may increase the risk of accident. In addition, compliance with the legal boundary conditions may not be ensured.

REMEDY

As a precautionary measure, the software of the voltage converter of the secondary on-board electrical system will be updated in the affected vehicles. The required work certainly be carried out free of charge.

CONTACT

Please contact Al Mulla Automobiles Co.  
Phone 1-867-888  
Mercedes-Benz Service Centre - Al Shuwaikh Industrial Area - 9 Street  
Mercedes-Benz Service Centre - Al Shuwaikh Industrial Area - 13 Street  
Mercedes-Benz Service Centre for Passenger Cars - Al Ahmadi - 29 Street



This Recall is run pursuant to articles (42,43,44,46 and 47) of no. (39/2015) issuing the executive by laws of law no. (39/2014) on Consumer Protection.



## Biden admin announces more new funding

The Biden administration on Monday continued its push toward internet-for-all by 2030, announcing about \$667 million in new grants and loans to build more broadband infrastructure in the rural U.S.

"With this investment, we're getting funding to communities in every corner of the country because we believe that no kid should have to sit in the back of a mama's car in a McDonald's parking lot in order to do homework,"

said Mitch Landrieu, the White House's infrastructure coordinator, in a call with reporters.

The 37 new recipients represent the fourth round of funding under the program, dubbed ReConnect by the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Another 37 projects received \$771.4 million in grants and loans announced in April and June. The money flowing through federal broadband programs, including what was announced Monday and the \$42.5 billion infrastructure

program detailed earlier this summer, will lead to a new variation on "the electrification of rural America," Landrieu said, repeating a common Biden administration refrain.

The largest award went to the Ponderosa Telephone Co. in California, which received more than \$42 million to deploy fiber networks in Fresno County. (AP)

In total, more than 1,200 people, 12 farms and 26 other businesses will benefit from that effort alone, according to USDA. (AP)

## German soccer could revisit a controversial investment deal

The top men's soccer clubs in Germany could reconsider a major investment deal that failed to go through last season, two leading figures have indicated.

A controversial plan to sell a one-eighth share of the worldwide broadcast rights to investors for the top two divisions over 20 years was defeated in May when it fell four votes short of the required two-thirds majority of the 36 clubs. It had been

reported the estimated deal, which sparked protests by fans, could have raised 2 billion euros (\$2.18 billion).

Comments, however, by Borussia Dortmund chief executive Hans-Joachim Watzke, who also has a senior role with the league, and Eintracht Frankfurt supervisory board chair Philip Holzer suggested the investment deal - or something like it - could be revived.

"Personally I can imagine the project again needs to be revised and redesigned," Watzke told the Frankfurt Allgemeine Zeitung newspaper's Monday edition. "Probably we should put together a smaller package and focus on the topics of internationalization and digitalization."

Watzke added that "my impression is that some clubs which voted against see the situation differently since then." (AP)

## Market Movements

21-08-2023

	Change	Closing pts		Change	Closing pts		
UAE	- DFM	+0.08	4,053.64	PAKISTAN	- KSE 100	-1.60	47,450.61
JAPAN	- Nikkei	+0.37	31,565.64	PHILIPPINES	- PSEI	-1.17	6,290.27
				SAUDI	- Tadawul	-0.81	11,408.45
				EGYPT	- EGX 30	-0.63	17,920.48

# Business

## Widespread anger over collapse of Syrian pound

# Protests rock govt-held areas in S. Syria as economy crumbles

BEIRUT, Aug 21, (AP) - Protests spread Monday in two government-held provinces in southern Syria amid widespread anger over the crash of the Syrian pound and the dwindling purchasing power of many people in the war-torn country, opposition activists said.

The rare protests are still limited to southern Syria and are far from government strongholds along the Mediterranean coast, the capital Damascus and the largest cities, including Aleppo and Homs.

The protests came a week after Syrian President Bashar Assad issued two decrees doubling public sector wages and pensions, sparking inflation and compounding economic woes for others.

The U.S. dollar has strengthened from 7,000 Syrian pounds at the beginning of 2023 to 15,000 now. At the onset of Syria's uprising turned civil war in 2011, the dollar was trading at 47 pounds.

The protests were concentrated in the southern city of Sweida, home to the country's Druze minority, and the nearby province of Daraa, often considered the birthplace of Syria's uprising 13 years ago. Sporadic protests in Sweida against the government and corruption have intensi-

fied and turned violent, while Daraa, back under government control since 2018, has experienced high crime and clashes between militias.

There was no immediate comment Monday from the government about the second day of protests in Sweida and Daraa.

On Sunday, the pro-government Sham FM radio station reported that final exams at branches of Damascus University in Sweida were postponed until further notice because some students could not reach campuses because of road closures.

### Decision

Assad's decision to hike wages and pensions comes as the cash-strapped government continues to restructure an expensive subsidy program for fuel, gasoline and wheat for bread. Soon after the decision, public transport and fuel fares increased. The economy has already been struggling after years of conflict, corruption and mismanagement, and Western-led sanctions on the government over accusations of war crimes and involvement in the illicit narcotics trade.

"We only kneel to God," chanted dozens of protesters in the city of

Sweida who were accompanied by Druze clerics, according to Suwayda 24, a news website run by activists in the region.

It said protesters were coming to the provincial capital from nearby villages.

The British-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, an opposition war monitor, reported that protesters closed main roads in Sweida, including the road leading to the local headquarters of Assad's ruling Baath party.

In Daraa province, where protests against the government in March 2011 spread across the country, protesters marched in villages including Nawa, Jaseem Sanamein and Dael calling for the downfall of Assad's government and for the expulsion of Iranian influence from the region, according to opposition activist Ahmad al-Masalmeh. Iran has been a main backer of Assad, helping to tip the balance of power in his favor.

The United Nations estimates that 90% of Syrians in government-held areas live in poverty and that over half of the country's population of 12 million struggles to put food on the table.

# WS mixed as rising bond yields keep cranking up the pressure



Persons stand near an electronic stock board showing Japan's Nikkei 225 index at a securities firm Monday, Aug. 21, 2023, in Tokyo. Asian stocks were mixed Monday as traders looked ahead to the Federal Reserve's summer conference for signs of whether the U.S. central bank thinks inflation is under control or more interest rate hikes are needed to cool inflation. (AP)

## Global stocks up as traders await Fed conference

### NEW YORK, Aug 21, (AP): Wall Street was mixed on Monday and holding a bit steadier after sliding for three straight weeks through what's been a dismal August.

The S&P 500 was up 0.1% in afternoon trading. The Dow Jones Industrial Average was down 141 points, or 0.4%, at 34,361, as of 12:37 p.m. Eastern time, and the Nasdaq composite was 0.8% higher.

Putting more pressure on the stock market were rising yields in the bond market, where the 10-year Treasury yield touched its highest level since 2007 and rose above 4.34% and is hovering around that level. That's up from 4.25% late Friday and from less than 0.60% in 2020.

Higher yields are good for bond investors, who get paid more in interest for their investments. But it also makes investors less willing to pay high prices for stocks and other investments that are less steady than U.S. government bonds.

A swift rise for yields globally has shaken stock markets worldwide. It's added to concerns that stock prices overshoot during their strong run earlier this year and that signals keep piling higher of China's faltering economic recovery.

This week's main economic event is likely to be a speech on Friday by Federal Reserve Chair Jerome Powell. The Jackson Hole, Wyoming, setting for his speech has been the home of major policy announcements in the past by the Fed, and it's one of the most important events each year for central bankers globally.

The worry is that Powell will dash investors' hopes that the Fed has al-

ready hiked interest rates for the final time and that its next move will be to cut rates early next year.

The Fed has already pulled its main interest rate to its highest level since 2001 in its effort to grind down high inflation. High rates do that by slowing the entire economy bluntly and hurting prices for investments.

For all the anticipation about Powell's speech, he may not end up sending a strong signal out of Jackson Hole, according to Goldman Sachs.

In the minutes from its last policy meeting in July, the Fed indicated it was unsure about its next move. It stressed again that it will make its upcoming decisions on rates based on what incoming data says about inflation and the economy.

The week after Powell's speech, big reports are due for each of those topics. One is the latest monthly update on the Fed's preferred way of measuring inflation, and the other is the monthly jobs report. "The Fed will likely wait to be informed by these new data before changing their current posture," Goldman Sachs' Lexi Kanter and Michael Cahill wrote in a report.

Economists at Bank of America, meanwhile, say there's a chance Powell will say every upcoming meeting of the Fed has a possibility to see a hike in interest rates given how strong recent economic reports have been.

"We think Powell's tone at Jackson Hole will be less balanced than the July FOMC minutes," they wrote in a BofA Global Research report.

The economy has remained remarkably resilient despite much higher interest rates. While the solid job market and spending by U.S. households eases long-held worries about a possible recession, they could also add upward pressure on inflation.

Another big event for the market will be Nvidia's profit report scheduled for Wednesday. The chip maker's stock

has flown higher this year, more than tripling on excitement about demand for artificial-intelligence technology.

Nvidia's report on Wednesday may offer a hint about whether all the furor was deserved. It rose 4% Monday.

The earnings reporting season for the spring is winding down for S&P 500 companies. The majority have reported better results than feared, as is usually the case. But that's done little to help support the stock market.

The S&P 500 has dropped nearly 5% in August to given back more than a quarter of its big gains from the first seven months of the year. Technology and other high-growth stocks seen as some of the biggest losers of higher rates have been hit particularly hard.

Tesla, one of those high-growth stocks, rose 5.7% to recover some of its 11% loss from last week.

Security software maker Palo Alto Networks jumped 16.2% for the biggest gain in the S&P 500. The California company reported better profit for the spring than analysts expected late Friday. But the majority of stocks within the S&P 500 were falling. On the losing end of Wall Street was Nikola, which has recalled more than 200 electric trucks following a couple battery fires.

It said it can't guarantee when it will resume selling the trucks and that it will raise \$325 million by selling convertible bonds. It fell 22.2%.

Besides the possibility about higher rates for longer, concerns about China's economic recovery have also weighed on markets globally.

Hong Kong's Hang Seng tumbled another 1.8% and is down 12.2% for August so far alone. Stocks also fell 1.2% in Shanghai.

China cut a bank lending rate, but the move fell short of what some analysts expected.

Coming into this year, the expectation was for a strong economic recovery by China would help prop up the

global economy. The world's second-largest economy instead has fallen well short of forecasts.

### Global

Global stocks were higher Monday as traders looked ahead to the Federal Reserve's summer conference for signs of whether the U.S. central bank thinks inflation is under control or more interest rate hikes are needed to cool inflation.

London, Tokyo, Paris and Wall Street futures advanced. Shanghai declined. Oil prices rose.

### Europe

In early trading, the FTSE 100 in London rose 0.3% to 7,281.64. The CAC 40 in Paris gained 1% to 7,237.32 and the DAX in Frankfurt advanced 0.6% to 15,672.15.

### Asia

In Asia, the Shanghai Composite Index lost 1.2% to 3,092.97 while the Nikkei 225 in Tokyo advanced 0.4% to 31,565.64. The Hang Seng in Hong Kong lost 1.8% to 17,623.29.

The Kospi in Seoul gained 0.2% to 2,508.80 while Sydney's S&P-ASX 200 shed 0.5% to 7,115.50.

India's Sensex gained 0.5% to 65,300.30. New Zealand and Singapore retreated while Bangkok and Jakarta gained.

### Oil

In energy markets, benchmark U.S. crude gained 62 cents to \$81.28 per barrel in electronic trading on the New York Mercantile Exchange. Brent crude, the price basis for international oil trading, advanced 68 cents to \$85.48 per barrel in London.

### Currencies

The dollar edged up to 145.58 yen from Friday's 145.32 yen. The euro rose to \$1.0883 from \$1.0878.

## Training course held

# Warba Bank spreads the culture of investing in gold to Al Safwa clients

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 21: Warba Bank announced holding a training course for its Al Safwa and Al Safwa Plus clients titled "How to start investing in gold" to spread the culture of investing in gold, in cooperation with the Bank's strategic partner, Dar Al Sabeek.

The course, presented by distinguished experts in the field of gold, focused on the political fluctuations that require investing in gold and the movement of its prices up and down, especially the 24-karat gold bars provided by Warba Bank, whether the Emirati or Swiss, which are considered the best of their kind in the field of investment in gold.

The course also focused on the digitally flexible way to buy, sell and store physical gold through the Warba Bank application.

Dar Al-Sabaek presented symbolic gifts to Warba Bank clients, which consisted of a gram of gold for each client, in addition to other valuable gifts. Warba Bank invited its Al Safwa and Al Safwa Plus clients to dinner after the course at the Grand Hyatt 360 Hotel.

In his comment, Abdullah Nasser Al-Shuail - Senior Director of the Branches and Private Banking Services said that the course was very useful to all clients, and it was of full benefit to them, this confirms that Warba Bank is keen to spread the culture of awareness, means of comfort and safety, and to provide and keep abreast of all that is new locally and internationally for all its clients, especially Al Safwa and Al Safwa Plus clients.

Al-Shuail explained that the "gold account" of Warba Bank is an investment account that allows the client to buy and sell the finest types of gold provided by Swiss and Emirati companies (24 karat with a purity of 999.9). Opening an account and controlling it is easier than ever before through the Warba Bank application in partnership with Dar Al Sabaek Group in Warba Bank. The account is distinguished by its investment nature, and clients can buy and sell gold bars directly through the Warba application online, and the prices are announced daily and with an immediate update, noting that Warba Bank has recently concluded a promotional campaign directed to all Warba Bank clients, which included providing dis-



Abdullah Nasser Al Shuail

counts for the Bank's commission on all gold buying and selling operations to be 100 Fils for every gram of gold.

Al-Shuail stressed that the "Gold Account" is very popular among clients due to its advantages and the easy dealing. He encouraged many segments to deal with gold with a new vision as an important source for preserving value and investing at the same time, as many tend to keep gold as an investment or to preserve value and protect against fluctuations in prices and markets. It is also a quick source of liquidity when needed.

Al-Shuail stated that gold always remains the best and safest investment, which value increases with time and it is the best gift that everyone is keen to acquire and give to their beloved one.

He concluded his statement saying that Warba Bank launched the Gold account years ago to enhance its role in creating new products and diversifying investment opportunities for clients, while expanding its market share in the retail market and individual services.

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

# German 'cbank' sees economy stagnating again in 3rd quarter

BERLIN, Aug 21, (AP) - Germany's central bank anticipates that the country's economy, Europe's biggest, will be more or less stagnant again in the current quarter - adding to a string of weak performances.

German gross domestic product stagnated in the second quarter after declining in both of the two previous quarters as the country struggled with high energy prices, rising borrowing costs and weakness in China, which has been a key trading partner.

The International Monetary Fund forecast last month that Germany would be the globe's only major economy to shrink this year, even with feeble economic growth around the world

amid rising interest rates and the threat of growing inflation.

A monthly report Monday from the Bundesbank, Germany's central bank, indicated that the picture isn't about to improve. "In the third quarter of 2023, German economic output will probably remain largely unchanged again," it wrote.

The bank said that, while private spending should continue to recover thanks to stable employment, significant pay increases and declining inflation, industrial production is likely to remain weak for the time being because of declining foreign demand, and high financing costs are expected to continue weighing on investment.



### Ecuadorians reject oil drilling in the Amazon

In a historic decision, Ecuadorians voted on Sunday against the oil drilling of a protected area in the Amazon that's home to two uncontacted tribes and serves as a biodiversity hotspot.

With over 90% of the ballots counted by early Monday, around six in ten Ecuadorians rejected the oil exploration in Block 44, situated within Yasuni National Park, one of the world's most biodiverse regions. The

area is inhabited by the Tagaeri and Taromenani, who live in self-isolation.

In 1989, Yasuni was designated a world biosphere reserve by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, also known as UNESCO. Encompassing a surface area of over 1 million hectares (2.5 million acres), it boasts 610 species of birds, 139 species of amphibians, and 121 species of reptiles.

At least three species are endemic.

The outcome represents a significant blow to Ecuadorian President Guillermo Lasso, who advocated for oil drilling, asserting that its revenues are crucial to the country's economy. As a result of the vote, state oil company Petroecuador will be required to dismantle its operations in the coming months. (AP)

### Elevate your palate: Dim Sum delights take center stage

Soaring above the city at Four Seasons Hotel Kuwait at Burj Alshaya, rooftop hotspot Sinto is the place to savour a fusion of edgy eats and rhythmic beats from August 15 to 31. As temperatures peak, guests can cool off in chilled-chic surroundings with dazzling city views while enjoying a special two-week promotional menu celebrating the intricate art of Dim Sum. These bite-sized delights from across

Asia are expertly crafted in the traditional style and ready to be paired with sinfully good house mocktails.

Throughout the promotion, guests are invited on a culinary journey that engages all the senses.

Harnessing the unique flavours and textures of Asia, the lively menu features creative treats like Exotic Vegetables Crystal Dim Sum, pillowy Shi-

take Mushroom Bao and subtly smoky Duck Gyoza. Deep, rich tastes come courtesy of the Wagyu Beef Dim Sum while the dessert, Gyoza Mango and Lemon Grass, offers a zesty kick to close.

The vibrant playlist, ranging from soulful Asian melodies to the lively pulse of contemporary beats, sets the tone for an evening where the dining experience transcends the plate.

### Al Rushood: Recognition confirms KFH leadership at regional and global levels

## KFH wins 'World's Best Islamic Financial Institution' award from Global Finance

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 21: In recognition of its continued successes and operational progress at the regional and international levels, leadership in the Islamic finance market and excellence in the digital banking solutions, Kuwait Finance House (KFH) has bagged 2023 "World's Best Islamic Financial Institution" award from Global Finance magazine.

In its sixteenth annual awards, Global Finance magazine announced six more awards for KFH; "Best Islamic Corporate Bank - Global", "Best Islamic SME Bank-Global", "Best Islamic Takaful- Global", "Best Islamic Project Finance Provider-Global", "Best Islamic Financial Institution - Middle East" and "Best Islamic Financial Institution in Türkiye".

In a statement by the magazine, the winners of this year's awards are those firms that contributed to the growth of Islamic financing. They successfully met their customers' needs for Shariah-compliant products with modern and efficient delivery channels, while creating the foundation for continued growth.

KFH will receive the awards in a ceremony to be held on October 14th this year, during the annual meetings of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank in Marrakesh, Morocco.

On this occasion, KFH Acting Group Chief Executive Officer, Abdulwahab Issa Al Rushood, said that this recognition affirms KFH's standing as the largest bank in Kuwait and the second largest Islamic bank in the world, and the first among Kuwaiti banks and all listed companies on Boursa Kuwait

in terms of market capitalization.

He mentioned that the awards reflect the Bank's efforts in promoting its role and sustainability at the local, regional and global levels, which is attained by strengthening its market share and focusing on digital transformation, service quality and efficiency of its human talents, while paying attention to the strength of its financial position, creditworthiness, development and innovation policy in offering banking solutions.

