



REVOLUTIONARY GUARD, ARMY GET NEW BALLISTIC MISSILES

Iran armed drone has Israel reach



In this photo released by the Iranian Presidency Office, President Ebrahim Raisi, second left, listens to Chief of Aviation Industries of Armed Forces Gen. Afshin Khajehfard, as Defense Minister Gen. Mohammad Reza Gharaei Ashtiani, third left, listens, during a ceremony unveiling a drone called the Mohajer-10, Tuesday, Aug. 22, 2023. (AP)

Raisi talks up friendly ties ... repeats cut-the-hand threat

TEHRAN, Aug 22, (AP): Iran's Defense Ministry unveiled a drone on Tuesday resembling America's armed MQ-9 Reaper, claiming that the aircraft is capable of staying airborne for 24 hours and has the range to reach the country's archenemy Israel.

Iran's state-run IRNA news agency published a photograph of the

drone, called the Mohajer-10, on display at a conference marking Defense Industry Day with what appeared to be smoke-machine fog underneath it.

"Mohajer" means "immigrant" in Farsi and has been a drone line manufactured by the Islamic Republic since 1985.

IRNA said the drone is able to fly up to 24,000 feet with a speed of 210 kph (130 mph), carrying a bomb payload of up to 300 kilograms (660 pounds).

It also said the drone could carry electronic surveillance equipment and a camera. Iran's hard-line President Ebrahim Raisi, a protégé of Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, also viewed the drone on Tuesday.

"Today, we can firmly introduce Iran as an advanced and technologic nation to the world," Raisi said in comments aired on state television.

He reiterated Iran's stance about friendly relations with "all countries in the world," adding that Iran's armed forces will cut off any hand that reaches out in an attempt to invade Iran, state TV reported.

The Associated Press could not immediately verify the claims about the drone's capabilities, though an arm of state television shared a video of it taking off from a runway. Long-range drones like the Reaper also require ground stations and satellite communications.

Officials in Israel, which flies its own long-range, high endurance drones, did not immediately respond to a request for comment Tuesday.

Continued on Page 4

Committee charged with coordination

High profile oversight panel formed

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 22: The Cabinet has approved the formation of a coordination committee headed by the Minister of Defense Ahmed Al-Fahad Al-Ahmed Al-Sabah to boost non-oil revenues, reports Al-Qabas daily.

The committee members will be Minister of State for Economic Affairs and Investment, Minister of State for Municipal Affairs, Minister of Commerce and Industry, Minister of Finance, and Dr. Abdulaziz Al-Osaimi and Director of the Macroeconomics and Financial Policy Department at the Ministry of Finance.

The Council assigned the new committee a

number of tasks such as considering all issues related to enhancing and maximizing the state's non-oil revenues in the State of Kuwait, examining work mechanisms and proposals submitted by various parties in this regard, and directing them as required by the higher interest of the country.

This is in addition to supervising the follow-up of the actions taken by government agencies to maximize their revenues and overcome the obstacles that they may face and forming work teams -- if necessary -- to support it in order to accomplish its tasks.

Opinion

Decision-makers ... we need a revolution to renew the laws

By Ahmed Al-Jarallah
Editor-in-Chief, the Arab Times

NewsWatch

STAGNATION continues its course as confusion increases and paralysis advances above everything else. This is due to the fact that the government is shackled by laws issued by its predecessors and cannot deviate from them. At the same time, it seeks to further shackle itself in the absence of a clear existence purpose, or so the majority of observers believe, to get rid of the cocoon in which it found itself.

In all issues raised by the people, there is always a legal obstacle, caused by the deep state that is able to pass all its benefits through the law. The Council of Ministers has no tool through which it can overcome that.

Likewise, the National Assembly is not in a better condition than its predecessor, as it almost surpasses everyone through its threats with the thick baton of interpellations that the government is soon subjected to, which means running around in a vicious circle.

Therefore, the advancement of the country is not considered serious, but it is just a slogan that tickles the feelings of the citizens. This happens while the people are waiting for a firm decision, starting with resolving the problems they suffer from either regarding loans that concern the majority of people, or the physical coercion that results from them, because of an old law that was inherited from the custom that existed when there was no modern state.