Al Rushood pointed out that KFH Group's exceptional business framework involves elements of strength and performance incentives that constantly push towards further achievements and overcoming challenges, which has made KFH widely commended in the global markets. The awards confirm the reliability of KFH's approaches and successful policies that are implemented with a highly professional manner.

"The Best Islamic Corporate Bank - Global and Best Islamic Project Finance Provider-Global awards highlight KFH's unique performance and leadership in financing and supporting large corporations through a range of financing services and solutions." Said Al Rushood.

He noted that both awards shed light on the Bank's leading participation in financing major development projects that contribute to promoting economic growth including projects in energy, transportation, communication, infrastructure, industrial production, real estate development, digital transformation, and technology development.

With regards to the Best Islamic



2023 Islamic Finance Institution

SME Bank-Global award, Al Rushood indicated that it is the result of KFH's ceaseless efforts in fostering and

advancing small and medium-sized businesses, a role in which financial and social goals intertwine. The recog-

niton is also dedicated to the Bank's appreciation towards the important role of SMEs in supporting the national economy, developing the entrepreneurial landscape, and creating investment opportunities. He revealed that KFH owns up the largest share at the local level in the SMEs financing volume.

Speaking about the Best Islamic Takaful- Global recognition, Al Rushood pointed out that KFH is the first in Kuwait to establish a Takaful insurance company that offered a new innovative approach in the insurance sector and paved the way for other insurance companies to offer insurance services as per the Shariah principles to corporations and individuals.

Commenting on the Best Islamic Financial Institution in Türkiye award, Al Rushood explained that KFH - Türkiye is one of the largest Islamic banks in Türkiye, and among the top ten in the Turkish market. Further, its operations expanded into European markets by establishing KT Bank AG in Germany.

Al Rushood stressed KFH's commitment towards global banking, governance, and Shariah standards, saying that KFH is entirely dedicated towards managing its capabilities and utilizing the available material capacities and human talents, in addition to meeting its customers' aspirations.

"KFH has been always a significant reference, a trusted brand, and a highly valuable source in the Islamic finance industry in Kuwait and the world" added Al Rushood.

It is worth noting that Global Fi-



Abdulwahab AlRushood

nance announced its 16th annual awards for the World's Best Islamic Financial Institutions that contributed to the growth of Islamic financing. These awards have become a trusted standard of excellence for the global financial community, and are granted after extensive consultations with bankers, corporate finance executives and analysts worldwide. The criteria for selecting top firms include growth in assets, profitability, geographic reach, strategic relationships, new business development and innovation in products, in addition to reputation and customer satisfaction.

Founded in 1987, Global Finance is headquartered in New York and is considered a trusted source in the world of business and finance in over 190 countries. Its magazine is the legacy of 36 years of experience in international financial markets.



BMW x NGX partnership

### Partners with Nigma Galaxy

## BMW Group ME strengthens its commitment to 'esports'

DUBAI, Aug 21: BMW Group Middle East, the iconic premium automotive manufacturer, is delighted to unveil its partnership with Nigma Galaxy, one of the biggest esports teams in the MENA region. This exciting collaboration underscores BMW Group Middle East's involvement in the esports community, further supporting the rapidly growing local gaming scene.

Nigma Galaxy, a global esports brand, emerged in 2019 through the merger of Team Nigma and Galaxy Racer, and has quickly risen to prominence in the gaming world.

Founded by four of the most successful players in the esports realm, Nigma Galaxy boasts 6 esports teams competing across different games, including popular titles such as League of Legends, Dota 2, PUBG Mobile, and more. At the forefront of developing esports infrastructure and nurturing local talent in the MENA region, Team Nigma has a very active presence in the gaming arena in the region and beyond, participating in top events such as Gamers8, currently taking place in Riyadh until August 31, 2023.

BMW Group Middle East has been steadily expanding its presence in the esports landscape the last few years, following a number of exciting partnerships with Publicis Groupe. The Nigma Galaxy partnership, which was defined and driven by Publicis Groupe together with BMW Group Middle East, will further accelerate the automotive brand's presence in esports, elevating the gaming experience for enthusiasts around the world.

Dr. Hamid Haqparvar, Managing Director at BMW Group Middle East, said, "As a gamer myself, I am very thrilled to join forces with Nigma Galaxy, a leading player in the esports domain. BMW

Group Middle East will continue to play an active role in the gaming community as part of its commitment to encourage and foster talents in the region. As we embark on this partnership, we aim to engage with gaming enthusiasts and create unforgettable experiences that reflect both Nigma Galaxy's and BMW's community values."

Emphasising the shared values that underpin this partnership, Christoph Timm, co-founder of Nigma Galaxy said, "This collaboration with BMW Group Middle East resonates deeply with our vision and values. BMW's passion for excellence and constant innovation aligns seamlessly with our commitment to pushing the boundaries of esports. Together, we aim to inspire and empower a new generation of gamers, supporting their dreams and aspirations in this exciting world of competitive gaming while creating unforgettable experiences that bridge the gap between the virtual and physical worlds."

The partnership between BMW Group Middle East and Nigma Galaxy is also sound when viewed around the latter's core values of passion, innovation, people and sportsmanship. Both brands embody a relentless passion for what they do, striving to exceed expectations and elevate their performance to new heights.

Innovation is deeply ingrained in their DNA, with BMW's commitment to sustainability and cutting-edge technology aligning with Nigma Galaxy's pioneering spirit in the esports industry.

The human element is central to their operations, as both organisations recognise the crucial role played by their teams and communities. Finally, sportsmanship serves as the foundation of their competitive spirit, whether it's while pushing the limits on the road or dominating the esports arena.



NGX x BMW

# Rice shortages and surging prices hit most vulnerable

Global food security at crossroads

## Francis Ndege isn't sure if his customers in Africa's largest slum can afford to keep buying rice from him.

Prices for rice grown in Kenya soared a while ago because of higher fertilizer prices and a yearslong drought in the Horn of Africa that has reduced production. Cheap rice imported from India had filled the gap, feeding many of the hundreds of thousands of residents in Nairobi's Kibera slum who survive on less than \$2 a day.

But that is changing. The price of a 25-kilogram (55-pound) bag of rice has risen by a fifth since June. Wholesalers are yet to receive new stocks since India, the world's largest exporter of rice by far, said last month that it would ban some rice shipments.

It's an effort by the world's most populous nation to control domestic prices ahead of a key election year - but it's left a yawning gap of around 9.5 million metric tons (10.4 tons) of rice that people around the world need, roughly a fifth of global exports.

"I'm really hoping the imports keep coming," said Ndege, 51, who's sold rice for 30 years.

He isn't the only one. Global food security is already under threat since Russia halted an agreement allowing Ukraine to export wheat and the El Nino weather phenomenon hampers rice production. Now, rice prices are soaring - Vietnam's rice export prices, for instance, have reached a 15-year high - putting the most vulnerable people in some of the poorest nations at risk.

The world is at an "inflection point," said Beau Daman, a natural resources officer with the U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization based in Bangkok.

Even before India's restrictions, countries already were frantically buying rice in anticipation of scarcity later when the El Nino hit, creating a supply crunch and spiking prices.

What could make the situation worse is if India's ban on non-basmati rice creates a domino effect, with other countries following suit. Already, the United Arab Emirates has suspended rice exports to maintain its domestic stocks. Another threat is if extreme weather damages rice crops in other countries.

An El Nino is a natural, temporary and occasional warming of part of the Pacific Ocean that shifts global weather patterns, and climate change is making them stronger. Scientists expect the one underway to expand to supersized levels, and, in the past, they have resulted in extreme weather ranging from drought to flooding.

The impact would be felt worldwide. Rice consumption in Africa has been growing steadily, and most countries are heavily dependent on imports. While



Diraya

## KIB sheds light on dangers of investing in 'virtual assets'

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 21: Kuwait International Bank (KIB) remains committed to its social responsibility and awareness efforts through its support of the 'Let's Be Aware' (Diraya) campaign, launched by the Central Bank of Kuwait in cooperation with the Kuwait Banking Association.

As part of this commitment, KIB has been shedding light on the dangers of trading and investing in virtual assets or cryptocurrencies on its various electronic and social media platforms.

The Bank has also been sharing information about the negative impact of virtual investments on investors' and traders' assets and funds.

Commenting on this issue, Gen-

eral Manager of KIB's Investment Department Jamal Al-Barrak said: "We are witnessing major and rapid changes in the digital world. Innovative means of investment, such as virtual assets and cryptocurrencies, are emerging. While these new opportunities hold the potential for significant gains, KIB is aware of their various risks and negative impacts that investors and traders should also acknowledge. As a financial institution that adheres to regulations and statutes, KIB stresses the urgency of avoiding the use of or trade in digital currencies or digital assets, as they have no legal status and are not linked to any official issuing body."



Jamal Al-Barrak

Al-Barrak then moved on to discuss the dangers of investing in encrypted virtual assets. He pointed out that citizens may be attracted to these investments because of their high returns and the desire to achieve quick profit.

nations with growing populations like Senegal have been trying to grow more of their own rice - many are struggling.

Amadou Khan, a 52-year-old unemployed father of five in Dakar, says his

children eat rice with every meal except breakfast, which they often have to skip when he's out of work.

"I am just getting by - sometimes, I've trouble taking care of my kids," he said.

Imported rice - 70% of which comes from India - has become prohibitively expensive in Senegal, so he's eating homegrown rice that costs two-thirds as much. (AP)



**broad-based ETFs on the rise**

Despite the market volatility this year, there remained a core foundation of inflows into equity ETFs. So far this year, equity ETFs took in more than RMB 300 billion (USD 41.4 billion), according to China Galaxy Research Institute.

Investors are piling huge amounts of capital into equity ETFs during market decline, while May, June, and July each recorded a net inflow of RMB 75

billion (USD 10.3 billion), RMB 55 billion (USD 7.6 billion), and RMB 61 billion (USD 8.4 billion) respectively, all at historical highs.

This prevailing trend has continued as data showed that equity ETFs drew RMB 79 billion (USD 10.9 billion) in the month to August 15th.

On August 7th, the daily inflow surpassed RMB 10 billion (USD 1.4 billion) and remained at the

similar level for the next two days.

Specifically, broad-based strategies attracted the biggest influx of investment with CSI 300 index, STAR 50 index, and ChiNext index topping the year-to-date inflow lists with net inflows of RMB 51 billion (USD 7 billion), RMB 46 billion (USD 6.3 billion), and RMB 28 billion (USD 3.9 billion) respectively, according to Wind data. (AP)

**Dubai ascends to new heights**

Dubai has established itself as a thriving global hub for esports and gaming following the spectacular conclusion of the second edition of Dubai Esports and Games Festival (DEF) which drew a record-breaking attendance of over 27,000 people during the thrilling five-day event and gathered over 75,000 gamers from across the globe!

DEF 2023, held from 21st to 25th June 2023, showcased the

diversity of the gaming community, attracting casual gamers, esports enthusiasts, and industry professionals through key events. This included the GameExpo B2B Summit powered by Pocket Gamer Connects (PG), the Game Expo consumer show, Regional Educational Tournaments, and Play Beyond Influencers Tournament.

Key sponsors and partners including Xbox, Ubisoft, Cap-

com, Teleios, Emirates Airline, Kitkat, Alienware, Playstation, Redbull, Logitech, and Moonlight also contributed to the festival's success.

Dubai's role as a global gaming hub was underscored through the dedication of stakeholders in supporting gaming communities in the UAE and beyond, which had a significant impact on the global gaming and esports industry. (AP)



Zain HS Store summer program Conclusion.

**Company recognizes 40 outstanding trainees at its Innovation Campus**

**Zain concludes summer program with HS Store to upskill university students**

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 21: The Zain Innovation Campus hosted a special ceremony to mark the successful conclusion of the company's Summer Internship Program with HS Store. During the event, 40 outstanding trainees were recognized for completing the fourth edition of the renowned program that targeted university-level students and aimed to upskill and prepare young talents for their future careers.

Attended by Zain Kuwait's Corporate Relations Department Manager Hamad Al Musaibeh and HS Store Founder and General Manager Fahad Al Mithin, the ceremony featured special moments and unique segments,

creating a family atmosphere that reflected the students' passions throughout the program. This came perfectly in line with Zain's brand identity: "A Wonderful World."

During the event, all trainees who joined the fourth edition of the program were recognized for their outstanding efforts and determination in pursuing new life, business, and technical skills. In addition, three of the top-performing trainees had a special honoring after excelling above all and being praised by Zain and HS Store officials and the customers whom they served. At the end of the event, a special video that documented the entire

experience replayed the wonderful memories the students created by being a part of this journey.

In its four editions, the Zain HS Store Summer Program was a huge success, having attracted hundreds of eager and dedicated young people who were keen on making the most out of their summer vacation. The students who joined gained invaluable insights, soft skills, and professional competencies that added value to their CVs and helped accelerate their new career journeys.

This year, the program was joined by 40 trainees who were all university students, giving them the opportunity to work for 5 weeks at several

HS Store branches across Kuwait. The trainees were responsible for a number of key tasks related to communications, business, technical, and administrative skillsets.

This initiative provided students with a range of workplace skills, such as customer service and engagement, product sales and marketing, electronics maintenance and smartphone repairing, and more. The trainees worked for 4 hours daily within a part-time schedule, and each participant received a cash reward at the end of the program.

The Zain HS Store Summer Program came under the umbrella of

Zain's Future University Network (FUN), a youth-tailored social program for university-level students that bridges the gap between studying and a unique experience at the Zain workplace by recruiting youth as the brand's main ambassadors.

FUN is one of the largest sustainable projects that Zain has been developing over the years since its first edition in 2008. It offers students an invaluable opportunity to benefit from a real-world work experience to develop many skills and gain expertise on both professional and personal levels, including project management, public relations, social media management,

customer engagement, and more.

Zain continues its long-term partnership with HS Store to offer this annual program under its wider community strategy that largely focuses on shouldering the youth and education sectors. This strategy is made possible by leveraging on Zain's vast network of partners from the community's top youth-centered entities and organizations.

The company dedicates more efforts and projects that invest in Kuwait's human capital, especially by focusing on developing the youth's business competencies to prepare them for their future careers.

**BearingPoint, IonQ bring quantum consulting to the European market**

'Partnership signals BearingPoint's ambition to expand quantum presence internationally'

AMSTERDAM, Aug 21, (AP): Management and technology consultancy BearingPoint and IonQ (NYSE: IONQ), an industry leader in quantum computing, sealed a strategic partnership to offer IonQ quantum system access and professional services to clients.

Through the agreement, IonQ and BearingPoint consultants can now build together innovative use cases and joint solutions in the field of quantum computing, educate private and public groups about the latest developments in quantum computing, and help them formulate positions on the rapidly evolving technology.

BearingPoint and IonQ sealed a strategic partnership with the purpose to build together innovative use cases and joint solutions in the field of quantum computing.

"We are pleased to announce today's collaboration with BearingPoint as they advise clients on the benefits and potential applications of quantum computing," said Peter Chapman, President and CEO of IonQ. "Today's agreement ensures that IonQ's industry-leading systems and services reach all the audiences that will benefit from quantum computing - people who are curious about quantum and want to explore new ways to integrate quantum into their existing workflows."

"We are excited to partner with IonQ," said Matthias Röser, Global Leader Technology at BearingPoint. "We see quantum computing as a decision accelerator for enterprises and look forward to providing our clients with strategic advice on how best to prepare for and integrate quantum technology into their tech stack."

The partnership signals BearingPoint's ambition to expand its quantum presence internationally. IonQ is the only company with its quantum systems available through the cloud on Amazon Braket, Microsoft Azure, and Google Cloud, as well as through direct API access.

IonQ, Inc. is a leader in quantum computing, with a proven track record of innovation and deployment. IonQ's current generation quantum computer, IonQ Forte, is the latest in a line of cutting-edge systems, boasting an industry-leading 29 algorithmic qubits.



The inauguration of the latest hypermarket.

**Lulu opens new Hypermarket in Kuwait**

KUWAIT CITY Aug 21: LuLu Group, leading retailer in the region, opened its latest hypermarket in the State of Kuwait. The store which is also 14th in the country was officially inaugurated by Ahmad Gaid Al Enaizy, Asst. Secretary - General of the Supreme Council for Planning and Development at The Warehouse Mall, Sabahiya in the presence of Dr. Matar Hamid Al Neyadi, UAE Ambassador to Kuwait, Yusuf Ali MA, Chairman of Lulu Group and other dignitaries.

Also present on the occasion were Adarsh Swaika, Indian Ambassador, Manelisi Genge, South African Ambassador, Belinda Lewis, British Ambassador, Aung Gyaw Thu, Charge D Affairs, Myanmar, Mugeruel Loan Stanecu, Romanian Ambassador, Saleh Amer Al-Kharusi, Omani ambassador to Kuwait and a large number of diplomats, government officials and other dignitaries.

Spread over 48,000 sq. feet, the Hypermarket market will offer a wide range of fresh fruits, vegetables, grocery food, non-food items, health and beauty products, meat and seafood, in-house kitchen & delicatessen and a

special area for local agri produces. In addition, the product range at the new branch encompasses children's toys, seasonal party supplies, electronic and mobile devices and accessories, IT products and peripherals, as well as premium cosmetics and perfumes

under the brand BLSH. All items on the Hypermarket's shelves have been curated from the best products worldwide and are made available at the most competitive prices, so as to fulfill and exceed the expectations of the brand's valued customers.



Officials touring the Hypermarket.

**ChainUp ISO/IEC 27001, 27017 & 27018 'certified' blockchain solutions provider**

SINGAPORE, Aug. 21: ChainUp, a leading global blockchain solutions provider, has been awarded three internationally recognised security accreditations - ISO/IEC 27001, 27017 and 27018 certifications. Following their announcement of the SOC 2 Type 1 achievement last week, attaining these highly-acclaimed certifications underscores ChainUp's dedication to maintaining stringent global security standards.

As regulations tighten, the demand for secure and compliant infrastructure continues to grow in the blockchain and Web3 industry. With an unwavering pursuit of excellence, ChainUp has meticulously designed a sophisticated framework focusing on information security, cloud computing security and Personally Identifiable Information (PII) protection, thereby recognized for achieving the international standards in managing information security. These international standards are published jointly by the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) and the International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC).

The achievement of ISO/IEC 27001 signifies that ChainUp has put in place a system to manage risks related to the security of data owned or handled, and respects all the best practices and principles enshrined in this International Standard. Attaining ISO/IEC 27017 demonstrates that ChainUp is adhering to the most stringent cloud services security standards and has appropriate processes in place to manage any unforeseen challenges. ISO/IEC 27018

certification implies that ChainUp has met specific requirements, controls, guidelines, and code of practice to protect their customers' PII. These esteemed accreditations reinforces that ChainUp's cutting-edge blockchain solutions are ready for the customers' trust internationally.

Sailor Zhong, Founder and CEO of ChainUp, said, "We are delighted and proud to achieve ISO/IEC 27001, 27017 and 27018 certifications. This is a testament to our ongoing commitment to meet the evolving security needs of our clients. ChainUp is dedicated to upholding international security standards, providing compliant and assured solutions. We will continue to empower businesses around the world to thrive in a secure Web3 ecosystem, contributing to the advancement of the blockchain industry."

**About ChainUp**

Founded in 2017 and headquartered in Singapore, ChainUp is a global leading end-to-end blockchain technology solutions provider covering infrastructure development and ecosystem support. We provide a complete suite of secure and compliant blockchain solutions including digital asset exchange, NFT trading, wallet, liquidity, Web3 infrastructure, digital asset custody, security token offerings and more. ChainUp currently serves more than 1,000 customers across 30 countries, reaching more than 60 million end-users.

Find out more about ChainUp: chainup.com

**Amberflo builds cloud metering for AI**

SAN FRANCISCO, Aug 21, (AP): Amberflo, the cloud metering and usage-based pricing and billing platform built by ex-AWS engineers, has launched native integrations and deep support for Generative AI. With the emergence of Generative AI tools like ChatGPT, Copilot, and Midjourney showing impressive performance on text, code, and image generation, SaaS companies across all industries and verticals are reimagining how they can incorporate these Large Language Models (LLMs) and deliver AI-powered services at scale.

Any business operating in the cloud can effectively meter their internal consumption of services like ChatGPT, then charge premiums by metering external consumption of these generative AI capabilities by customers. This enables modern businesses to build a profitable model by aligning backend service consumption with each customer's specific usage for a transparent pricing model at scale.

"Companies across every industry are eager to integrate Generative AI tools like ChatGPT into their own applications and resell it with enhancements, unique to their business built on top - but until today had no way of accurately and easily tracking metered consumption," said Puneet Gupta, CEO and Founder of Am-

berflo.io. "With scalable cloud metering and a highly flexible billing platform in place, businesses can understand in real-time how much a specific customer is consuming and charge them accordingly."

Amberflo is the only fully managed cloud metering and billing platform being offered with a pay-as-you-go pricing and self-service sign up. Amberflo handles the ingestion, aggregation, and measurement of all usage data, and enables companies to construct an ideal pricing strategy based on customer insights and revenue forecasts. The platform's highly differentiated architecture of decoupling its metering cloud from billing cloud - along with its ease of use and high scalability - makes it the de facto choice for modern cloud businesses that wish to leverage AI and delight their customers with superior product experiences.

"The beauty of Amberflo is the confidence it gives us internally to meter and monetize any sort of usage-based trend in the market," said Krishna Raj Raja, CEO of SupportLogic. "Without a doubt the biggest trend for the foreseeable future will be Generative AI. We here at SupportLogic are eager to translate the rise of tools like ChatGPT into value for our customers, and profits for our business."



Segway-Ninebot announced that its cumulative shipments have exceeded 2 million units of E-moped, setting a new industry record.



Segway-Ninebot exceeds 2 million units shipments

On July 26, 2023, Segway-Ninebot announced that its cumulative shipments have exceeded 2 million units of E-moped, setting a new industry record. In just 123 days, Segway-Ninebot reached 2 million units shipped after hitting 1.5 million in March 2023. This surpasses the previous industry record set by the company. Segway-Ninebot has seen rapid growth in recent years. In 2020, it set a sales record of over 100,000 units in its first year. In 2021, sales reached 420,000 units, nearly triple the previous year. By August 2022, cumulative

sales of E-moped in China topped 1 million. In 2022, Segway-Ninebot ranked first in smart short-distance transportation sales in China. Its online 618 promotion festival sales volume across all channels exceeded 10 million USD, increasing 101% year-over-year in 2023. Behind this growth is Segway-Ninebot's insight into new urban travel ecosystem. In the past three years, Segway-Ninebot has launched over 7 new series with innovations like long battery life, smart driving, and gesture sensing unlock. Through breakthrough R&D, Segway-Ninebot frequently resets in-

dustry ceilings. The company has greatly expanded its product portfolio to meet diverse user needs with finer granularity. As a brand representing youthful passion for life and riding, Segway-Ninebot has opened new possibilities for urban mobility since launching its first model. Today, Segway-Ninebot has a presence in over 100 countries and regions in the world. It has over 11.8 million riders and 12 million registered app users. By connecting with users, Segway-Ninebot has earned recognition, especially among youth. (AP)

The Conversation

'Keep your vehicle's software up to date'

To steal today's computerized cars, thieves go high-tech

By Doug Jacobson  
Iowa State University

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

These days, cars are computer centers on wheels. Today's vehicles can contain over 100 computers and millions of lines of software code. These computers are all networked together and can operate all aspects of your vehicle.

It's not surprising, then, that car theft has also become high-tech. The computers in a vehicle can be divided into four categories. Many computers are dedicated to operating the vehicle's drive train, including controlling the fuel, battery or both, monitoring emissions and operating cruise control.

The second category is dedicated to providing safety. These computers collect data from the vehicle and the outside environment and provide functions like lane correction, automatic braking and backup monitoring.

The third category is infotainment systems that provide music and video and can interface with your personal devices through Bluetooth wireless communications. Many vehicles can also connect to cellular services and provide Wi-Fi connectivity. The final category is the navigation system, including the car's GPS system.

Computers in one category often need to communicate with computers in another category. For example, the safety system must be able to control the drive train and the infotainment systems.

One difference between the network in your car and a typical computer network is that all devices in the car trust each other. Therefore, if an attacker can access one computer, they can easily access other computers in the car.

As with any new technology, some aspects of today's cars make it harder for thieves, and some make it easier. There are several methods of stealing a car that

are enabled by today's technology. One of the high-tech features is the use of keyless entry and remote start. Keyless entry has become common on many vehicles and is very convenient. The fob you have is paired to your car using a code that both your car and fob know, which prevents you from starting other cars. The difference between keyless entry and the remotes that unlock your car is that keyless entry fobs are always transmitting, so when you get near your car and touch the door, it will unlock. You had to press a button for old fobs to unlock the car door and then use your key to start the car.

The first keyless fobs transmitted a digital code to the car, and it would unlock. Thieves quickly realized they could eavesdrop on the radio signal and make a recording. They could then "replay" the recording and unlock the car. To help with security, the newest fobs use a one-time code to open the door.

One method of stealing cars involves using two devices to build an electronic bridge between your fob and your car.

Commands

One person goes near the car and uses a device to trick the car into sending a digital code used to verify the owner's fob. The thief's device sends that signal to an accomplice standing near the owner's home, which transmits a copy of the car's signal. When the owner's fob replies, the device near the house sends the fob signal to the device near the car, and the car opens. The thieves can then drive off, but once they turn the car off they cannot restart it. Carmakers are looking to fix this by ensuring the fob is in the car for it to be driven.

The network used by all computers in a car to communicate is called a controller area network bus. It's designed to allow the computers in a car to send commands and information to each other. The CAN bus was not designed for security,

because all of the devices are assumed to be self-contained. But that presumption leaves the CAN bus vulnerable to hackers.

Car thieves often try to hack into the CAN bus and from there the computers that control the car's engine. The engine control unit stores a copy of the wireless key code, and thieves can clone this to a blank key fob to use to start the victim's car. One method is accessing a car's onboard diagnostics through a physical port or wireless connection meant for repair technicians. Thieves who access the onboard diagnostics gain access to the CAN bus.

Another network hacking method is breaking through a headlight to reach the CAN bus via a direct wiring connection.

Modern thieves also try the USB hack, which exploits a design flaw in Hyundai and Kia vehicles. This is more of an old-style hot-wiring of a car than a high-tech computer issue. It is named the USB hack because when thieves break into a car, they look for a slot in the steering column. It turns out that a USB connector fits into the slot, and this allows you to turn on the ignition.

So all someone has to do is break the window, insert a USB connector and start the car. This technique has become infamous thanks to a loose affiliation of young car thieves in Milwaukee dubbed the Kia Boyz who have gained notoriety on TikTok.

Hyundai and Kia have issued an update that closes the vulnerability by requiring the fob to be in the car before you can start it.

Given there are so many different car models, and their complexity is increasing, there are likely to continue to be new and creative ways for thieves to steal cars.

So what can you do? Some things are the same as always: Keep your vehicle locked, and don't leave your key fob in it. What is new is keeping your vehicle's software up to date, just as you do with your phone and computer. (AP)

Tip etiquette in flux

Tipflation: How you can avoid feeling ripped off

By Nathan B. Warren, BI Norwegian Business School and Sara Hanson, University of Richmond

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

Tipping has gotten more complicated - and awkward - in North America. The ever-growing list of situations in which you might be invited to tip includes buying a smoothie, paying an electrician, getting a beer from a flight attendant and making a political donation.

Should you always tip when someone suggests it? If yes, how do you calculate the right amount? And if you don't, are you being stingy?

As marketing professors who specialize in customer interactions, we're researching how digital payment technologies have changed how and when customers tip. Our research suggests that asking for tips before service and suggesting tip amounts that are too high can frustrate customers and be bad for business.

US customers historically tipped people they assumed were earning most of their income via tips, such as restaurant servers earning less than the minimum wage. In the early 2010s, a wide range of businesses started processing purchases with iPads and other digital payment systems. These systems often prompted customers to tip for services that were not previously tipped.

Today's tip requests are often not connected to the salary and service norms that used to determine when and how people tip.

Customers now routinely see menus of suggested default options - often well above 20% of what they owe. The amounts have risen from 10% or less in the 1950s to 15% around the year 2000 to 20% or higher today. This increase is sometimes called tipflation - the expectation of ever-higher tip amounts.

1. Should I tip?

It's generally up to you to decide whether you will tip and how much.

To avoid being pressured into tipping when you don't want to, establish your own norms for different services. That will make you less likely to be surprised by an unexpected or high-pressure tip request. Many customers do pay tips in those situations but get upset.

We advise you to always tip when there's a clear tradition of doing so: dining at full-service restaurants or ordering a drink at a bar, traveling by taxi, having meals delivered to your door and getting a haircut.

We also recommend tipping employees you believe are being paid less than a fair wage. Though it can be difficult to determine whether employees are underpaid, learning whether your state or city guarantees a minimum wage that's well above the federal requirement can help.

2. How much?

This question is especially important when preservice tips are requested. If service quality may vary based on your response, for example with food delivery, food trucks, bars and restaurants, we suggest tipping the middle or high default tip amount, which will often be around 20%, or a flat dollar amount that is the rough equivalent. That approach will avoid the possibility of getting poor service. Of course, this can result in frustration if service doesn't meet your expectations.

3. Can I skip it this time?

If a tip request comes as a surprise, that usually means there is no norm you're familiar with for that service. We recommend that you don't tip in

Men's salons up

Is it goodbye to the barbershop?

By Kristen Barber  
Southern Illinois University

With their red, white and blue striped poles, dark Naugahyde chairs and straight razor shaves, barbershops hold a special place in American culture.

But numbers show that barbershops are dwindling. According to census data, from 1992 to 2012 we saw a 23 percent decrease in barbershops in the United States (with a slight uptick in 2013).

As a sociologist, I find barbershops fascinating because they've also traditionally been places where men spend time with other men, forming close relationships with one another in the absence of women. Many patrons will even stop by daily to simply chat with their barbers, discuss the news or play chess. A real community is created in these places, and community is important to health and well-being.

So how should we interpret the decline of the barbershop? Is it yet another sign that, according to Robert Putnam in "Bowling Alone," our community ties are crumbling? Or should we really be looking at just what sort of men are no longer getting haircuts at a barbershop - and what sort of men still go there?

At the same time barbershops are closing, men's salons are popping up across the country. They cater to men, providing them with high-end services that include hot towel facials and hand-detailing (a euphemism for a manicure). They're more expensive than the average barbershop or chain store, have sleek contemporary decor and aren't exactly conducive to hanging out and socializing.

In my book on these men's salons, "Styling Masculinity," hairstylists described the barbershop as a vanishing place. They explained that men are seeking out a pampered grooming experience that the barbershop - with its dusty TV, linoleum floor and stack of auto magazines - doesn't offer.

The young licensed barbers working in these salons also seemed disenchanted with the old school barbershop. They saw these newer men's salons as a "resurgence" of "a men-only place" that provides more "care" to clients than the "dirty little barbershop." (AP)

that situation, despite the social pressure. If you wind up tipping anyway, we recommend either not returning to the business or writing a polite but critical review online describing your uncomfortable experience.

We don't believe there's a reason to feel guilty leaving no tip or a low tip when you are using a service that is not traditionally tipped or where service quality is not affected by the tip amount, such as when making a donation or ordering an office chair from an internet retailer. (AP)

LAHAINA, Hawaii, Aug 21, (AP): Long before a wind-whipped wildfire blasted through the island of Maui, tension existed between Hawaii's kamaaina, or longtime residents, and the visitors some islanders resent for turning their beaches, mountains and communities into playgrounds.

It's a love-hate relationship that dates back generations. But now that tension is building in the aftermath of a blaze that killed over 100 people and scorched the historic town of Lahaina, making it the deadliest US wildfire in more than a century.

A week after the fire, a state flag blew upside down in the breeze along a road leading to a neighborhood designated for residents of Hawaiian descent, signifying that the community is in distress. Beneath the flag, a sign scrawled in blue paint ordered tourists to "KEEP OUT."

"Tourism has definitely been a hinderance at this point, because we need to take care of our families - our ohana," said Kapali Keahi, who lives in the neighborhood. Keahi said those affected by the fire, himself included, are still "getting out of the survivor mode."

The Maui Economic Development Board says tourism is "irrefutably" the economic engine of Maui, which saw 1.4 million visitors in just the first half of 2023. About 70% of every dollar generated in Maui can be attributed to tourism, according to the board.

Rebuild

Yet as the island looks to rebuild, residents like Keahi wonder what role tourism should play in the long road ahead to recovery. Experts say there's no easy answer.

"You do have this time where you have to stop everything and focus on the disaster, but there does come a time when you have to start to rebuild, and that means keeping people employed," said Rafael Villanueva, a member of the Tourism Expert Network, which provides consulting services to businesses like hotels.

Villanueva said that's the general roadmap he and his then-colleagues at the Las Vegas Convention and Visitors Authority followed in 2017 after the deadliest mass shooting in modern America unfolded at a country music festival on the Las Vegas Strip. Support the victims and the community first, then worry about the tourists.

Within an hour of the shooting that would leave 60 dead and hundreds more injured, the publicly funded body charged with promoting Las Vegas had halted its advertising promising that "What Happens Here, Stays Here." Villanueva said they filled billboards with a message that the community instead could rally around: "Vegas Strong."

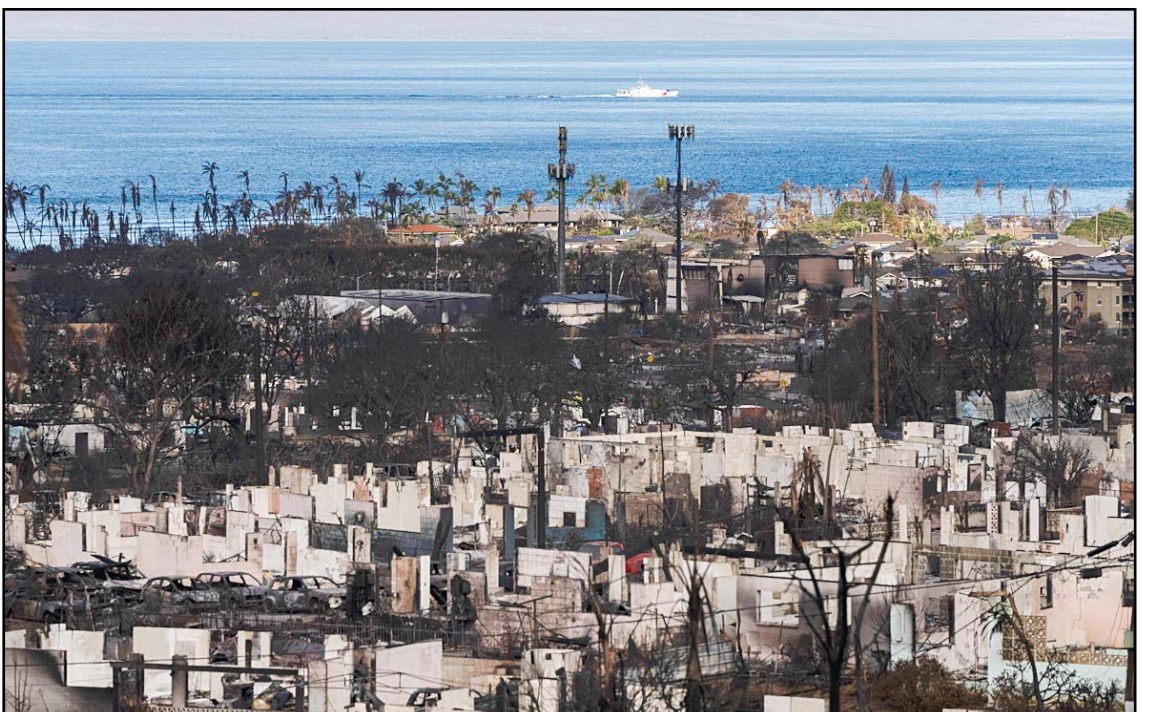
Then they opened up their convention center for recovery efforts, including victim notifications. But eventually, they shifted their messaging, inviting visitors back to a Strip that they promised was a safe tourist destination.

"You need to do what you can to not let the situation snowball into something much worse," Villanueva said.

Hawaii Gov. Josh Green said in a statewide address Friday night that tourists should avoid fire-ravaged West Maui while emphasizing that the

Halt to tourism could lead to 'mass exodus'

As Maui rebuilds, residents reckon with tourism role in their recovery



A general view shows the aftermath of a wildfire in Lahaina, Hawaii, Wednesday, Aug. 16, as a Coast Guard vessel sails through the ocean past the devastated community. Long before a wildfire blasted through the island of Maui the week before, there was tension

between Hawaii's longtime residents and the visitors some islanders resent for turning their beaches, mountains and communities into playgrounds. But that tension is building in the aftermath of the deadliest US wildfire in more than a century. (AP)

43 pct more Americans travel to Europe

How to stretch dollar on Europe trip

By Sally French  
NerdWallet

European travel is - by some metrics - bigger this year than it was pre-pandemic. In the first six months of 2023, 43% more Americans flew to Europe compared to the same period in 2022 and 4% more than the same period in 2019. Those figures come from the US Department of Commerce's International Trade Administration, or ITA, data.

While bigger crowds generally mean higher prices, there's another reason why travelers should brace for European travel to be expensive this year: inflation. Soaring inflation has, by some metrics, hit harder in Europe than in the US.

The yearly rate of inflation in the US rose 3% in June 2023, according to May consumer price index data. But in the European Union, the annual inflation rate rose 6.4% in June 2023, according to Eurostat, the statistical office of the European Union.

So while you should expect European travel to be expensive and crowded this year, a few strategies can make a European vacation more affordable.

1. Save money

Second cities are the lesser-known, rest of the island and state were open and safe.