The law must be developed in order to suit the changing times, especially when it comes to civil cases and dud cheques that other countries ended a long time ago, whereas Kuwait, or rather the deep state, is still insisting on it to keep benefiting from people's misfortunes.

Those old and outdated laws not only shackle the government, but also society as a whole, and limit individual initiatives, such as the law to prevent coeducation, which annually costs the state more than KD 150 million.

This means there is a waste of half a billion dollars solely to satisfy a strict desire to which governments have submitted to in order to prevent the grilling of some minister. In reality, such an environment did not improve the level of education, but only increased its disadvantages, which is one of the chronic problems in the state.

Also, when the e-government was announced, people were optimistic, thought that Kuwait had started a step forward, and were waiting for the rest of the steps. However, people collided with the documentary cycle "stagnation" based on an outdated law dating back to the 1960s.

This happened while no government moved a finger in facilitating this session, but rather abandoned it because the e-government saves one from moving in and out of about 20 institutions and ministries to complete a transaction.

It is unfortunate that this is the situation in Kuwait when the countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council, and even many around the world, have made great strides in e-governance, to the extent that a citizen there finishes his or her transactions from the comfort of his home or from anywhere in the world. This indicates the extent of backwardness of the Kuwaiti administration which is restricted by many chains of underdevelopment.

Continued on Page 4

Email: ahmed@aljarallah.com

Follow me on:



ahmedaljarallah@gmail.com

KUWAIT CITY: The Ministry of Health confirmed that random field swabs are one of the most important preventive measures to combat the spread of infectious diseases such as meningitis, influenza, Corona viruses and pneumonia, reports Al-Rai daily.

The daily quoting health sources said the practice has been ongoing over the past years and have never been stopped for any reason whatsoever.

The ministry indicated that these swabs give the possibility of identifying the emergence of any infection at its inception, before it spreads and also provides an accurate estimate of the location and type of infection spread in society, and helps take appropriate action to address it, and is being applied in most advanced health systems around the world.

The ministry pointed out that these swabs are optional and not mandatory, so you can refuse to take them if you are asked to do so.

KUWAIT CITY: The courts have registered 10 new lawsuits that include a claim for compensation for flight delays, whether arriving or departing by several airlines, while hearings are being awaited, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

This is due to the psychological and moral damages and suffering that spoils the happiness of travelers for reasons that have nothing to do with them.

ERBIL: The French military suffered a second fatality during an anti-terrorism training mission in Kurdistan region, north Iraq, the Ministry of Peshmerga Affairs of Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) said in a statement on Monday.

Warrant Officer Nicolas La-tourte, who joined the mission of the global coalition against the so-called Islamic State (IS or Daesh) in last May, succumbed to a wound he sustained yesterday; he was training the KRG Peshmerga forces on how to defuse explosive devices. (KUNA)



People visit the Bedouin village of al-Ghuraifa, buried under the sand, about 100 km (62 miles), southeast of Sharjah, United Arab Emirates, Sunday, July 9, 2023. Built in the 1970s, the village was abandoned two decades later as oil wealth transformed the country into a global hub of commerce and tourism, home to the futuristic cities of Dubai and Abu Dhabi. (AP) - See Page 2



Mourners carry the body of 17-year-old Othman Abu Kharj during his funeral in the West Bank city of Jenin, Tuesday, Aug. 22, 2023. Israeli security forces said they conducted an arrest raid in the town of Zababdeh near Jenin and opened fire at those who threw explosives at them. The Palestinian Islamic Jihad militant group claimed Abu Kharj as a fighter. (AP)

Over 200 Palestinians, 30 Israelis killed this year

West Bank military raid claims 17-year-old

UN neutrality hit

'Extra-judicial'

UN reports 200 Afghan killings

ANKARA, Aug 22, (AP): Turkey's foreign minister accused the United Nations of abandoning its neutrality on Tuesday, a day after the U.N. Security Council criticized construction work by Turkish Cypriots inside the buffer zone dividing Cyprus and condemned their assault on U.N. peacekeepers.