"We continue to welcome and encourage travel to our beautiful state," he said, "which will support the local economy and help speed the recovery of those who have already suffered so much."

Green also has said it would be

less-populated areas around major cities. They can often offer lighter crowds and lower prices than the big tourist destinations.

As far as European second cities (or third or fourth cities) go, you might enjoy Austria's second-largest city by population, Graz, which is about a 2½-hour train ride from Vienna. Between the Graz Truffle Festival and the abundance of places to enjoy Backhendl (Austrian fried chicken), it's a foodie paradise. And with sites like the Eggengberg Palace and the world's largest historical armory, it's a must-visit for history buffs.

In France, you might skip Paris for the country's third-largest city by population, Lyon, which has a lovely historic district called Vieux Lyon, as well as spectacular Roman ruins that are free to visit.

2. Stretch your budget

Shoulder season is the period between the peak season and the off-season. It often has lighter crowds (and typically lower prices) than peak season. Plus, there's generally cooler weather and more local things to do.

The exact dates of off-peak versus peak seasons can vary by region, based on factors like weather and tourist at-

tractions. But according to 2019 ITA data, across Europe, the four least busy months to fly were November through February. The four busiest months in the same year were May, June, July and September. That leaves March, April and October as those shoulder season months - and potentially the best months to travel to Europe.

But even if you can't be flexible with which month you travel, sometimes adjusting your trip by a day or two could save hundreds of dollars in airfare. Travel booking tools like Google Flights and Hopper offer date grids that show you the cheapest airfare in the period surrounding your intended travel date.

3. Get compensated

Even with the perfect flight itinerary, anticipate delays. 2023 has been brutal for European air travel, which has been met with everything from computer problems to ongoing airport staff strikes.

If your European flight is delayed, you may be entitled to compensation. An EU regulation called EU261 forces airlines to compensate travelers for most cancellations, denied boarding, or delays of two or more hours on flights into, out of or within the EU. (AP)

prying eyes of outsiders.

Vacation (cross head) "Some of us need work," said Sumibitay, who works at the front desk of a condominium complex in Kihei, where some of the units are used as vacation rentals. "So if they're saying Maui is closed, then there are no tourists coming in, and then we lose our jobs."



Health and Human Services Secretary of the United States Xavier Becerra attends a G20 Health Minister's meeting in Gandhinagar, India on Aug 18. (AP)



**G20 health mins agree to strengthen health architecture**

The G20 Health Minister's Meeting on Saturday adopted unanimously an Outcome Document reaffirming commitment of G20 countries to continue strengthening global health architecture.

The two-day Meeting that concluded today in Gandhinagar in western Indian state of Gujarat adopted an Outcome Document to address ongoing global health challenges and future public health emergencies. The Indian Ministry of Health and Family Welfare said in a statement.

"Building on the lessons from COVID 19 pandemic, we arrived at a consensus to build more resilient, equitable, sustainable and inclusive health systems equipped to address ongoing global health challenges and future public health emergencies with equitable access to safe, effective, quality-assured and affordable vaccines, therapeutics, diagnostics, and other medical countermeasures, especially in Low-and Middle-income Countries and Small Island Developing States," the document said.

The G20 countries also stressed the importance of enhancing national health systems by bringing people to the centre of preparedness and equipping them to respond effectively.

The document also suggested measures to achieve gender equality in health systems and to address specific needs of women and girls while designing global health decisions.

The G20 countries also affirmed the need to converge, consolidate, and create a healthier future and strengthen national health systems especially in the backdrop of lessons from the COVID-19 pandemic. (KUNA)

**EMA accepts LEO Pharma's MAA for cream in chronic hand eczema**

**Delgocitinib improves itch, pain and other signs of CHE**

BALLERUP, Denmark, Aug 21: LEO Pharma A/S has announced that the European Medicines Agency (EMA) has validated the marketing authorization application (MAA) for delgocitinib cream, an investigational product and topical pan-Janus kinase (JAK) inhibitor for the treatment of adult patients with moderate to severe chronic hand eczema (CHE). The acceptance of this MAA marks the beginning of the formal review procedure for this potential new treatment by the EMA's Committee for Medicinal Products for Human Use (CHMP).

"We are delighted that delgocitinib cream has entered this first stage of the European regulatory process. If approved, it will be the first topical treatment specifically indicated and developed for moderate to severe CHE," says Kresten Meldgaard Madsen, Chief Development Officer, LEO Pharma and points to the company's dedication to advancing the standard of care for the benefit of people with skin conditions, their families, and society.

"Chronic hand eczema negatively impacts patients' quality of life, psychological well-being, physical functioning, and ability to work. Despite a one-year prevalence of around 9%, there are currently no topical treatments specifically approved for the treatment of moderate to severe CHE. The strong clinical data enclosed in this submission brings hope to patients and reflects LEO Pharma's continued commitment to addressing the critical unmet need in CHE," says Dr Jacob Pontoppidan Thyssen, Executive Vice President and Chief Scientific Officer, LEO Pharma.

**Disease**

LEO Pharma is currently developing delgocitinib in a cream formulation for the treatment of moderate to severe CHE in adults. CHE is a heterogeneous, fluctuating, inflammatory skin disease with key symptoms of itch and pain, with a high psychological, social, and occupational burden, that warrants specifically developed treatments. There are currently no treatments specifically approved for moderate to severe CHE that provide both short-term efficacy and long-term disease control. Delgocitinib cream is a first-in-class investigational topical pan-JAK inhibitor for CHE. It inhibits the activation of JAK-STAT signaling, which plays a key role in the pathogenesis of CHE. The pathophysiology is characterized by skin barrier dysfunction, inflammation of the skin, and alterations of the skin microbiome.

The MAA for delgocitinib cream is based on results from the phase 3 program, which includes the DELTA 1 and DELTA 2 phase 3 clinical trials that evaluated the safety and efficacy of delgocitinib cream compared to cream vehicle. Both trials met their primary and all secondary endpoints. The MAA is also based on interim data from the DELTA 3 open-label, multi-site extension trial, which is still in progress and is evaluating the long-term safety of delgocitinib cream. The efficacy and safety of delgocitinib cream have not been evaluated by any regulatory authority.

The primary objective for the randomized, double-blind, vehicle-controlled, multi-center phase 3 clinical

trials (DELTA 1 and DELTA 2) was to evaluate the efficacy of twice-daily applications of delgocitinib cream compared with cream vehicle in the treatment of adults with moderate to severe CHE.

The primary endpoint of the trials was the Investigator's Global Assessment for chronic hand eczema treatment success (IGA-CHE TS) at Week 16. Treatment success was defined as an IGA-CHE score of 0 (clear) or 1 (almost clear) with at least a two-step improvement from baseline. Additional IGA-CHE scores included 2 (mild), 3 (moderate), and 4 (severe).

**Endpoints**

Key secondary endpoints at Week 16 included reduction of itch and pain scores of  $\geq 4$  points measured by the Hand Eczema Symptom Diary (HESD) from baseline to Week 16, as well as at least 75% improvement from baseline and at least 90% improvement from baseline on the Hand Eczema Severity Index (HESCI) at Week 16. The number of treatment-emergent adverse events from baseline to Week 16 defined the key safety endpoint of the trials.

Subjects who completed 16 weeks of treatment with delgocitinib cream or cream vehicle twice daily in trials DELTA 1 or DELTA 2 were offered to roll-over to the DELTA 3 Open-label, Multi-site Extension trial. The purpose of this ongoing extension trial is to evaluate the long-term safety of delgocitinib.

Chronic hand eczema (CHE) is defined as hand eczema (HE) that lasts for more than three months or relapses twice or more within a year. HE is the most common skin disorder of the hands with a one-year prevalence rate of approximately 9%. In a substantial number of patients, HE can develop into a chronic condition. CHE is a fluctuating disease with key symptoms being itch and pain, and patients may experience signs such as erythema, scaling, lichenification, hyperkeratosis, vesicles, edema, and fissures on hands and wrists.

Delgocitinib is a first-in-class investigational topical pan-Janus kinase (JAK) inhibitor. It inhibits the activation of JAK-STAT signaling, which plays a key role in the pathogenesis of CHE. The pathophysiology is characterized by skin barrier dysfunction, inflammation of the skin, and alterations of the skin microbiome. LEO Pharma is currently developing delgocitinib in a cream formulation for the treatment of moderate to severe chronic hand eczema (CHE) in adults. In 2014, LEO Pharma A/S and Japan Tobacco Inc. (JT) entered into a license agreement in which LEO Pharma gained exclusive rights to develop and commercialize delgocitinib for topical use in dermatological indications worldwide, excluding Japan, where JT retains rights.

LEO Pharma is a global company dedicated to advancing the standard of care for the benefit of people with skin conditions, their families and society. Founded in 1908 and majority owned by the LEO Foundation, LEO Pharma has devoted decades of research and development to advance the science of dermatology, and today, the company offers a wide range of therapies for all disease severities.

**Firm selected to exhibit Automated Swab at Exchange**

**'RHINOstic system' enables the first handsfree swab diagnostic workflow**

**Event supports investigators**

**One unveils '23 Rising Star Awards funding research in mental health**

WALTHAM, Mass., Aug 21: Rhinostics has been selected to exhibit its RHINOstic® Automated Swab platform at the Vizient Innovative Technology Exchange. Vizient, Inc, the nation's largest member-driven healthcare performance improvement company, will hold the Exchange on Oct 3 in Grapevine, Texas.

The annual Innovative Technology Exchange offers selected suppliers the unique opportunity to demonstrate their product or service to supply chain and clinical leaders from Vizient's member hospitals and subject matter experts who serve on their supply councils. Each product or service will showcase how it improves clinical outcomes, enhances safety or drives incremental improvements to health care delivery or business models.

The RHINOstic® system enables the first handsfree swab diagnostic workflow, replacing manual procedures to bring swabs into assay workflows.

The system integrates a stacked-ring polypropylene swab with an automated tube cap to reduce human contact. After a patient sample is collected, the swab is placed into a collection tube for dry shipment, reducing sample loss during transport and accidental biohazard contact. When it reaches the lab, the RHINOstic™ Decapper robotically removes the swab and links it to downstream liquid handlers and automated assay workflows. Globally, laboratories have used the swabs for COVID-19 testing, multi-analyte respiratory testing, vaginal and triple-site collection for sexually transmitted infections (STIs), wounds, and other swab sample types.

**Platform**

"We are honored to bring our technology platform to Vizient's Innovative Technology Exchange. We believe our groundbreaking RHINOstic automated swab will positively impact their membership in many areas, including comfortable sample collection combined with the ability to streamline their laboratory workflows. Hospital systems continue to consolidate laboratories to serve an increasing number of locations. Each lab that adopts our technology quickly realizes the benefits of stream-lined workflows, more reliable and repeatable testing through robotics, reducing labor dependency and costs, and dropping their reagent usage to make a significant impact on their cost of goods. Increasingly, every laboratory is looking for ways to manage their laboratory staff turnover while managing costs more effectively," said

RUTHERFORD, Calif., Aug 21: One Mind™, a leading mental health non-profit, has announced recipients of the 2023 One Mind Rising Star Awards. Each emerging leader will receive a \$300,000 research grant, distributed over three years, to support their ongoing research to benefit people living with psychiatric disorders and the mental healthcare system. In addition to funding, the awardees will participate in the prestigious One Mind Rising Star Leadership Program, through which they will receive hands-on training and access to resources to make an impact on the larger mental health ecosystem.

The One Mind Rising Star Awards supports early-career investigators in neuroscience, psychiatry, and related disciplines who pursue research to advance the understanding, treatment, and prevention of mental illness. These include, but are not limited to schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, depression, obsessive-compulsive disorder, eating disorders, post-traumatic stress disorder, anxiety disorders, and suicidality. The awardees are selected through a competitive grants process administered by One Mind's Scientific Advisory Board, which includes ten of the world's leading scientists and clinicians.

"We are excited to continue transforming the world's mental health by supporting this new cohort of the 2023 One Mind Rising Stars," states One Mind President Brandon Staglin. "We extend our gratitude to our sponsors, the Deyo, Hall, and Luther families,

for providing these three promising scientists with the resources they need to further their success. We are eager to support these visionary scientists who bring new insights, approaches, spirit of risk-taking, and a sense of urgency to this complex field, as they forge the next generation of mental health solutions".

**This year's awardees and their areas of research are:**

Arpiar Saunders, PhD, Assistant Professor, Vollum Institute, Oregon Health & Sciences University, recipient of the 2023 One Mind-Ben Langford and Nicholas Hall Rising Star Award:

Analysis of synaptic rewiring driven by schizophrenia-associated ion channels: Brain function is enabled by synaptic connections, and genetic studies implicate synaptic proteins in serious mental illness. Yet how mutant synaptic proteins affect brain wiring is largely unknown. By developing viral genomic technologies that describe neural circuits at scale, Dr. Arpiar Saunders aims to understand how schizophrenia-associated mutations in glutamate receptors alter neural wiring throughout the brain. In discovering the relationship between gene-specific mutations and neural miswiring, Saunders will help open the door for personalized therapeutics.

Claudia Lugo-Candelas, PhD, Assistant Professor, Columbia University Irving Medical Center, recipient of the 2023 One Mind-Luther Family Rising Star Award:

Prenatal sleep health – An untapped intervention target for the intergenerational prevention of mood and anxiety disorders: Adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) can have a lasting negative impact that may extend to the next generation. Poor gestational sleep can impact a child's neurodevelopment and has been documented in persons with a history of ACEs, creating a cycle of increased risk for psychiatric illness. By examining alterations to prenatal melatonin secretion as the mediator between ACEs and poor sleep, Dr. Lugo-Candelas seeks to identify how ACEs are passed on. Her discoveries will provide targets for mental health interventions.

Ignacio Saez, PhD, Assistant Professor, Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai, recipient of the 2023 One Mind-Russ and Stephanie Deyo Rising Star Award

Computational psychiatry for patient-tailored stimulation treatment of depression: Despite depression being the leading cause of disability, current treatments are often ineffective. Dr. Ignacio Saez proposes a new method for understanding depression: record electrical activity and pinpoint the changes necessary to treat their symptoms. By directly recording neural activity during neurosurgery, in combination with decision-making tasks, Dr. Saez will determine the nature of brain coordinated activity during reward processing, how it changes with depression, and propose novel paradigms to treat changes in reward processing and mood.

Cheri Walker, PhD, President and CEO of Rhinostics.

"Suppliers come to the Exchange hoping to be awarded an Innovative Technology contract, which signals health care providers of their product's unique qualities," said Kelly Flaharty, senior director of contract services, Vizient. "We are pleased to include this technology in the group selected to participate."

The annual Innovative Technology Exchange is part of Vizient's Innovative Technology Program that includes product review of supplier-submitted

technologies by member-led councils and task forces. Since 2003, Vizient has reviewed over 1,600 product submissions as part of its Innovative Technology Program.

Rhinostics is at the forefront of revolutionizing sample collection. As a spin-out company from Harvard University and Wyss Institute, we are taking a radical new approach to sample collection device design and function. We recognize that many automated microplate-based workflows are encumbered by manual steps at the workflow's beginning, and aim to develop

and commercialize elegant, automated collection devices to break through these bottlenecks.

Using our advanced collection device technologies such as the RHINOstic® and ELEstic™ Automated Swabs, VERIstic® blood collection devices and HIPPOstic™ DNA collection device, test kit manufacturers can empower comfortable yet high-end patient experiences with abundant and clean sample yields for tests from lateral flow to microfluidics; all while boosting profits and differentiating their brand.

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# NBA has been playing to hip-hop beat for nearly 50 years

Music

NEW YORK, Aug 21, (AP): From his booth at the corner of the court, Miami Heat disc jockey M Dot has a front-row look at the harmonious fusion of basketball and music.

M Dot - real name Michael Hankerson - has watched LeBron James and Dwyane Wade to Jimmy Butler nod their heads in pregame layup lines to songs from artists like Drake and Jeezy. He's seen fans mumble song lyrics between cheers, and rap artists hype up the crowd during timeouts.

It's a relationship that began in the late 1970s, early '80s as hip-hop was taking flight, and so was a new NBA era.

Today, basketball games are like a playground for the sounds of hip-hop - the unmistakable music genre infused with rhythmic beats and vivid storytelling.

Just as a movie soundtrack helps viewers follow the action of the narrative through each plot twist, hip-hop has done the same for the NBA. Over the past five decades, the genre has inserted lyrics, beats and culture into the sport's DNA. Now, as hip-hop reaches its 50th anniversary, the two are inextricably intertwined.

"Hip-hop has always been young, fresh, relatable," M Dot said. "If you were to attend any NBA game, I would go as far as to say it's probably a third of the music being played."

Other sports certainly have been touched by hip-hop culture over the decades. But by nature of sharing the same playgrounds as the musical genre's birthplace, the kinship with basketball has always been differ-

ent. "I think the relationship between basketball and hip-hop, they seem kind of symbiotic. They both allow for individual expression within a team dynamic," said Mark Campbell, University of Toronto professor of music and culture. "What makes them unique is that a lot of times what's memorable about basketball is not how many wins a team made, but it is about how Dr. J (Julius Erving) went around the rim or how an individual player created poetry in motion."

Many hip-hop artists and basketball players have lived similar rags-to-riches stories, making for a natural brotherhood on and off the court.

## Connection

Remnants of that connection have roots in the infant days of the genre. Sugar Hill Gang's "Rappers Delight" - the first rap song to appear on Billboard's Hot 100 - linked hardwood to drum machine in 1979 when Big Bank Hank rapped, "So after school, I take a dip in the pool, which is really on the wall/I got a color TV so I can see the Knicks play basketball."

Kurtis Blow did it again in 1984 with "Basketball," his lyrical ode to the sport and another of rap's earliest commercial successes.

"Basketball by the middle of the '80s after the merger with the NBA and with the ABA, is struggling to be a profitable professional sport," Campbell said. "All it really took was someone like (Michael) Jordan to have the swagger of local b-boys in the neighborhood, to have the swagger of anyone hanging outside, or to pick up the swagger of a

Rakim or those guys and put it on a stage where cable television allowed people to see what they couldn't see in the neighborhoods that they weren't part of."

It was the start of a connection that has persisted throughout the decades.

Allen Iverson, when he entered the NBA in 1996, embodied hip-hop culture in everything he did, from his clothes to his corn rows.

With stars embracing hip-hop in ways never seen before, it all gave the NBA pause and raised concerns in some circles about the league's more conservative corporate sponsors. Former league Commissioner David Stern instituted a dress code for players who were on the bench in street clothes.

But it was more than a look. The hip-hop/NBA seed had taken hold. Iverson's time in the league helped cement an era of NBA players who went from simply consuming hip-hop leisurely and hanging out with its stars, to actually producing their own music.

Iverson, Shaquille O'Neal, Kobe Bryant, Marcus Smart, Damian Lillard and so many others have hip-hop albums.

Lillard, a seven-time All-Star, is known by his rap persona Dame D.O.L.L.A. in the studio. With four albums to his credit, he often displays his lyrical talent on social media. This past season when a snowstorm left him and his Portland Trail Blazers teammates stranded on the tarmac for seven-plus hours, he used the downtime to pen a quick verse around the ordeal, complete with an impromptu music video shoot.

## Variety

# Features



This image released by Warner Bros. Pictures shows, (from left), Belissa Escobedo, Adriana Barraza, Bruna Marquezine, Elipida Carrillo and George Lopez in a scene from 'Blue Beetle.' (AP)

## Film

'Blue Beetle' director on first Latino superhero film

# 'DC film a love letter to our ancestors'

WEST HOLLYWOOD, Calif., Aug 21, (AP): Director Ángel Manuel Soto didn't think too much about the "Latino side of things" when visually crafting DC's "Blue Beetle" alongside Mexican screenwriter Gareth Dunnet-Alcocer.

The film - starring "Cobra Kai's" Xolo Maridueña as Jaime Reyes, aka Blue Beetle and DC's first Latino superhero - oozes with Mexican references and elements of other Latin American cultures through almost every scene. Still, the Puerto Rican director says that all of this came naturally due to his and Dunnet-Alcocer's backgrounds.

"We never were like, 'Okay, so how are we going to make this Latino?' We cannot hide who we are. If we have the opportunity to tell our collective experiences because we are Latino, they're going to come out Latino."

In "Blue Beetle," Reyes finds himself in possession of an ancient scarab named Khaji Da made of alien biotechnology that chooses Reyes as its symbiotic host. In a hilarious scene, the scarab attaches itself to Reyes, transforming the hesitant young adult into a superhero.

Soto is promoting the film by himself due to the ongoing Hollywood strikes, which prohibit actors and screenwriters from promoting work under television and theatrical contracts. Still, he made sure to bring his cast along for the ride via a culturally relevant white shirt with illustrations of his lead cast as Mexican Loteria characters during the Los Angeles leg of the press tour. The game is similar to bingo and is popular in Mexican and Mexican-American households.

"I know they're sad that they cannot be here, but they understand that what they're doing is

important for the future generations, and they have my full support, so the least I could do was bring them with me," said Soto. "I know they're here in spirit."

Soto hopes that audiences will still show up to support the film when it opens Friday.

"Hopefully, people will watch the movie because it is a good movie, and our cast killed it and they're going to fall in love with them," said Soto.

## Seamless

The Associated Press sat down with Soto to chat more about the film's seamless Mexican and Latino cultural references and why he was initially hesitant to take on the project.

Remarks have been edited for clarity and brevity.

AP: What has it been like being on this press tour, having to promote it on your own?

Soto: I love talking about what I love. I think as exhausting as it might be, because it's a lot for one person to do, connecting with fans and having experiences with people from other cultures, from other countries definitely fuels the energy cause I'm learning a lot. I learn a lot when I talk to people. I get reassurance, I get empowered. So any depletion of energy caused by forced nights of sleep and constant travel are immediately replenished when interacting with beautiful people.

AP: I read that you originally wanted to pitch a Bane origin story, but instead, DC presented you with this film. What was it like for you mentally having to pivot from wanting to tell a supervillain origin story to this coming-of-age superhero one?

Soto: I had no idea they were working on something like "Blue Beetle." Coming out of the success of a film like "The Joker" and understanding there's other characters that might have so many things to explore, I wanted to pitch that Bane idea. So they came in and was like, 'Yeah, that's a great idea. But we got this product here, and it's "Blue Beetle." I knew a little bit about Blue Beetle. I knew that Jaime Reyes was in it. My first reaction was that I didn't want to brownwash something, you know, that already existed. It's okay if there's familiarity with certain things, but I didn't want to be that person that my Latinidad had to conform to somebody else's expectations of Latinidad. I wanted to be able to be free, and I wanted the actors that I hired that are Latino to be authentically themselves.

So when I said that, they were like, 'Oh, no, no, don't worry. Our writer is Gareth Dunnet-Alcocer. He is a Mexican from Querétaro and just read the script. Let me know what you think.' And when I read the script, I could see that the person who wrote it not only is Latino, but he wrote characters that he knows and they were so relatable because we've realized that even though we're both from different countries, we're so similar. Our families are so similar. The music, the TV shows, we grew up exactly the same, just in different countries. And we're like, 'Oh my gosh, this is special because not only Mexicans are going to connect. I think all Latinos are going to connect. And consequently, all the people that are not Latino also are going to connect if they're open and curious.

Continued on Page 12

ARABO TIMES

TUESDAY, AUGUST 22, 2023

NEW YORK: The DC superhero film "Blue Beetle" led weekend ticket sales with a modest \$25.4 million opening, according to studio estimates Sunday, dethroning "Barbie" from the top spot after a record-setting run that left movie theaters colored pink for a month.

The "Barbie" phenomenon is far from over. Greta Gerwig's film, which earlier this week became the highest-grossing Warner Bros. release ever domestically, nearly managed to stay No. 1 again with \$21.5 million in its fifth weekend. It's up to \$567.3 million in North America and an eye-popping \$1.28 billion globally.

The other half of "Barbenheimer" also continues to perform remarkably well for a movie so far into its run.

Christopher Nolan's "Oppenheimer" took in \$10.6 million in its fifth week. With a \$285.2 million domestic total, "Oppenheimer" now owns the distinction of being the biggest box-office hit never to land No. 1 at the weekend box office. The previous record-holder for that unlikely stat is 2016's "Sing," which grossed \$270.3 million in the shadow of "Rogue One: A Star Wars Story" and "Hidden Figures."

Universal Pictures' "Oppenheimer" has done even better overseas. Its global gross stands at an estimated \$717.8 million through Sunday.

"Blue Beetle," starring Xolo Maridueña, came in on the lower side of expectations and notched one of the lower debuts for a DC Comics movie. Though earlier planned as a streaming-only release, Warner Bros. elected to put "Blue Beetle," the first DC movie to star a Latino superhero, into theaters in the late summer, a typically quiet period at the box office.

The production price tag of about \$105 million was lower for "Blue Beetle" than the average superhero film. It's one of the last releases produced under an earlier regime at DC Studios, which James Gunn and Peter Safran took the reins of last year.

The film, directed by Ángel Manuel Soto and written by Gareth Dunnet-Alcocer, drew solid reviews - certainly better than the three previous DC releases this year ("The Flash," "Black Adam" and "Shazam! Fury of the Gods"). "Blue Beetle" (76% fresh on Rotten Tomatoes) is the rare comic-



Nolan



Gerwig

book film to put a Hispanic cast front and center.

But it also faced some tough luck, and not just in the unexpected staying power of "Barbie" and "Oppenheimer." Southern California was bracing Sunday for Hurricane Hilary - potentially dampening ticket sales in the region. (Los Angeles was still its top

market.) And like recent releases, "Blue Beetle," which added \$18 million internationally, didn't have its cast available to promote the movie due to the ongoing actors strike.

Universal's raunchy canine comedy "Strays" showed even less bite. The film, with a voice cast including Will Ferrell and

Jamie Foxx, landed in fifth place with \$8.4 million. Comedies have generally struggled in theaters in recent years, but "Strays" had it particularly rough given that its starry cast was unavailable.

"Strays" was very narrowly bested by "Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles: Mutant Mayhem." (AP)



## People &amp; Places

## Film

## 'Latino stories universal'

## 'Blue Beetle' director keeps focus on stars

Continued from Page 11

**AP:** Can you talk more about how you and Dunnett-Alcocer settled on the story? I love how you found a way for the women to all be strong figures and also to blend all of these Latino cultures in the film.

**Soto:** We know the tropes, right? We know the hero's journey, and we all know the superhero genre, how it works. We didn't want to miss the opportunity (to) tell the story through a different lens. For us, it's hard to keep a secret from your mother or family because they're always in your face, always up your nose. And we wanted to like, 'Okay, that's going to happen, then let's just keep them in from the beginning.' They were in the transformation. They're still going to be their family, and they're going to bully him because he is a reluctant hero. Not reluctant for a moment, the whole film, he just wants this (scarab) out and then he ends up understanding that that's his destiny and that could not have happened without his family.

And we wanted to create this love letter to the people that came before us, to our ancestors, especially to the women in our life. None of my family are damsels in distress. They're tougher than I can ever be. And we wanted to honor that. They paved the way and they are heroes in their own right. So we wanted to give them heroic arcs because it is important to see the women in our lives differently than society has pushed them to be.

**AP:** The soundtrack seemingly includes every Latino music legend. Why was it important for the soundtrack to be mostly Latinos?

**Soto:** You know, the movies that you have seen, every time they go to a Latin country, if they go to Mexico, it's always the same music. If they go to the Caribbean, it's always the same music. And the truth is that, yeah, we listen to that, but we also listen to other stuff. Not only do we consume stuff from the US, but we also have great rock bands in our countries. Just because other people have not heard it doesn't mean that they're not great. So the same way that I've been introduced to other music from the US without any complaints, I wanted to introduce to the world, to the music that I grew up with, hoping they don't complain about it either.

In a normal summer, the arrival of "Blue Beetle," the first DC superhero movie to feature a Latino lead, would be a splashy, triumphant moment for its filmmakers and stars.

But with actors and screenwriters on strike, the film's promotional campaign has been without its lead cast.

That's left director Ángel Manuel Soto as the main voice promoting the film, a rare big-budget summer movie highlighting Latinos and Latino culture. Soto has taken the burden in stride and found clever ways to spotlight his cast.

At a film screening this week, Soto and his wife held a picture of "Blue Beetle" star Xolo Maridueña over their faces as photographers snapped them. For a series of promotional interviews, he wore a special shirt with the film's Latino cast represented as Mexican Loteria cards, a clever homage for a movie infused with Latino music and culture.

While Soto acknowledges some initial disappointment with the timing of the strike and his movie's release, he has come to terms with it and said he knows it happening for a good reason.

"You realize if it was for something banal, for something stupid, then I will get mad. But the truth is that our writers and actors are fighting for something 100% legit, and they are in the right side of history. And sure, the timing was off, why didn't it happen a month later so that we can have our moment? But at the same time, I'm like, 'If it happened today its because it had to happen today,'" Soto said.

## Success

"And my hope is that our actors are treated fairly, our writers are treated fairly, that they're being compensated accordingly to their work," he said. "And if that happens, then that guarantees us more years of amazing stories to be told."

Soto isn't alone in hoping "Blue Beetle" is a success so that more strong projects with Latino casts and stories are made.

Earlier this month, 27 Latino organizations including the National Hispanic Media Coalition, The Hispanic Federation, Latino Film Institute and more released an open letter urging the Latino community to support the film during its opening weekend.

"Our stories are universal and need to be told," the letter said. "Together, we must continue to advocate for a more equitable and inclusive industry, one that respects and honors our storytellers and stories."

A study released last week by University of Southern California's Annenberg Inclusion Initiative showed how invisible Latinos are in the top theatrical releases. Of the 100 top grossing movies of 2022, 46 didn't include a Latino speaking character.

"Blue Beetle" has been praised for keeping the story of a Mexican American family - played by Maridueña as Jaime Reyes, who's transformed into the Blue Beetle; his sister Milagro (Belissa Escobedo); parents Alberto (Damián Alcázar) and Rocío (Elpidia Carrillo), Jaime's grandmother (Adriana Barraza) and his uncle (George Lopez) - as a focal point throughout the movie.

Soto said he hopes audiences will connect with the film and its actors, even if they haven't been able to conduct interviews or attend promo events.

"Hopefully people will watch the movie because it is a good movie and our cast killed it and they're going to fall in love with them," Soto said. "And that will only probably ensure to see more of them in the future."



Soto



Musician Rhiannon Giddens performs at National Sawdust on Thursday, Aug. 17, in New York. (AP)



South Korean singer Taemin attends KCON at the Los Angeles Convention Center on Friday, Aug. 18. (AP)



Zucker



Long

## Variety

**NEW YORK:** The illustrator of bestselling children's books by former president Barack Obama, Madonna, and poet Amanda Gorman has a six-figure deal with a Macmillan imprint for two of his own projects. Loren Long's first book under his new contract is "The Yellow Bus," scheduled for June 2024.

"Noticing a rusted and abandoned school bus sitting in a field with goats climbing in and out of it got me thinking about purpose and the passage of time. I thought 'Surely that yellow bus started its life in a grand fashion, bright and shiny, carrying children from one important place to another,'" Long said in a statement issued Monday through Roaring Brook Press.

"The Yellow Bus resulted from me contemplating and imagining what the life of that old bus might have been. And the feeling that comes from doing things for other people," he said.

Besides working on Obama's "Of Thee I Sing," Madonna's "Mr. Peabody's Apples" and Gorman's "Change Sings," Long has written and illustrated the popular series about Otis the tractor, including "Otis and the Kittens," "Otis and the Scarecrow" and "Otis and the Tornado." Apple TV is planning an animated series based on the Otis books. (AP)

**WATERBURY, Vt:** Vermont's lieutenant governor was at a local library, reading a book about two male penguins to a crowd of nearly two dozen. This was not the first stop for Lt. Gov David Zucker- man nor would it be the last.

While officials in some other states are banning or restricting certain books in schools and libraries, Zucker, in liberal Vermont, has taken a different tack: reading and discussing them at libraries and bookstores around the state.

While Vermont hasn't "fallen victim" to the trends in some other states, Zucker said that does not mean that books have not been challenged in this state. He said individuals have run for school board seats with the idea of curriculum management in mind and topics around race, and gender and identity have been elevated at school board meetings in recent years.

He hopes the book reading tour will highlight what he sees as the value of representation, free speech, open dialogue and the exchange of ideas.

According to the American Library Association, attempted book bans and restrictions at school and public libraries

## Music

## 'You're the One' a potent mix of folk, country, rock

## Giddens shows her lively side

**NEW YORK, Aug. 21, (AP):** Most people familiar with singer Rhiannon Giddens know her scholarly side.

She won a MacArthur "genius grant" for her work making sure the contributions of Black Americans aren't ignored in the history of folk and country music. Earlier this year, she earned a Pulitzer Prize for co-writing the opera "Omar," about an enslaved Muslim man who lived in Charleston, South Carolina. She's produced an online series on the history of the banjo - which she plays adeptly - and has lectured at Harvard, Stanford and Yale.

Her saucy side, not so much. That will change for anyone who hears "Hen in the Foxhouse" or the Nina Simone homage "You Put the Sugar in my Bowl" on her new album, "You're the One," out last Friday.

The disc is the most broadly inviting work of Giddens' career, a potent stew of folk, country, rock, soul and Cajun steered by producer Jack Splash, who has worked with Alicia Keys, Valerie June, Solange Knowles and Kendrick Lamar. A listener can commiserate with some done-wrong songs, luxuriate in love or just dance.

To hear Giddens tell it, she needed a change after her work with "Omar."

"I just needed a break," she told The Associated Press this week. "I mean, do you want to go onstage and try to entertain, sing correctly, talk about minstrelsy, slavery and American capitalism in ways it's not going to drive off your audience, while educating them at the same time and having them walk out with a smile on their face? It's a lot."

There's no required study hall on "You're the One," but that doesn't mean there aren't meaningful moments.

"Another Wasted Life" is inspired by Kalief Browder, a New York City teenager who spent two years in solitary confinement at Rikers Island - three years in jail total - when he couldn't make bail on a charge of stealing a backpack. He died by suicide after his release, af-

ter charges were dropped without a trial. Giddens, a 46-year-old mother of two who lives in Ireland with partner Francesco Turrissi, talks in detail about her childbirth experience and how the album's title cut is about how the cloud of postpartum depression lifted for her. Jason Isbell duets with her on a song about a cross-cultural romance.

She spoke about her career with the AP. This interview has been edited for brevity and clarity.

**AP:** You've won a MacArthur grant, a Pulitzer Prize and (two) Grammys. Which achievement means the most to you?

**Giddens:** They all mean a lot. The Pulitzer is kind of special because of the work that I do, you know? Of course, I am so appreciative of the Grammys. And the MacArthur was something that allowed me to do all the things that I do. But "Omar" was such a labor of love and focus. ... To be up there with Barbara Kingsolver and these incredible journalists who are also doing the things I'm doing, but in a different way, it just feels amazing.

**AP:** Rolling Stone magazine called "You're the One" your most outward-looking record. Is that a fair assessment?

**Giddens:** It's my most accessible album, and that's why I did it. It's so easy to just be in your corner. I know how to make a record that folkies like. ... This was something I didn't know what I was doing, really. And that's where I like to live. I like to do something I haven't done.

**AP:** Does it bother you that some purists may be upset by it?

**Giddens:** I know what I'm doing next and they will be very happy, so they can be out of joint for this one because the whole point was I wanted to go bigger, right? ... I wanted to see how accessible this could be to people who are outside of my world.

**AP:** Although you tell the story about how the song "You're the One" was inspired by your experience coming out of postpartum depression, it could just as easily be read as

a simple love song. Did you want to give people freedom to interpret it the way they want to?

**Giddens:** That's the way all songs are. You're going to interpret it the way you want to, anyway. So I never really thought about it. I knew telling the story (in interviews) was going to disrupt that. But people can still use it as a love song if they want. It is a love song, it's just I wrote it because of my son. But the emotion is universal.

**AP:** How did you come to work with Jack Slash, and what was that like?

**Giddens:** It was Alex, my manager. He said, "Have you ever heard of Jack Slash?" I was like, who? I didn't. I'm not really paying attention. So I listened to some stuff and I knew he'd done (work with) Valerie June. Her stuff is far out, further out than I go. But I really appreciate what she's doing. It sounds very interesting. When we got with him, he had taken detailed notes on every song, and he was really available for an approach of meeting in the middle.

**AP:** Why did you find Jason Isbell to be the right person to help you tell the story in "Yet to Be"?

**Giddens:** I've never actually met him in person. We're Twitter fans. I love what he's doing with social media. I was like, this dude is the best. And, of course, he's a great musician and he's been such a vocal ally for Black women in the industry in Nashville - the historic eight nights at the Ryman with the different Black female musicians opening for him. I mean, that's putting your money where your mouth is.

**AP:** So you were attracted to him more as an activist than a musician?

**Giddens:** Are you surprised?

**AP:** A website (chapelboro.com) recently described you as the most famous living North Carolinian. What do you think when you see that?

**Giddens:** Yeah, Michael Jordan. Give me a break. I mean, look, I appreciate it. But I know where I sit. There's a good cadre of people who really love our work. And then there's everybody else who are like, "Who? Who's that?" That's fine.

set a record in 2022. The association compiled more than 1,200 challenges in 2022 - nearly double the previous record total in 2021.

PEN America also said it found more than 2,500 instances of books being banned - affecting more than 1,600 titles - from July 2021 to June 2022. Texas and

Florida were the states with the most bans, according to the organization's 2022 report.

During his reading at Bridgeside Books in Waterbury on Sunday, Zucker- man read the book, "And Tango Makes Three," which is based on the true story of two male penguins who were devoted to each other at the Central Park Zoo in New York.

The book, written by Peter Parnell and Justin Richardson, is listed among the 100 most subjected to censorship efforts over the past decade, as compiled by the American Library Association.