In a statement issued Monday, the Security Council described the construction of a road as a violation of the status quo that is contrary to council resolutions. The statement came at the end of emergency closed consultations by the council's 15 members.

Angry Turkish Cypriots last week punched and kicked a group of international peacekeepers that blocked crews working on a road that would encroach on the island's U.N.-controlled buffer zone. The road is designed to connect the village of Arsos, in the Turkish Cypriot north, with the multi-ethnic village of Pyla, which is inside the buffer zone and abuts the Greek Cypriot south.

ISLAMABAD, Aug 22, (AP): More than 200 extra-judicial killings of former Afghan government officials and security forces have taken place since the Taliban took over the country two years ago, according to a U.N. report released Tuesday.

The groups most targeted by the Taliban were former army, police and intelligence forces, according to the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan.

UNAMA documented at least 800 human rights violations against former Afghan government officials and security forces between Aug. 15, 2021, when the Taliban seized power, and the end of June 2023.

JERUSALEM, Aug 22, (AP): Israeli security forces stormed into a town in the north of the West Bank on Tuesday, leading to fighting that killed a 17-year-old Palestinian, according to Palestinian health officials, the latest violence to grip the occupied territory.

Israel also released on Tuesday the results of a military investigation into the death of a soldier killed during its major raid into the Jenin refugee camp last month, concluding that the soldier was killed by a bullet fired by Israeli forces.

The Israeli military conducted an arrest raid before dawn in the town of Zababdeh south of Jenin, local media said. The Palestinian Health Ministry reported that 17-year-old Othman Abu Kharj was fatally shot in the head. The Palestinian Islamic Jihad militant group claimed Abu Kharj as a fighter.

Meanwhile, Israeli security forces were still searching for the Palestinian gunman who carried out a shooting in the northern Palestinian city of Hawara that killed an Israeli father and son on Saturday.

The army said its forces arrested 15 Palestinian suspects in several northern West Bank towns. In Zababdeh, Israeli security forces said they opened fire at those who threw explosive devices at them.

In the southern West Bank, the Israeli army captured two Palestinians who were suspected of carrying out a shooting attack the day before that killed an Israeli woman and seriously wounded a man near the Palestinian city of Hebron.

While recently the vast majority of Palestinian attacks have been concentrated in the northern West Bank, the latest shooting reveals that Palestinian militancy is "spreading to other areas in the center and southern regions," wrote Haaretz military correspondent Amos Harel, describing an explosive mix of forces that risks amplifying the surge in

violence. "Revenge attacks by Jewish terrorists only intensify the mounting tensions," he wrote, referring to the rise in Jewish settler attacks on Palestinians. "The fact there are Cabinet ministers and members of Knesset from the coalition who openly encourage such acts only adds fuel to the fire."

The Israeli military said it confiscated the rifle used to shoot at the victim's car and that the two suspects had confessed to their involvement during interrogation. A car without a license plate that was allegedly used to carry out the attack was found burned north of Hebron, said mayor of the town of Halhoul.

Palestinian media identified the two suspects arrested near Hebron as Saqer and Muhamad al-Shantir.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's far-right government has come under pressure from coalition members that want to exert more control over the occupied West Bank and take harsher measures against Palestinians.

Also:

UNITED NATIONS: The Israeli-Palestinian conflict has killed over 200 Palestinians and nearly 30 Israelis so far this year - already surpassing last year's annual figures and the highest number since 2005, the U.N. Mideast envoy said Monday.

Tor Wennesland told the U.N. Security Council that the upswing in violence is being fueled by growing despair about the future, with the Palestinians still seeking an independent state.

"The lack of progress towards a political horizon that addressed the core issues driving the conflict has left a dangerous and volatile vacuum, filled by extremists on all sides," he said.

While Israelis and Palestinians have taken some actions toward stabilizing the situation, Wennesland said unilateral steps have continued to fuel hostilities.

Day by Day

ALL pertinent records regarding the thief's acts of pilfering an aircraft, appropriating an apartment, and stealing real estate, as well as his acts of deception, have been submitted to the respective government institutions of the nations from which the assets were unlawfully taken.

By decree of the European Union establishment and the United States Treasury, the thief has been barred from entering European nations. Additionally, he has been ousted from a Gulf nation due to substantiated evidence linking him to the activities of the Satanic party associated with malevolent forces and laundering the funds of this party.

The same applies to the countries from which he obtained the nationality or a passport, and they will be aware of his illicit activities.

... Yet tomorrow is another day.

Zahed Matar



NEIGHBORS

LEISURE

Grimmer & glimmer

It wasn't always malls



Above: Houses are seen buried under the sand in the village of al-Ghuraifa. (AP)

Nestled in sand dunes an hour's drive from the skyscrapers of Dubai, a desert village abandoned in the 1990s stands as an eerie relic of the rapid urbanization of the United Arab Emirates.

Built in the 1970s to house semi-nomadic Bedouin, the village of al-Ghuraifa was abandoned two decades later as oil wealth transformed the country into a global hub of commerce and tourism, home to the futuristic cities of Dubai and Abu Dhabi.

In recent years, the ghost village near the town of al-Madam in the Sharjah emirate has become something of a tourist attraction, offering an escape from the concrete jungles of the coastal cities and a glimpse at the Emirates' hardscrabble past.

The village, which comprises two rows of homes and a mosque, "can teach us a lot of the modern history of the UAE," said Ahmad Sukkar, an assistant professor at the University of Sharjah who is part of a team researching the site.

It was built as part of a public housing project after the 1971 formation of the United Arab Emirates, a federation of seven sheikhdoms. The discovery of oil 13 years earlier was just starting to reshape the country.

The village housed around 100 members of the al-Ketbi tribe, Sukkar said.

Continued on Page 3

A house's entrance gate is buried under the sand at the Bedouin village of al-Ghuraifa about 100 km, 62 miles, southeast of Sharjah, United Arab Emirates. Built-in the 1970s, the village was abandoned two decades later as oil wealth transformed the country into a global hub of commerce and tourism, home to the futuristic cities of Dubai and Abu Dhabi. (AP)

editor's choice



Prayer Timings

Fajr	03:56	Asr	15:26
Sunrise ..	05:20	Maghrib ..	18:22
Zohr	11:51	Isha	19:43

Local

Expected weather for the next 24 hours:
By Day: Very hot and relatively humid over coastal areas with light to moderate westerly wind to light variable wind with speeds of 06-30 km/h.

Weather

By Night: Hot to rather hot with light variable wind changing to light to moderate north-westerly wind with speeds of 06-30 km/h.

Station	Max Exp	Min Rec
Kuwait City	46	34

Kuwait Airport	46	30
Abdaly	47	29
Jahra	48	31
Salmiyah	38	34
Ahmadi	39	33
Nuwaisib	45	29
Wafra	47	29

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

Grimmer &

Continued from Page 2

They were one of several Bedouin tribes that until then had led a semi-nomadic existence, raising animals, traveling among the desert oases and visiting Dubai and Abu Dhabi when they were small port towns reliant on fishing and pearl diving.

The modern cement houses, built to ease the transition to settled life, featured local flourishes. The interior walls were brightly colored, and some were adorned with mosaics. The homes also featured spaces where village elders could host local councils, known as "majalis" in Arabic. One house had wallpaper depicting a lush green landscape, a stark contrast to the monotonous sand-scape outside.

It's unclear what exactly sparked the exodus just two decades after the homes were built.

In local lore, the residents were driven away by evil spirits, but Sukkar says it's more likely that they left to seek a better life in the UAE's fast-growing cities. The village had limited access to electricity and water, and was buffeted by sandstorms. Families would have also had to contend with a long commute across the desert to reach government jobs and schools in Dubai.

Nowadays the desert is slowly reclaiming the village. Drifts of sand have blown into the homes, and in some rooms, they obscure walls and nearly reach the ceiling. Only the mosque remains as it was, thanks to regular sweeping by maintenance workers from nearby al-Madam.

Some descendants of the camel-mounted Bedouin who once plied the desert sands still reside in the Emirates' rural stretches, though many now live in cities with glimmering skyscrapers, cavernous, air-conditioned malls and a sprawling network of modern highways. Expatriates from all corners of the earth make up the vast majority of the UAE's population, and some have taken an interest in its humbler past.