Zuckerman was joined by three Vermont authors, who each read segments from other banned books, including "Monster," by Walter Dean Myers, and the bestselling children's picture book "Where the Wild Things Are," by Maurice Sendak, which was pulled off some shelves when it first came out in 1963.

"I think books are a place for kids to explore and to be things that they're not or see what it's like to be something else," said children's author and illustrator Sarah Dillard. "To take that away from them I think is putting them at a huge disadvantage for being in the real world." (AP)



Musician Jon Batiste performs on NBC's 'Today' show at Rockefeller Plaza on Friday, Aug. 18, in New York. (AP)



## Space

## Craft suffers tech glitch

## Russia's lunar mission ends in Luna-25 crash

MOSCOW, Aug 21, (AP): Russia's Luna-25 spacecraft crashed into the moon after it spun into an uncontrolled orbit, the country's Roscosmos space agency said Sunday.

The pilotless spacecraft was aiming to be the first ever to land on the south pole of the moon, an area where scientists believe there could be important reserves of frozen water and precious elements. It had been expected to land Monday.

However, Roscosmos said it lost contact with the Luna-25 on Saturday after the spacecraft ran into difficulties and reported an "abnormal situation".

"The apparatus moved into an unpredictable orbit and ceased to exist as a result of a collision with the surface of the moon," read a statement from the agency.

The Luna-25 was in a race with an Indian spacecraft launched on July 14 to be the first to reach the south pole. Both were expected to reach the moon between Aug. 21 and 23.

The lunar mission was Russia's first since 1976, when it was part of the Soviet Union. Only three governments have managed successful moon landings: the Soviet Union, the United States and China.

The lunar south pole is of particular interest to scientists, who believe the permanently shadowed polar craters may contain frozen water in the rocks that future explorers could transform into air and rocket fuel.

A previous Indian attempt to land at the south pole in 2019 ended when the spacecraft crashed into the moon's surface.

Roscosmos said it wanted to show Russia "is a state capable of delivering a payload to the moon," and "ensure Russia's guaranteed access to the moon's surface."

Sanctions imposed on Russia since it began its actions in Ukraine have affected its space program, making it more difficult to access Western technology.

The Luna-25 was initially meant to carry a small moon rover but that idea was abandoned to reduce the weight of the craft for improved reliability, analysts said.

## Abnormal

The craft launched from the Vostochny Cosmodrome in Russia's Far East on Aug. 10. The spacecraft is a pet project of Russian President Vladimir Putin and key to his efforts to make Russia a space superpower.

Russia reported an "abnormal situation" Saturday on its moon-bound Luna-25 spacecraft, which launched earlier this month.

The country's space agency, Roscosmos, said the spacecraft ran into unspecified trouble while trying to enter a pre-landing orbit, and that its specialists were analyzing the situation.

"During the operation, an abnormal situation occurred on board the automatic station, which did not allow the maneuver to be performed with the specified parameters," Roscosmos said in a Telegram post.

Roscosmos did not specify whether the incident will prevent Luna-25 from making a landing.

The spacecraft is scheduled to land on the south pole of the moon on Monday, racing to land on Earth's satellite ahead of an Indian spacecraft. The lunar south pole is of particular interest to scientists, who believe the permanently shadowed polar craters may contain water. The frozen water in the rocks could be transformed by future explorers into air and rocket fuel.

Also on Saturday, the Russian spacecraft produced its first results. Though Roscosmos said the information was undergoing analysis, the agency reported that the preliminary data obtained contained information about the chemical elements of the lunar soil and that its equipment had registered a "micrometeorite impact."

Roscosmos posted images of the Zeeman crater - the third largest in the moon's southern hemisphere - taken from the spacecraft. The crater has a diameter of 190 kilometers (118 miles) and is eight kilometers (five miles) deep.

The launch from Russia's Vostochny spaceport in the Far East of the Luna-25 craft on Aug. 10 was Russia's first since 1976 when it was part of the Soviet Union.

The Russian lunar lander was expected to reach the moon between Aug. 21 - 23, around the same time as an Indian craft which was launched on July 14.

Only three governments have managed successful moon landings: the Soviet Union, the United States and China. India and Russia are aiming to be the first to land at the moon's south pole.

Roscosmos said it wants to show Russia "is a state capable of delivering a payload to the moon," and "ensure Russia's guaranteed access to the moon's surface."

Sanctions imposed on Russia after it invaded Ukraine make it harder for the country to access Western technology, impacting its space program. The Luna-25 was initially meant to carry a small moon rover but that idea was abandoned to reduce the weight of the craft for improved reliability, analysts say.

"Foreign electronics are lighter, domestic electronics are heavier," Egorov said. "While scientists might have the task of studying lunar water, for Roscosmos the main task is simply to land on the moon - to recover lost Soviet expertise and learn how to perform this task in a new era."

## Superpower

The spaceport is a pet project of Russian President Vladimir Putin and is key to his efforts to make Russia a space superpower and move Russian launches from the Baikonur Cosmodrome in Kazakhstan.

A previous Indian attempt to land at the moon's south pole in 2019 ended when the lander crashed into the moon's surface.

The Russian lunar lander was expected to reach the moon on Aug. 23, about the same day as an Indian craft which was launched on July 14. The Russian spacecraft will take about 5.5 days to travel to the moon's vicinity, then spend three to seven days orbiting at about 100 kilometers (62 miles) before heading for the surface.

Only three governments have managed successful moon landings: the Soviet Union, the United States and China. India and Russia are aiming to be the first to land at the moon's south pole.

Roscosmos, Russia's space agency, said it wants to show Russia "is a state capable of delivering a payload to the moon," and "ensure Russia's guaranteed access to the moon's surface."

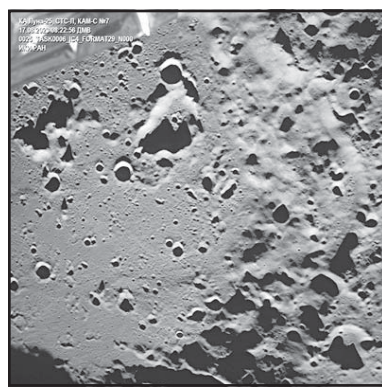
"Study of the moon is not the goal," said Vitaly Egorov, a popular Russian space analyst. "The goal is political competition between two superpowers - China and the USA - and a number of other countries which also want to claim the title of space superpower."

Sanctions imposed on Russia after it invaded Ukraine make it harder for it to access Western technology, impacting its space program. The Luna-25 was initially meant to carry a small moon rover but that idea was abandoned to reduce the weight of the craft for improved reliability, analysts say.

The pollution of the lake, located about



Astronauts, (from left), Russian cosmonaut Konstantin Borisov, Danish astronaut Andreas Mogensen, NASA astronaut Jasmin Moghbeli and Japanese astronaut Satoshi Furukawa pose for a photo at a news conference at the Kennedy Space Center as they prepare for their mission to the International Space Station in Cape Canaveral, Fla., Sunday, Aug. 20. The launch to the space station is scheduled for early Friday, Aug. 25. (AP)



This photo released by the Roscosmos State Space Corporation on Thursday, Aug. 17, shows an image of the lunar south pole region on the far side of the moon captured by Russia's Luna-25 spacecraft before its failed attempt to land. Russia's Roscosmos state corporation said Sunday that the Luna-25 crashed into the moon after it spun into an uncontrolled orbit. The authorities have opened an inquiry into the possible cause. (AP)



Xi

Maduro

## Discovery

**Pangolin scales seized:** Thai authorities has said they have seized more than a ton of pangolin scales worth over 50 million baht (\$1.4 million) that are believed to have been headed out of the country through a land border.

The scales that cover a type of anteater were found Wednesday night in the northeastern province of Kalasin, and apparently were meant to be transported out through Mukdahan province, which shares a border with Laos, Thai police said at a news conference in Bangkok on Thursday.

Two male suspects, who were on a truck with the scales, were arrested and charged with the illegal possession of carcasses of protected animals, according to Ariyapong Sinsorn, the deputy chief of the Natural Resources and Environmental Crime Division. The two men confessed to the charges, he said.

The pangolin scales, which have an estimated price of around 40,000 baht (\$1,129) per kilogram, are suspected to have been brought from Malaysia to Thailand, to be transported to Laos. From there, it was apparently headed for sale to clients in China, said Kamnuan Chananan, a regional deputy chief of the environmental crime division. He said a further investigation is being conducted to determine the route of transport.

The scales, displayed during the news conference in Bangkok, were dried and contained in fertilizer sacks bearing a Chinese character and different numbers. The authorities said they suspect the numbers are used for marking the quality of the scales.

The amount of scales is estimated to come from at least 3,000-4,000 dead pangolins, wildlife protection official Prasert Sonsatahponkulk said, adding that the scales will be tested to find out the species of the pangolins.

Pangolins are endangered and it is illegal to trade them. The animal's scales are used in traditional Chinese medicine and contain keratin, a protein also found in rhino horn, though there is no scientific proof that they provide any medicinal value. Pangolin meat is considered a delicacy in Vietnam and some parts of China. China's president is Xi Jinping. (AP)

**Oil, trash threaten life in lake:** The fishermen of Lake Maracaibo say they face their worst nightmare everyday as fish stocks decline and pollution degrades the health of this great freshwater lake, one of the oldest - and largest - in the world.

Lake Maracaibo, which once was at the heart of Venezuela's oil boom, has turned into a polluted wasteland, according to environmentalists. Venezuela's president is Nicolas Maduro.

The pollution of the lake, located about

## The Conversation

## Astronomers use dead stars to measure gravitational waves

## A symphony of ripples in spacetime

By Chris Impey  
University of Arizona

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

An international team of astronomers has detected a faint signal of gravitational waves reverberating through the universe. By using dead stars as a giant network of gravitational wave detectors, the collaboration - called NANOGrav - was able to measure a low-frequency hum from a chorus of ripples of spacetime.

I'm an astronomer who studies and has written about cosmology, black holes and exoplanets. I've researched the evolution of supermassive black holes using the Hubble Space telescope.

Though members of the team behind this new discovery aren't yet certain, they strongly suspect that the background hum of gravitational waves they measured was caused by countless ancient merging events of supermassive black holes.

Gravitational waves are ripples in spacetime caused by massive accelerating objects. Albert Einstein predicted their existence in his general theory of relativity, in which he hypothesized that when a gravitational wave passes through space, it makes the space shrink then expand periodically.

Researchers first detected direct evidence of gravitational waves in 2015, when the Laser Interferometer Gravitational-Wave Observatory, known as LIGO, picked up a signal from a pair of merging black holes that had traveled 1.3 billion light-years to reach Earth.

The NANOGrav collaboration is also trying to detect spacetime ripples, but on an interstellar scale. The team used pulsars, rapidly spinning dead stars that emit a beam of radio emissions. Pulsars are functionally similar to a lighthouse - as they spin, their beams can sweep across the Earth at regular intervals.

The NANOGrav team used pulsars that rotate incredibly fast - up to 1,000 times per second - and these pulses can be timed like the ticking of an extremely accurate cosmic clock. As gravitational waves sweep past a pulsar at the speed of light, the waves will very slightly expand and contract the distance between the pulsar and the Earth, ever so slightly changing the

time between the ticks.

Pulsars are such accurate clocks that it is possible to measure their ticking with an accuracy to within 100 nanoseconds. That lets astronomers calculate the distance between a pulsar and Earth to within 30 feet (9 meters). Gravitational waves change the distance between these pulsars and Earth by tens of miles, making pulsars easily sensitive enough to detect this effect.

The first thing the NANOGrav team had to do was control for the noise in its cosmic gravitational wave detector. This included noise in the radio receivers it used and subtle astrophysics that affect the behavior of pulsars. Even accounting for these effects, the team's approach was not sensitive enough to detect gravitational waves from individual supermassive black hole binaries. However, it had enough sensitivity to detect the sum of all the massive black hole mergers that have occurred anywhere in the universe since the Big Bang - as many as a million overlapping signals.

In a musical analogy, it is like standing in a busy downtown and hearing the faint sound of a symphony somewhere in the distance. You can't pick out a single instrument because of the noise of the cars and the people around you, but you can hear the hum of a hundred instruments. The team had to tease out the signature of this gravitational wave "background" from other competing signals.

The team was able to detect this symphony by measuring a network of 67 different pulsars for 15 years. If some disruption in the ticking of one pulsar was due to gravitational waves from the distant universe, all the pulsars the team was watching would be affected in a similar way. On June 28, 2023, the team published four papers describing its project and the evidence it found of the gravitational wave background.

The hum of the NANOGrav collaboration found is produced from the merging of black holes that are billions of times more massive than the Sun. These black holes spin around one another very slowly and produce gravitational waves with frequencies of one-billionth of a hertz. That means the spacetime ripples have an oscillation every few decades. This slow oscillation of the wave is the reason the team needed to rely on the incredibly accurate timekeeping of pulsars.

These gravitational waves are different from the waves LIGO can detect. LIGO's signals are produced when two black holes 10 to 100 times the mass of the Sun merge into one rapidly spinning object, creating gravitational waves that oscillate hundreds of times per second.

If you think of black holes as a tuning fork, the smaller the event, the faster the tuning fork vibrates and the higher the pitch. LIGO detects gravitational waves that "ring" in the audible range. The black hole mergers the NANOGrav team has found "ring" with a frequency billions of times too low to hear.

Astronomers have long been interested in studying how stars and galaxies first emerged in the aftermath of the Big Bang. This new finding from the NANOGrav team is like adding another color - gravitational waves - to the picture of the early universe that is just starting to emerge, in large part thanks to the James Webb Space Telescope.

A major scientific goal of the James Webb Space Telescope is to help researchers study how the first stars and galaxies formed after the Big Bang. To do this, James Webb was designed to detect the faint light from incredibly distant stars and galaxies. The farther away an object is, the longer it takes the light to get to Earth, so James Webb is effectively a time machine that can peer back over 13.5 billion years to see light from the first stars and galaxies in the universe.

It has been very successful in the quest, having found hundreds of galaxies that flooded the universe with light in the first 700 million years after the big bang. The telescope has also detected the oldest black hole in the universe, located at the center of a galaxy that formed just 500 million years after the Big Bang.

These findings are challenging existing theories of the evolution of the universe.

It takes a long time to grow a massive galaxy. Astronomers know that supermassive black holes lie at the center of every galaxy and have mass proportional to their host galaxies. So these ancient galaxies almost certainly have the correspondingly massive black hole in their centers.

The problem is that the objects James Webb has been finding are far bigger than current theory says they should be. (AP)

600 kilometers (372 miles) west of the capital, Caracas, is the result of decades of excessive oil exploitation, poor maintenance

of the obsolete infrastructure and a lack of waste treatment plants in the area. Tens of thousands of kilometers of pipes

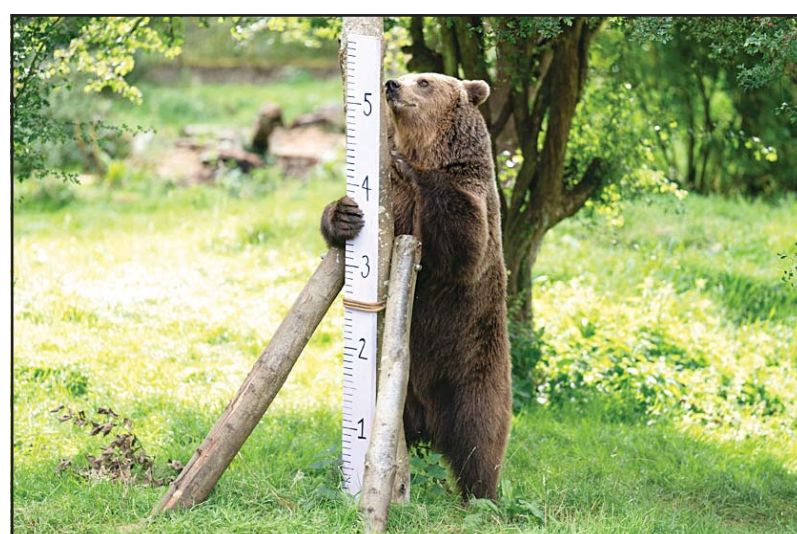
lie at its bottom, where crude oil leaks and system failures are frequent.

The lake, which collects rainwater from more than a hundred tributaries, has also become the wastewater deposit for the western states of Zulia, Mérida and Trujillo, where 5.3 million people live. Waste from the Colombian department of Norte de Santander also ends up in it.

Fertilizers, sewage and other chemicals are discharged into Lake Maracaibo, causing high concentrations of nitrogen and phosphorus that have led to the growth of cyanobacteria such as microcystin that produces 95% of what is locally called "verdin," a greenish, toxic microalgae that occupies much of the lake's waters, according to Beltrán Briceño, a professor at the University of Zulia and head of the microbiology laboratory of the Institute of Agricultural Research in Maracaibo.

The proliferation of cyanobacteria can cause serious damage to both aquatic animals and human beings due to the toxins they generate, he said. Cyanobacteria can cause massive fish deaths.

The fish no longer come near the shores of the lake because the microalgae "drowns them," said José Aular, a 61-year-old fisherman who says he developed a skin rash because of the lake's contamination. (AP)



Eurasian brown bear Minnie is measured during the annual stocktake at ZSL Whipsnade Zoo in Bedfordshire, England, Monday Aug. 21. Required as part of the zoo's licence, the annual stocktake includes every animal, with all other British zoos required to do similar yearly counts. (AP)



## Chahal dropped

## Iyer, Rahul return for Asia Cup

NEW DELHI, Aug 21, (AP): Batters Shreyas Iyer and KL Rahul were named in India's 17-man squad on Monday for the Asia Cup after recovering from injury.

India will play all its games in the Asia Cup, which starts on Aug. 30, in Sri Lanka after refusing to travel to Pakistan due to political tensions between the two countries.

Pakistan will host four matches, including one in the Super 4, while nine games will be played in Sri Lanka, including the final on Sept. 17.

India's squad does not feature an off-break bowler while the selectors dropped leg-spinner Yuzvendra Chahal and included Kuldeep Yadav as the only wrist spinner.

Rahul and Iyer have gone through rehabilitation for several weeks following thigh and back injuries respectively.

## CRICKET

Rahul, who also keeps wicket, hasn't played competitively since May while Iyer has been out of international cricket since March.

Uncapped left-handed batter Tilak Varma was rewarded on Monday for his impressive displays against the West Indies in the recent Twenty20 series.

"In the West Indies we saw some real promise in terms of not just performances but temperament," chief selector Ajit Agarkar said about Varma. "It gives us an opportunity to take him with the team, give him some more exposure."

"Fortunately we can take 17, it'll be 15 at the World Cup. So, when the time comes we'll take that decision, but at the moment it at least gives the coach and captain an opportunity to have him with the squad." The selectors preferred Ishan Kishan as the second wicketkeeper and left out Sanju Samson, who will travel as a reserve.