On a recent day, tour guides could be seen leading groups of visitors through the abandoned village. It's also been the setting for music videos and social media posts featuring the foreign models, fancy cars and displays of opulence for which Dubai is now best known.

"I wonder why they left," said Nitin Panchal, an Indian expatriate visiting the site. "Could it be a genie, could be black magic? We'll never know."

The municipality recently installed fencing around the perimeter, along with a security gate, garbage bins and a parking lot. Past visitors had left graffiti, scraped décor from the walls and climbed atop fragile roofs for photos.

The new measures have drained some of the mystery from the site and raised the prospect of it becoming yet another tourist attraction in a country filled with them.

Danny Booth, an expatriate from the Isle of Man, a British Crown Dependency in the Irish Sea, said he had decided to "come and have a look before things start to change here."

"Sometimes these places are better left undisturbed, as they lose their charm when they become crowded," he said. (AP)

Temps to soar to 50 C at weekend

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 22: The Director of the Meteorology Department of the General Administration of Civil Aviation, Abdulaziz Al-Qarawi, said the summer rains are due to the high relative humidity and temperature differences between the earth's surface and the upper layers of the atmosphere, and the winds forming cumulus thunderstorm clouds, reports Al-Qabas daily.

Al-Qarawi added, the chances of rain are limited and scarce in some areas that are rapidly forming and quickly fading, accompanied by variable winds, with speeds of up to 60 kilometers per hour.

He pointed out that the chances rain are steadily decreasing but predicted the weather will be dry and very hot, and expects temperature to rise again to 50 degrees Celsius at the weekend.

3 years jail, KD 3,000 fine for unlicensed charitable work

MPs submit bill to organize charities, NGOs

By Saeed Mahmoud Saleh

Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 22: MPs Fares Al-Otaibi, Muhammad Hayef, Hamad Al-Obaid, Mubarak Al-Tasha and Khalid Al-Otaibi have submitted a bill on organizing charities and public benefit associations.

The bill specifies the activities of the above-mentioned organizations in and outside Kuwait; such as supporting the needy, implementing and contributing to humanitarian projects in different fields like education, rescue operations during disasters and wars, health and societal development.

Charities and public benefit associations are allowed to sign cooperation and partnership agreements with local and foreign public institutions, other similar entities, and international and regional organizations according to the regulations stipulated in the executive decree of the bill once ratified, and after obtaining approval from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

They are allowed to collect donations internally and externally for the implementation of licensed charitable projects. They can open branches in Kuwait or overseas after obtaining approval from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

They are prohibited from engaging in any activities unless they obtain a license from the Ministry of Social Affairs, which will open a file for every charity or public benefit association. They are obliged to provide public institutions with copies of these files. The public can access these files on the official website of the ministry.

They are not allowed to implement projects or engage in activities that violate the relevant laws or public morals, collect donations for rescue operation purposes unless they obtain a license, engage in political activities, promote sectarianism, damage the social fabric, interfere in the internal affairs of countries where they carry out humanitarian work, or be involved in political and sectarian disputes.

They are obligated to submit annual reports to the Ministry of Social Affairs and respond to the latter's questions. They are also exempted from tax.

In order to obtain a license, a charity must consist of at least 50 Kuwaiti members above 21 years old who should not have been convicted of committing honor crimes unless they have completed rehabilitation. The license application must include the name of the charity or public benefit association, sources of money and financial audit method.

The Ministry of Social Affairs has the authority to reject an application for the establishment of a charity or public benefit association, or demand for amendment of the organization's basic structure. The ministry should respond within 60 days after submission of the application.

The Board of Directors of a charity or public benefit association shall consist of five to 25 Kuwaiti members who should not receive salary for their work. None of these members could provide services to the organization through their own business or company unless it is done free of charge. A board member should not occupy the same position in more than three charities or public benefit associations.

Charities and public benefit associations are allowed to establish their own union whose regulations will be specified in the executive decree. Their sources of money include donations, grants, charities, Zakat, revenues from the assets and profitable projects of the organizations, and others approved by the Ministry of Social Affairs. The money of charities and public benefit associations are transferred only through the banks accredited by the Central Bank of Kuwait.

Charities and public benefit associations are subject to the oversight of the Social Affairs Ministry, which will assign inspectors with judicial arrest power to check these organizations during official working hour in order to review the files and documents, and then record violations if any.

The Social Affairs minister has the authority to dismiss the Board of Directors for certain reasons and then assign an interim board. If the board is dissolved as per the de-

cision of the minister, fresh elections should be conducted within one year.

The Social Affairs minister has the power to dissolve a charity or public benefit association in the following cases:

- the number of founding members is reduced by half unless the required number is achieved within 90 days,
- failure to fulfill financial obligations,
- violation of this law and involvement in illegal activities,
- suspension of activities for more than one year without valid reasons.

If the organization is dissolved, its assets and money are transferred to Zakat House and Secretariat General of Awqaf at the Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs.

Whoever engages in charitable activities under the name of an unlicensed charity will be imprisoned for three years or fined KD3,000.

Whoever collects donations without obtaining a permit from the Ministry of Social Affairs will be imprisoned for two years or fined KD2,000; and then the collected donations will be confiscated.

Whoever engages in activities that violate the purpose of establishing a charity or concealed important information is imprisoned for one year or fined KD3,000.

Whoever deliberately harms the funds of a charity is imprisoned for five years or fined KD5,000.

The existing charities and public benefit associations must modify their status in order to meet the conditions stipulated in this bill and obtain a license within two years of implementation. The law on collecting donations for public purposes enacted in 1959 is then cancelled.

In another development, MP Muhammad Al-Mahan asked State Minister for Municipal and Communication Affairs Fahd Al-Shulah about the number of cleaning contracts that Kuwait Municipality signed for Wafra residential area from Jan 1, 2017 till date; including the duration, value and name of contractor for each contract.

He wants to know if there is a cleaning contract for the residential area at present, reasons if the answer is 'no', if the Municipality recorded violations committed

by any of the contractors, penalties imposed on erring contractors, and number of complaints submitted by the residents of Wafra residential and agricultural areas since Jan 1, 2017 till date.

MP Hassan Jawhar forwarded queries to HH the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah about the commitment of the government to submit a bill on regulating the salaries and appointment of senior officials. He said the government affirmed its commitment to submit the bill within the first 100 days after presenting its program but it has not done so till date considering more than 200 days have passed. He urged HH the Prime Minister to submit the bill before the next parliamentary session; otherwise, the government will be held responsible for squandering public funds and depleting the State budget.

In addition, MP Shuaib Al-Muwaizri has called on the Ministry of Health to stop randomly taking samples from individuals to make sure they are free of Covid-19. He claimed the World Health Organization (WHO) is implementing a plan aimed at reducing the number of inhabitants on the planet as a prelude to gaining full control over nations through a new pandemic and the administration of fatal vaccines. He urged Minister of Health Ahmed Abdulwahab Al-Awadhi to close the WHO office in Kuwait and conduct investigations on the fatal vaccines.

Furthermore, the Ministry of Information has completed a bill on organizing the information and media sectors. The Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Kuwait Municipality, Communications and Information Technology Regulatory Authority, and Cybercrimes General Department will review the bill and revised it, if necessary.



KUNA photo
 Minister of Information and Minister of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs Abdurrahman Al-Mutairi and Director General of KUNA Dr. Fatima Al-Salem at the KUNA headquarters.

Info minister visits KUNA headquarters

Minister of Information Abdurrahman Al-Mutairi visited Kuwait News Agency (KUNA) headquarters on Tuesday, where he was received by Director General Dr. Fatima Al-Salem.

During the visit, the Minister discussed with Dr.

Fatima ways to develop media services and was briefed on the agency's new AI media service; KUNA Smart Oasis. The Minister praised KUNA's credibility and its role in delivering local and international news objectively. (KUNA)

Other Voices

Friedman and tragedy at Kuwait Airways

By Ahmad alsarraf

When reading the tweets of some deputies, I feel that they are looking for anything that will allow them to tell their constituents, 'Hey, look we are here,' just to stay in the spotlight!