"We're one voice and we've been very good coaching associates and friends for a long, long time," Bradburn said. "Mickey and I communicate daily... he's very much part of the new direction that we're wanting to take this team. We're really looking forward to having Mickey on board, but for me, he's on board every day anyway."

Bradburn and Arthur's aggressive approach has also got the approval of chief selector Inzamam-ul-Haq as they have planned to be more proactive during the middle overs of the 50-over game.

"We're working hard on developing some skills to really attack that middle over period with some hostility - not only with the bat, but with the ball and with our field placings as well," Bradburn said. "The selection has been very clear and with Mr. Inzi (Inzamam-ul-Haq) coming on board, it's wonderful to have such experience... he's very much aligned with the thinking of the current selection panel and we're very comfortable with the lineup that we've selected."

Pakistan coach Grant Bradburn wants to see his team play an aggressive brand of cricket when it starts the build-up for the World Cup with a three-match ODI series against Afghanistan next week.

The series begins in Sri Lanka on Aug. 22, followed by the Asia Cup in Pakistan and Sri Lanka before the World Cup in India, starting on Oct. 5.

"We're not looking to sit back and wait for bowlers to bowl badly, we're looking to be aggressive," Bradburn said

in Lahore on Wednesday, a day before the team departs for Sri Lanka. "We're training to use our skills. We're looking to use those skills in the game. It's not a request from coaches to players, it's a necessity for them to be in the team because that's the way the game is moving forward globally... above all, we want to play winning cricket."

Pakistan hasn't played white-ball cricket since last hosting New Zealand for the ODI series in April, but most of the players selected for the series against Afghanistan are presently playing T20 white-ball league cricket.

Pakistan showed glimpses of its aggressiveness during the 4-1 victory over New Zealand at home and also in a 2-0 away win over Sri Lanka in the test series in July.

Fast bowlers Shaheen Afridi and Haris Rauf, alongside legspinners Shadab Khan and Usama Mir, played in The Hundred in England. Captain Babar Azam, Fakhar Zaman, Mohammad Haris, Naseem Shah, Mohammad Nawaz and Ifthikhar Ahmed featured in the Lanka Premier League to get used to the playing conditions in Sri Lanka.

"It's good that some of the boys have been getting cricket in The Hundred and in the LPL," Bradburn said. "It's been excellent that they've been able to play cricket."

Bradburn was appointed Pakistan coach in May, nearly a month after Mickey Arthur was slotted in as team director by previous Pakistan Cricket Board managing committee head Najam Sethi.

Arthur, who is serving as head of cricket at Derbyshire, will be with the Pakistan team during the series against Afghanistan and also for few games of the Asia Cup before he travels with the team to India for the World Cup.

Bradburn said he is very much "aligned" with Arthur to instill aggressiveness in the Pakistan team.

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Pakistan coach Grant Bradburn wants to see his team play an aggressive brand of cricket when it starts the build-up for the World Cup with a three-match ODI series against Afghanistan next week.

## Yankees lose 8 in a row for first time in 28 years, fall to Red Sox

Orioles rout Athletics

NEW YORK, Aug 21, (AP): The Yankees extended a losing streak to eight for the first time since 1995, allowing Justin Turner's ninth-inning, go-ahead double after a key overturned call in a 6-5 defeat to the Boston Red Sox on Sunday.

New York appeared to go ahead in the eighth when Isiah Kiner-Falefa scored from first on rookie Anthony Volpe's single but Kiner-Falefa was ruled out in a video review. Turner hit a three-run homer and drove in the go-ahead run off Clay Holmes (4-4).

## BASEBALL

The Yankees (60-64) have lost eight straight for the first time since Aug. 19-26, 1995.

Chris Martin (4-1) allowed two hits in a scoreless eighth, and Kenley Jansen got his 29th save.

## Nationals 4, Phillies 3

In Williamsport, Trevor Williams tossed two-hit ball over six shutout innings and led Washington over Philadelphia in front of hundreds of the best Little League World Series players from around the world.

Jake Cave hit a two-run homer off Kyle Finnegan in the ninth but the Nationals closer recovered to strike out pinch-hitter J.T. Realmuto to end the game and set off a flurry of fireworks in the outfield. Finnegan got his 21st save.

Williams (6-7) struck out four and walked three.

He had some early help against the NL wild-card leaders. Keibert Ruiz ripped a two-RBI double off Phillies starter Zack Wheeler (9-6) and Dominic Smith had a two RBI single for a 4-0 lead in the first.

## Brewers 6, Rangers 2

In Arlington, Max Scherzer (12-5) moved into 11th on the career strikeout list just before an erratic stretch when he forced in a pair of runs,



Boston Red Sox's Justin Turner (top right), hits a three-run home run during the seventh inning of a baseball game against the New York Yankees in New York. (AP)

and NL Central-leading Milwaukee completed a three-game sweep.

Corey Seager hit his 23rd homer for AL West-leading Texas (72-52), which matched a season high with their fourth consecutive loss.

No. 9 batter Tyrone Taylor had a two-run triple for Milwaukee (68-57). Adrian Houser (5-4) struck out seven and allowed one run over five innings and Devin Williams got his 30th save.

Scherzer got his 3,343rd strikeout when Brice Turang whiffed opening the third inning, the third of four strikeouts for the three-time Cy Young Award winner.

## Orioles 12, Athletics 1

In Oakland, Kyle Bradish (8-6) struck out eight in six dominant innings. Jorge Mateo hit an inside-the-park home run and AL-best Baltimore (77-47) moved 30 games over .500 for the first time since ending 2014 at 96-66.

Ryan Mountcastle extended his on-base streak to a career-high 26 games with three hits including his 17th home run to pace the Orioles' 17-hit attack. Gunnar Henderson hit his 21st to go with two doubles and a triple, and Austin Hays added a two-run single as Baltimore won its sixth in eight games.

The A's fell to 34-90, the first time that they've been 56 games under .500 since the franchise was in Philadelphia and finished 49-105 in 1946.

JP Sears (2-10) tied his career high by allowing seven runs in four innings.

## Mariners 7, Astros 6

In Houston, Eugenio Suárez hit a two-run homer and rookie Dominic Canzone had a career-high four hits as Seattle took a 6-0 lead against Hunter Brown (9-9) and extended its winning streak to six with a series sweep.

Seattle starter Emerson Hancock pitched two scoreless innings before leaving with a right shoulder strain. Dylan Moore set a career high with four hits.

Matt Brash (9-4) pitched 1 1/3 scoreless innings for the win and Gabe Speier struck out two in the ninth for his first big league save.

## Giants 4, Braves 3

In Atlanta, Pinch-hitter Joe Pederson walked with the bases loaded against Kirby Yates (7-1) in the ninth inning, forcing in Michael Conforto with the go-ahead run.

Luis Matos and Wilmer Flores homered, and the Giants won for the second time in 14 road games. The Braves had won seven straight home games.

Camilo Doval (5-3) was part of a bullpen effort that pitched 7 1/3 innings.

## Tigers 4, Guardians 1

In Cleveland, Miguel Cabrera singled in his final at-bat at Progressive Field, Spencer Torkelson and Kerry Carpenter homered, and Detroit are 7-3 against Cleveland with three games left and won the season series for first time since 2015.

Torkelson hit a two-run homer in the first off Logan Allen (6-6), his 22nd this season. Cleveland has lost 15 of 22.

Eduardo Rodriguez (9-6) allowed one run and struck out six in 6 2/3 innings, and Alex Lange pitched the ninth for his 18th save.

## Blue Jays 10, Reds 3

In Cincinnati, Brandon Belt had his second multihomer game this season and Hyun Jin Ryu (2-1) won consecutive starts for the first time since his latest Tommy John surgery, allowing two runs and four hits in five innings.

Kevin Kiermaier and Belt hit two-run homers in the second inning, and Bo Bichette, Belt and George Springer had solo shots in the fourth.

Hunter Greene (2-5), who made his first start since June 17 after a stint on the injured list caused by right hip pain, gave up career highs of nine runs and 10 hits and tied his

career high by allowing five home runs.

Bowden Francis gave up one run and two hits over three innings for his first professional save.

## Twins 2, Pirates 0

In Minneapolis, Dallas Keuchel (1-1) retired his first 19 batters before Bryan Reynolds doubled off the right-field wall. Signed to a minor league contract in June, the 35-year-old left-hander made his third big league start this season.

Griffin Jax got two strikeouts to end the seventh. Jhoan Duran struck out two in the ninth and earned his 23rd save.

Edouard Julien drove in a pair of runs off Osvaldo Bido (2-4).

## Cardinals 7, Mets 3

In St. Louis, Paul Goldschmidt homered with three hits and three RBIs, Richie Palacios hit a two-run single and St. Louis avoided a four-game sweep and stopped a four-game slide.

Dakota Hudson (5-0) won his fourth straight decision, striking out seven in 5 1/3 innings while allowing two runs and five hits.

Pete Alonso homered for New York, which had won four in a row. Carlos Carrasco (3-7) gave up three runs and nine hits in four innings.

## Cubs 4, Royals 3

In Chicago, Seiya Suzuki and Miguel Amaya hit solo homers and Kyle Hendricks (5-6) won for the first time since July 25, allowing one run and five hits in 6 1/3 innings.

Jordan Lyles (3-14) pitched a five-hit complete game but became the major leagues' first 14-game loser as Kansas City fell for the fourth time in five games and dropped to 40-86, better only than Oakland among the 30 major league teams.

Adbert Alzolay got his 18th save after allowing pinch-hitter Maikel Garcia's run-scoring single and Matt Beaty's RBI groundout.

## White Sox 10, Rockies 5

In Denver, Lenyn Sosa capped Chicago's seven-run eighth inning with a three-run homer against Justin Lawrence and Chicago avoided a sweep and improved to 6-11 in Au-

## MLB Results/Standings

WASHINGTON, Aug 21, (AP): Results and standings from MLB games on Sunday.

Team	W	L	Pct	GB
Detroit	4	4	.500	1
Toronto	10	4	.714	3
Chicago Cubs	4	4	.500	3
Seattle	7	7	.500	6
Minnesota	2	7	.286	0
Boston	6	7	.462	5
Milwaukee	6	7	.462	2
Chicago W. Sox	10	6	.625	5
Baltimore	12	6	.667	1
San Francisco	4	7	.364	3
St. Louis	7	7	.500	3
Washington	4	7	.364	3

American League				
East Division				
W	L	Pct	GB	
Baltimore	77	47	.621	—
Tampa Bay	75	51	.595	3
Toronto	69	56	.552	8-1/2
Boston	66	58	.532	11
New York	60	64	.484	17

Central Division				
W	L	Pct	GB	
Minnesota	65	60	.520	—
Cleveland	59	66	.472	6
Detroit	57	67	.460	7-1/2
Chicago	49	75	.395	15-1/2
Kansas City	40	86	.317	25-1/2

West Division				
W	L	Pct	GB	
Texas	72	52	.581	—
Houston	70	55	.560	2-1/2
Seattle	69	55	.556	3
Los Angeles	61	64	.488	11-1/2
Oakland	34	90	.274	38

National League				
East Division				
W	L	Pct	GB	
Atlanta	80	43	.650	—
Philadelphia	67	57	.540	13-1/2
Miami	64	61	.512	17
New York	58	67	.464	23
Washington	57	68	.456	24

Central Division				
W	L	Pct	GB	
Milwaukee	68	57	.544	—
Chicago	64	59	.520	3
Cincinnati	64	61	.512	4
Pittsburgh	55	69	.444	12-1/2
St. Louis	55	70	.440	13

West Division				
W	L	Pct	GB	
Los Angeles	76	47	.618	—
San Francisco	65	59	.524	11-1/2
Arizona	64	61	.512	13
San Diego	59	66	.472	18
Colorado	48	76	.387	28-1/2

gust. Andrew Vaughn had three hits, including his 16th homer.

After Dylan Cease struggled, Bryan Shaw, Aaron Bummer (4-2) and Gregory Santos combined for 4 1/3 innings of one-hit relief.

Charlie Blackmon homered and tripled for Colorado. Matt Koch (2-1) was the loser.



Detroit Tigers' Javier Báez throws out Cleveland Guardians' Tyler Freeman at second base during the seventh inning of a baseball game in Cleveland. (AP)

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## Germany, Brazil, Canada and the US begin post-tournament soul-searching

## Women's World Cup teams head home to different futures

SYDNEY, Aug 21, (AP) — Teams headed home from the Women's World Cup with uncertain futures but hopes that the monthlong tournament would spur new interest and further investment in the game.

For some teams, like Nigeria, the Philippines and Jamaica, the struggle for funding, support and recognition will continue.

More established teams like Germany, Brazil, Canada and the United States now begin the post-tournament soul-searching about what went wrong.

Spain, which defeated England 1-0 in the final on Sunday, can relish as first-time champions.

"We need to be ready, because after this FIFA Women's World Cup women's football is going to explode in every single one of your countries," FIFA chief women's football officer Sarai Bareman said at a women's soccer conference held in the days before the final. "We need to be ready for it. There will be millions and millions of women and girls around the world who will sign up to play football for the first time ever after this World Cup."

"Everyone needs to stand ready, with investment, with infrastructure, with coaches, with referees, with tournaments, member associations, federations, confederations. We

need to stand ready to receive that interest and retain it in our game in a sustainable way."

The next major tournament for women's soccer is next year's Olympics in France. The French were eliminated from the World Cup in a penalty shootout after a scoreless draw with co-host Australia in the quarterfinals.

Before France even got to the World Cup the team had some upheaval. Wendie Renard threatened not to play for the team, and the

## SOCCER

French federation responded by firing coach Corinne Diacre in March and hiring Herve Renard, who coached Saudi Arabia's men at the World Cup in Qatar. Herve Renard, whose contract runs through the Paris Olympics, was already looking forward to next year.

"We have no regrets," he said. "Next year we'll be back, we'll be back at home and we are going to try and glean something from this."

The United States is in the market for a new coach after the two-time defending World Cup champions crashed out of the tournament at the earliest point ever. Sweden de-



Spain's goalkeeper Cata Coll (center), stops a shot during the second half of the FIFA Women's World Cup soccer final between Spain and England at Stadium Australia in Sydney, Australia. (AP)

feated the United States in a penalty shootout in the round of 16.

U.S. coach Vlatko Andonovski resigned after the tournament. The team needs to work fast to name a replacement, because the Americans are among four teams who have already qualified for the Olympics - along with France, Brazil and Colombia.

The Brazilians didn't emerge from the group stage for the first time since 1995. Afterward, Marta said a tearful goodbye after her sixth World

Cup. "Women's football doesn't end here, Women's football in Brazil doesn't end here," Marta said. "We need to understand this."

Nigeria has asked global players' union FIFPRO to intervene and make sure the team received the World Cup bonuses for every player participating in the tournament. Nigeria's players were each set to earn \$60,000 for advancing to the knockout round. The Super Falcons fell to

England on penalties in the round of 16.

FIFPRO confirmed it was assisting the team in not only receiving the bonuses, but also other payments dating back to 2021.

FIFA dedicated individual payments from the prize pool for each player at the World Cup. All participants were to receive \$30,000, with the total growing the further along teams got in the tournament. FIFPRO was going to lend help to make sure each player received the funds.

Spain's players each earned a \$270,000 bonus for winning the tournament. The federation earned \$4.29 million.

The Philippines was among eight teams playing in their first World Cup. The team upset New Zealand 1-0 in the group stage for a historic victory. But it wasn't enough to get the team out of the group stage.

Canada returns to a messy contract situation with its federation. The women's team has been without a contract for a year, and reached an interim funding agreement during the tournament that guaranteed the players would be paid.

The Canadians will be back at work soon, hosting Jamaica in an Olympic qualifier in late September.

The Reggae Girlz did not have many friendly matches in the run-up to the

World Cup and there were crowdfunding campaigns to help the players pay for travel and accommodations. It was hoped that their success in the World Cup - they advanced to the knockout round for the first time - would translate into additional support from the Jamaican federation.

"The smaller countries will realize that there's a platform out there and I think young women all over the world, they're looking," Jamaica coach Lorne Donaldson said. "I think all of these governments, everybody, it's time to step up. Cut the bull crap and step up for women's football and let's move along."

Morocco was another of the first-time teams in the World Cup and played well enough to advance to the knockout round, a first for an Arab and North African team at the World Cup.

Morocco has poured money into its women's program. The federation not only created an academy but it pays its players monthly wages to encourage young women to play.

"I look at these debutant teams, I look at these players, so investment is paying dividends," former U.S. coach Jill Ellis said. "I am yelling from the highest mountain top that it's not a matter of if you should, it's why would you not invest in women's football?"

## Hovland rallies with 61 to win BMW

## Dunlap captures US Amateur

OLYMPIA FIELDS, Ill., Aug 21, (AP) — Viktor Hovland delivered the best round of his career at the right time, making birdie on all but two holes on the back nine Sunday for a 9-under 61 to break the course record at Olympia Fields and storm past Scottie Scheffler and Matt Fitzpatrick to win the BMW Championship.

What looked to be a two-man race between Scheffler and Fitzpatrick turned into a one-man show by Hovland. He headed to the back nine four shots behind. In the end, Scheffler and Fitzpatrick had to hole out from the fairway to catch him.

Both closed with a 66, a score that normally would be enough to win on a day like this. They had to settle for runner-up to Hovland, who won for the second time this year and never looked better doing it.

## GOLF

Jordan Spieth bogeyed his last two holes for a 71 and still narrowly made it among the top 30 from the FedEx Cup who advance to the Tour Championship next week. Fitzpatrick was the only one to play himself in, going from No. 40 to No. 10 with his runner-up finish.

Nick Dunlap capped a big summer with his biggest title yet, winning the U.S. Amateur at Cherry Hills to join Tiger Woods as the only players to win the U.S. Amateur and U.S. Junior Amateur.

Dunlap never trailed in his 4-and-3 victory over Neal Shipley, though it was tied after 18 holes in the morning of golf so exquisite they produced 11 birdies between them.

It got a little sloppy at the end, but only after Dunlap seized control. He was 4 up with four holes to play when Shipley failed to birdie the par-3 15th hole to extend the match.

Dunlap, a 19-year-old at Alabama, won the U.S. Junior two years ago. Woods famously won three straight U.S. Juniors followed by three straight U.S. Amateur titles.

Dunlap, No. 9 in the world amateur ranking, won back-to-back this summer in the Northeast Amateur at Wannamoisett and the North & South Amateur at Pinehurst, two of the more prestigious amateur events in America.

Dunlap's victory gets him in the Masters, U.S. Open and British Open next year. Shipley gets in the Masters and U.S. Open as the runner-up.

Alexa Pano celebrated her 19th birthday by beating Gabriella Cowley of England on the third hole of a playoff to win the ISPS Handa World Invitational for her first LPGA Tour victory in the ISPS Handa World Invitational.

Pano closed with 6-under 66 on the Galgorm course for a three-way tie with Cowley (70) and Germany's Esther Henseleit (69). They finished at 8-under 281 in a tournament co-sanctioned by the European tour, LPGA and Ladies European Tour. The two competitions were held concurrently for an equal prize money, with the women on their own set of tees.