News spread on social media, quoting Al-Rai newspaper, stating that Jazeera Airways is ready to buy 35% of Kuwait Airways.

Representative Shuaib Al-Muwaizri hastened to issue a statement denouncing the attempt to acquire the "national carrier" and warned the government against the consequences of approving the deal. Then it became clear that the news dates back to 8 years, and the deputy should not have believed it in the first place, as this news lacks logic in the first place.

The other distinguished MP, Fayed Al-Jumhour, also confirmed the news, condemning it and anyone who seeks to harm the reputation and credibility of Kuwait Airways, and threatened to interrogate the Prime Minister. I do not know what is the relationship of the Kuwait Airways credibility and reputation with the good intention of a party to buy 35% of it?

The belief in the news about the purchase shows their understanding of things!

What Shuaib does not know, or who wants to buy an asset like the Kuwaitia, is that neither its financial conditions nor its functional structure nor the quality of its aircraft, nor anything in it tempts to buy it, because the size of its problems is greater than the ability or strength of any president or board of directors who manages the company, as it represents the shining model.

What the "government joker" Minister Saad Al-Barrak warned against was that the government is a failed merchant, as its losses began in the early years of its establishment, and it is said that it cost public money more than \$35 billion over 70 years, with repeated raising of its capital and write-off of its loans!

What Al Muwaizri or any party aiming to buy as-

sets of Kuwait Airways is that the latter cannot attract anyone to buy it because of several facts concerning its financial conditions, job organization and the aircraft.

The troubles of Kuwait Airways are beyond the capability of any chairman or board of directors to tackle. Kuwait Airways is a real model of what Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Oil, State Minister of Economic and Investment Affairs and Acting Minister of Finance Saad Al Barrak when he said the government is a failed trader.

Losses of Kuwait Airways have started too early since it was established. It is said that it cost the national economy over KD 35 billion in 70 years and through increasing its capital and writing off its loans.

Outstanding and genius US economist Milton Friedman who won Nobel Prize in 1976 and whose theories concerning free economy and political freedoms are adopted by several countries such as Chile, Estonia, India and Hong Kong said the failure of a private sector company ends up with bankruptcy and dissolution.

He added that the opposite happens with public sector companies pointing out that in such a case, the government pumps money to the company's capital ignoring its frequent failure.

This is exactly what happened with the Kuwait Airways which no one knows definitely how much it cost the Treasury and how big is the corruption committed there.

Such circumstances made it impossible for the honest chairman and most sincere board of directors to reform it especially with the firm domination by Muslim Brotherhood followers backed by their MPs. One of the evidences supporting my vision is the failure to promote the workers or dispose of the useless employees.

In the light of the above mentioned facts, the MPs who threatened to grill HH Prime Minister should be grateful to any party willing to buy Kuwait Airways. If I were in charge, I would accept the offer and furthermore, I would pay compensation to the buyer instead of making him pay the price to the State.

e-mail: a.alsarraf@alqabas.com.kw

Racing against time

Schools repairs continue

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 22: As the concerned authorities in the Ministry of Education are racing against time to complete the readiness of schools for the new academic year, and ensure the requirements for the start of the new academic year are provided, educational sources affirmed that the maintenance teams are working according to the capabilities available to them to carry out the necessary maintenance and repairs in schools, reports Aljarida daily.

They explained that the ministry has a plan to complete the necessary maintenance before the start of the school year on September 10. The concerned sectors have completed the procedures for seven maintenance contracts that include all six educational zones, the ministry's head office, and affiliated central departments. The contracts are in the custody of the State Audit Bureau and awaiting their approval, in preparation for completing their procedures and starting to complete the awarding procedures.

The ministry hopes for the speedy settlement of tenders for the maintenance contracts of the educational zones, in the light of which all required works and maintenance can be carried out, and to ensure the provision of an appropriate educational environment for students.

The ministry may resort to conducting some emergency and rapid maintenance works through direct contracts according to procedures and the regulations that allow it to do so within the budget limits in order to address the necessary problems at the present time until the completion and signing of contract procedures, and the start of their implementation.