Cowley led after the third round but needed an eagle on the 18th to make the playoff. Henseleit was eliminated on the first extra hole.

Cowley then missed a 3-foot birdie putt for the win on the second playoff hole, and Pano took full advantage by making a birdie when the players returned to the par-5 18th for a third time.

Daniel Brown closed with a 1-under 69 and wrapped up a five-shot victory



Viktor Hovland holds the Western Golf Association Trophy (left), and the BMW Championship Trophy after winning in the final round of the BMW Championship golf tournament in Olympia Fields, Ill. (AP)



Ken Duke of the United States celebrates his victory at the PGA Tour Champions Shaw Charity Classic golf tournament in Calgary, Alberta. (AP)

in the ISPS Handa World Invitational for his first professional victory.

Brown started the day with a six-shot lead, which was briefly cut to just two strokes before he made three birdies in a four-hole stretch that gave him plenty of breathing room. He finished at 15-under 266, five clear of Alex Fitzpatrick.

The tournament co-sanctioned by the European tour, LPGA and Ladies European Tour. The two competitions were held concurrently for an equal prize money, with the women on their own set of tees.

Eddie Pepperell closed with a 68 and finished alone in third.

Ken Duke holed a 5-foot birdie putt on the par-5 18th hole to win the Shaw Charity Classic for his first title on the PGA Tour Champions.

Duke closed with a 4-under 66 for a one-shot victory over Thongchai Jaidee of Thailand and Tim Petrovic, who started the final round in the lead.

Jaidee shot a 62. Petrovic had to play out of the rough on the closing hole and failed to make birdie that might have forced a playoff. He shot 69.

Duke rolled in his birdie putt, took a step toward the hole with a big fist pump and began to celebrate. His lone PGA Tour victory was 10 years ago at the Travelers Championship.

Petrovic struggled on the front nine with a pair of bogeys but battled back and was tied for the lead with Duke and Jaidee going to the 18th. But he laid it up in the rough and couldn't get a close look at birdie.

Duke finished at 14-under 196 and won \$360,000.

Chan Kim played his final seven holes in 6-under par, closing with an 8-under 64 for a three-shot victory in the inaugural Magnit Championship.

Kim, an eight-time winner on the Japan Golf Tour, won for the first time on the Korn Ferry Tour. The victory all but assures a PGA Tour card for Kim, a 33-year-old from Hawaii who played his college golf at Arizona State. He moves to No. 12 in the points list. The top 30 from the Korn Ferry Tour graduate to the PGA Tour next season.

Taylor Dickinson had a chance to catch Kim. He was one shot behind until closing with two bogeys for a 69 to finish alone in second. Dickinson moves to No. 31 on the points list as the season is winding down.

Wilson Furr (66), Mac Meissner (68) and Patrick Welch (68) tied for third.

Andy Ogletree closed with a 7-under 64 and pulled away for a seven-shot victory over Ian Poulter in the International Series-England event on the Asian Tour. The leading seven players are from LIV Golf, including Ogletree, the main alternate in the Saudi-backed series. Poulter's son, Luke, played his first professional tournament and tied for 22nd.

## Belotti scores his first Serie A goals for Roma

## Juventus put miserable season behind them

MILAN, Aug 21, (AP) — Andrea Belotti finally scored his first league goals for Roma but they weren't enough to help José Mourinho's team win its Serie A opener after it was held 2-2 by Salernitana.

It could have been worse for Roma as it appeared to be heading for a loss following two impressive goals from Antonio Candreva before Belotti netted a late equalizer.

Roma's city rival Lazio also dropped points as two late goals saw it lose 2-1 at Lecce. Juventus won 3-0 at Udinese, while Atalanta beat Sassuolo 2-0.

That saw Belotti given a rare start and he thought he had finally netted his first league goal for Roma — after a year at the club — but his seventh-minute strike was ruled out by the video assistant referee for a tight offside decision.

However, Belotti didn't have to wait much longer as barely 10 minutes later he brought down Diego Llorente's ball over the top, rounded Salernitana defender Norbert Gyömbér and beat Guillermo Ochoa from 12 yards.

Ochoa pulled off a great save in the 33rd minute to

## SOCCER

prevent Roma from doubling its lead as he kept out Chris Smalling's header from close range.

And Salernitana equalized three minutes later. Candreva started the action near the halfway line and then burst forward, collected a pass from Federico Fazio and turned Smalling inside out before firing into the roof of the net.

Candreva's second goal, four minutes after the break, was even more impressive as the 36-year-old controlled a cross-field pass and twisted his way past Bryan Cristante to curl a precise and powerful strike into the top far corner. Salernitana appeared to be heading for a first-ever win over Roma before Belotti headed in a corner with eight minutes remaining.

Juventus put a miserable season behind it with a 3-0 statement victory at Udinese.

Federico Chiesa opened the scoring in the second minute. Dušan Vlahović's penalty and Adrien Rabiot's

header in stoppage time gave Juventus a comfortable lead at the interval.

Vlahović also had a late goal ruled out for offside. Hardly anything went right for Juventus last season. It was hit with a 10-point penalty for legal issues stemming from a false-accounting case and finished seventh. It was then also given a UEFA ban that will keep it out of the Europa Conference League.

Charles De Ketelaere netted his first goal in Italian soccer on his Atalanta debut.

De Ketelaere had joined Atalanta on loan after a disappointing season at AC Milan following a big-money move from Belgian club Brugge.

The Belgium international, who had earlier hit the crossbar, headed in the opener seven minutes from time. Nadir Zortea sealed the result in stoppage time.

Lazio appeared to be heading for victory following a strike from Ciro Immobile in the 26th minute. But Lecce leveled through Pontus Almqvist with five minutes remaining before Federico Di Francesco scored the winner two minutes later.



Salernitana's Boulaye Dia (left), and Roma's Leandro Paredes vie for the ball during the Serie A soccer match between Roma and Salernitana, at Rome's Olympic Stadium. (AP)

## Man United to let Greenwood leave

MANCHESTER, England, Aug 21, (AP) — Manchester United said Monday that Mason Greenwood will leave the club after a criminal investigation of possible attempted rape was closed by prosecutors six months ago.

The 21-year-old England forward has not played for United since January 2022 and his future remained unclear during the club's own investigation.

Greenwood said it was "the best decision for us all ... to continue my football career away from Old Trafford, where my presence will not be a distraction for the club."

Greenwood had been implicated in controlling and coercive behavior and assault relating to a young woman after images and videos were posted online.

Prosecutors in England closed their case in February, and United's own investigation continued.

Greenwood said he "did not do the things I was accused of."

## SOCCER

He added: "However, I fully accept I made mistakes in my relationship, and I take my share of responsibility for the situations which led to the social media post. I intend to be a better footballer, but most importantly a good father, a better person, and to use my talents in a positive way on and off the pitch."



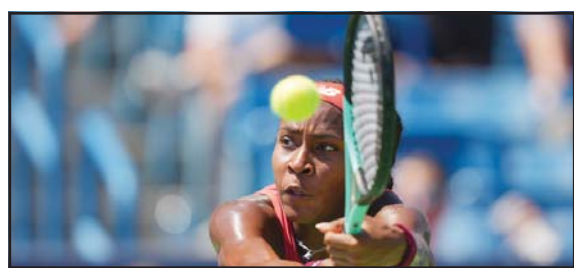
Ben Foster is heading back into retirement, months after helping Wrexham — the soccer team owned by Hollywood stars Ryan Reynolds and Rob McElhenney — gain promotion back into the English Football League.

The former Manchester United goalkeeper came out of retirement in March to sign a short-term deal with Wrexham and played a key role in the team winning the fifth-tier National League.

The 40-year-old Foster agreed to extend his stay at Wrexham for another year but decided, after a 5-5 draw against Swindon on Saturday, that he will quit the game again.

Foster was the most famous player in a Wrexham team that has been thrust into the spotlight because of its A-list owners and for being the subject of a television series that streams worldwide.





Coco Gauff, of the United States, returns a shot to Karolina Muchova, of the Czech Republic, during the women's singles final of the Western & Southern Open tennis tournament in Mason, Ohio. (AP)

# Sports

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'Felt like a Grand Slam'

## Djokovic outlasts Alcaraz for Cincinnati title; Gauff claims women's crown

MASON, Ohio, Aug 21, (AP): Novak Djokovic outlasted Carlos Alcaraz in a thrilling rematch of their Wimbledon final, winning 5-7, 7-6 (7), 7-6 (4) on Sunday to take the Western & Southern Open.

In a match that lasted 3 hours, 49 minutes, the longest best-of-three sets final in ATP Tour history (since 1990), the No. 2-seeded Djokovic avenged his loss last month to the top-ranked Alcaraz and earned his 95th career title, passing Ivan Lendl for third among men in the professional era, dating to 1968. In the women's final, seventh-seeded Coco Gauff became the first teenager in more than 50 years to win the Western & Southern Open with a 6-3, 6-4 victory over Karolina Muchova.

Djokovic was playing his first tournament on U.S. soil in two years because of COVID-19 restrictions. He secured his third Cincinnati championship in six years on his fifth match point when Alcaraz went wide with a forehand return.

"This was one of the most exciting matches I've ever played in any tournament," the winner of a men's-record 23 Grand Slam titles said during the post-match trophy presentation. "It felt like a Grand Slam."

With temperatures hovering near 90 degrees, Djokovic survived the tournament's longest men's match since at least 1990 to become the oldest man to

win the championship. Ken Rosewall was 35 when he won in 1970.

The rematch of Alcaraz's five-set victory at Wimbledon broke the previous Cincinnati record of 2 hours, 49 minutes, set in 2010 as Roger Federer was beating Marley Fish. It's the longest three-set match on the men's tour this season by three minutes.

"I have so much to say, but I'm not sure that I have the energy," Djokovic said, cradling his trophy. He paused and looked at Alcaraz.

"You never give up, do you?" he said. "I love that about you. I hope we meet in New York. That would be fun

### TENNIS

— well, for the fans, not for me."

The U.S. Open begins Aug. 28. Alcaraz, the defending champion, is guaranteed to remain No. 1 heading into the tournament.

The tiebreakers were Alcaraz's fourth and fifth in four matches during the week. He went three sets in every match, while Djokovic didn't drop a set until Sunday.

"The match was pretty close," Alcaraz said. "I'll be back."

Gauff, the 2022 French Open runner-up, earned her first Masters 1000 title when Muchova sailed a forehand return wide on Gauff's fourth match

point. The 19-year-old American tossed her racket in the air and jumped up and down in glee after surviving a 1-hour, 56-minute match played in temperatures approaching 90 degrees.

"This is unbelievable," Gauff said during the post-match trophy presentation. "I'm just happy to be here for this moment."

"I want to congratulate Karolina for an incredible run in this tournament," she added. "Hopefully, we'll play more often, and on a bigger stage than this."

Gauff was the tournament's fourth teenage finalist and first since Vera Zvonareva in 2004. She is the first teenage champion since 17-year-old Linda Tuero in 1968.

After a spotty first set that featured a combined five service breaks, including Gauff's double fault on one game point, Gauff gained command over her Czech Republic opponent with a break in the eighth game.

She fought off two break points in the fourth game of the second set and took control with a break in the next game when Muchova sent a backhand wide. While winning the next game, Gauff caught a break with a winner off the net that left her with her left palm on her racket and looking up at the sky as if she was praying in gratitude.

She missed on three match points in the eighth game before closing it out.



Novak Djokovic, of Serbia, celebrates with the Rookwood Cup as he poses for photos after defeating Carlos Alcaraz, of Spain, during the men's singles final of the Western & Southern Open tennis tournament in Mason, Ohio. (AP)

"When I woke up this morning, the first thing I said was 'Ouch,'" the 26-year-old Muchova said. "I knew it

was going to be a tough task to win, especially against someone like Coco." The French Open runner-up will

celebrate her birthday on Monday by moving to No. 10 on the WTA rankings.

## Lyles wins world title, Cheptegei 'continues' dominance in 10,000

Johnson-Thompson rules heptathlon

BUDAPEST, Hungary, Aug 21, (AP): Noah Lyles calls himself the "Told you're not a 100 guy." That didn't stop him.

In fact, nobody could Sunday at the world championships in what has always been his second-best race. Now, he doesn't see anyone slowing his path to becoming the world's next great Olympic sprinter.

The 26-year-old American reeled in the field to win the 100-meter world title in 9.83 seconds — a victory that puts him in position to be the first man to complete the 100-200 double since Usain Bolt made a habit of it at Olympics and world championships from 2008-16.

Witty, outspoken, unafraid to bet on himself, Lyles might just be the guy to add some fire back to a sprint game where titles have been shuffled between men of few words and names from out of nowhere since Bolt left six years ago. The Paris Olympics are less than 12 months away.

Though not a complete newcomer to the 100, Lyles has a thin resume at that distance.



Katarina

after battling with COVID in the lead-up to U.S. nationals last month.

Behind the scenes, though, things have been changing. Lyles knew he needed more work on the first halves of his 200-meter races to get better at his signature event. That's where the focus went. He said recently his coach, Lance Brauman, was getting excited about the progress and Brauman "is a guy who does not get excited at all."

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That was Bolt's story, too. And though there will never be another Bolt, Lyles isn't afraid to dream big.

He raised eyebrows with an Instagram post earlier this summer in which he declared he wanted to run 9.65 in the 100, a time only Bolt has bettered, and 19.10 in the 200, which would shatter the Jamaican's world record of 19.19. Lyles, whose biggest competition in the 200 is expected to come from 19-year-old Erryon Knighton, currently holds the American record at 19.31.

Defending 100 champion Fred Kerley scoffed at the 9.65 goal, adding some spice to the pre-race news conference by saying if Lyles did that, he'd run faster. Lyles countered: "That's



Noah Lyles, of the United States, celebrates after winning the gold medal in the Men's 100-meter final during the World Athletics Championships in Budapest, Hungary. (AP)

what they all say 'til they get beat."

Lyles didn't even get a chance to do the honor. Kerley got beat in the semi-final round and Lyles' closest competition in the final came from Letsile Tebogo, a 20-year-old from Botswana who became the first African to win a medal in 100 at worlds. He took silver in 9.873, .001 ahead of British national-record holder Zharnel Hughes.

"This is funny for the people, of course," said the reigning Olympic champ, Marcell Jacobs of Italy, who also was targeted in the pre-race trash talk, and also found himself out before the final. "But you have to talk when the race is finished. When the (last) race is finished, not the first."

Other winners on Day 2 in Budapest were Uganda's Joshua Cheptegei, who won his third straight worlds at 10,000; Britain's Katarina Johnson-Thompson, who won her second world heptathlon title; Serbia's Ivana Vuleta in the long jump; and Canada's Ethan Katzberg in a hammer throw that featured the host country's first medal of the meet, a bronze from Bence Halasz.

## Barcelona 'get' late goals to win first official match at temporary new home

MADRID, Aug 21, (AP): Barcelona found a way to win late and guarantee a housewarming celebration at its temporary new home for the season.

With late goals from Pedri and Ferran Torres, Barcelona beat Cadiz 2-0 in the first official match at the Lluís Companys Olympic Stadium in Montjuïc, where the team will play while the Camp Nou undergoes an extensive makeover. Pedri opened the scoring in the 82nd minute and Torres scored in stoppage time.

Barcelona secured its first win of the season despite the absence of coach Xavi and forward Raphinha because of red cards in the 0-0 opening draw at Getafe last weekend. Xavi was handed a two-game suspension for excessively complaining to the referee and Raphinha was sent off for elbowing an

opponent.

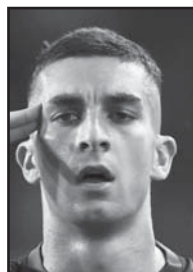
Xavi watched from the stands at the Olympic stadium and said he was happy with the team's new home.

Barcelona, the defending champions, struggled in attack until Pedri found the net with a left-footed touch following a nice give-and-go play with midfielder Ilkay Gundogan, the team's main signing this season. Torres sealed the victory

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with a goal from inside the area after a late breakaway. Robert Lewandowski had a goal disallowed for offside.

The win came before a crowd of 39,603 people at the Lluís Companys, which was the main stadium for the 1992 Barcelona Olympics and can hold 49,000 people — compared to the 99,000-capacity Camp Nou, Europe's largest soccer stadium. The Camp Nou is undergoing a long-delayed overhaul to improve its facilities and add even more seats.



Torres

### Reds play Lee Man

Big-spending Saudi clubs primed to dominate Asian Champions League

SEOUL, South Korea, Aug 21, (AP): Cristiano Ronaldo gets his first taste of Asian competition on Tuesday as Al-Nassr meets Shabab Al-Ahli of Dubai in a Champions League pre-

liminary round playoff with the rest of the continent wondering if big-spending Saudi Arabian clubs can be stopped.

Al-Nassr finished second in its domestic league last season but since signing the five-time Ballon D'Or winner in December, has added more stars this summer. Marcelo Brozovic, Sadio Mane, Alex Telles and Seko Fofana have arrived from Inter Milan, Bayern Munich, Manchester United and Lens respectively.

The club has lost its first two games of the new Saudi Professional League season and Shabab Al-Ahli may be champion of the United Arab Emirates but Al-Nassr is still seen as a strong favorite to progress to the group stage, especially as the single elimination game will take place at its Riyadh home.

"In the past, only Japanese and South-Korean clubs could compete with Saudi clubs," Roel Coumans, who left his position as head coach of Saudi Arabian club Abha in the summer, told Associated Press. "The gap with Saudi teams will become bigger and bigger."

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If Al-Nassr defeats Shabab Al-Ahli, it will give Saudi Arabia four teams in the group stage that starts in September and they will present formidable opposition for the rest of the continent's contenders. Al-Hilal, which as a record four Asian titles, has signed Brazilian superstar Neymar and Fulham striker Aleksander Mitrovic in the past week, with Al-Ittihad adding FIFA Ballon D'Or holder Karim Benzama from Real Madrid as well as N'Golo Kante and Fabinho from Chelsea and Liverpool.

Earlier in August, the new strength of the leading Saudi Arabian teams was clear for all to see at the Arab Club Cup as rivals from Egypt, Morocco, Algeria and elsewhere in the region struggled to compete.

Saudi Arabia dominated the 16-team tournament with three of the four representatives reaching the last four. Al-Nassr lifted the trophy, defeating Riyadh rival Al-Hilal in the final with Ronaldo finishing as tournament top scorer.

With the Asian Champions League split into two geographic zones until the final, there is some hope for the eastern powers.

Urawa Reds of Japan defeated Al-Hilal in the final in May but needs to defeat Hong Kong's Lee Man to progress to the group stage this time.

South Korea's Incheon United meets Vietnam's Haiphong. China will be hoping that both Shanghai Port and Zhejiang will progress to the group stage with victories over Thai opposition, BG Pathum United and Port respectively.

For now though, the focus is on Riyadh and on whether Ronaldo, who won the UEFA Champions League with Manchester United and four with Real Madrid, can lead his new team towards another continental prize.