The preparation teams formed by the Public Education Sector are working in coordination with the rest of the sectors to ensure that companies are able to carry out their work inside the schools, especially since the work of these teams will continue until the beginning of the school year.

Joint Arab 'efforts' vital to tackle societal perils

CAIRO, Aug 22, (KUNA): Chairman of the Arab Permanent Committee on Human Rights (AHRIC) Talal Al-Mutairi underlined recently that it is essential to coordinate and unify Arab efforts to address threats to the society, family and common sense by legal, political, diplomatic and media means.

Al-Mutairi, who is Kuwaiti Assistant Foreign Minister for Human Rights, made the remark while addressing the 52nd session of the committee, with member states' concerned bodies, human rights agencies and nongovernmental organizations attending.

He said that today's gathering marks 55 years since the AHRIC was launched, urging its members to take it upon themselves to review terms of references, retain gains, coordinate stances, prop up partnerships, ensure unity and address challenges.

He added that the meeting also came as settlers carried on breaking into Al-Aqsa Mosque, aggressions on Palestinian villages continued, religious hatred alarmingly mounted and children's sanctity was still in jeopardy.

He emphasized that amid the current serious threats and challenges, it is imperative to unify ranks and move in an orderly and coordinative way and lead an international initiative to put forward draft resolutions that would serve the region's priorities and interests.

He underscored that Palestine has always been the prime priority of the Arab world, calling on the occupation force to put an end to its occupation of Palestinian territories and to release all Palestinian prisoners immediately.

"This is the voice of wisdom, the voice of logic and the voice of international law," Al-Mutairi said, calling for ensuring accountability, stopping impunity and blatant defiance of international legitimacy.

Furthermore, the Arab human rights panel's chief strongly condemned the desecration of the Holy Quran in the West as a disgraceful and provocative act and unacceptable behavior.

MUTTON BIRYANI

www.mughalmahal.com

ORDER NOW

Calls for development of beaches

Coasts of Kuwait still lack services

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 22: Despite the voices calling for the development of beaches for years so that they can be benefitted from, the coasts of Kuwait still lack the services, plants and activities that can be provided to the public, reports

Al-Qabas daily.

The country's beaches suffer from the ongoing encroachments, environmental neglect and the absence of a supervisory and educational role in monitoring violations, in addition to the lack of interest in providing facilities and services on the beaches in order for the public to benefit from them and

raise the level of tourist attractions.

This was affirmed by experts in environmental affairs and activists who have been monitoring encroachments on the marine environment. They stressed that Kuwait is still suffering from the continued chaos of sewage and untreated water being dumped through the rainwater drainage system into the Kuwait Bay and a number of other areas.

Head of the "Kayak for Kuwait" team and environmental activist Bashar Al-Hunaidi said, "The encroachments on Kuwait's beaches are continuing. The emission of unpleasant odors from the sea water is increasing in many adjacent areas as a result of the continued pouring of sewage water and other liquids into these waters at different periods and times."

Many of the beaches are unfit for use particularly due to the encroachments of building contractors on the coasts and the throwing of waste. Also, many owners of plots and chalets work for elderly people and close the beaches, which is a flagrant encroachment on the environment. There is a clear failure in the process of following up these encroachments and violations from Environment Public Authority (EPA).

Violations

The environmental activity by the volunteers is prominent in monitoring violations and guiding those concerned to stop them. We do not find anyone moving on their own to search for defects and stop the encroachment on the marine environment."

Furthermore, environmental activist Dr. Finis Al-Ajmi stated that Kuwait is one of the few countries that do not have beaches equipped for the public, except in specific areas.

He said, "The beaches are supposed to be completely reorganized. Many of them are now used as private beaches in front of chalets and villas, which is contrary to the law and regulations in force in the country."

Dr. Al-Ajmi highlighted the necessity of rehabilitating the beaches for public interest and evaluating the situation, especially since the beaches in the country lack cleanliness, services, toilets, activity halls, facilities, markets, cafes, restaurants, children's activities and swimming areas.

He stressed the lack of environmental awareness in the matter of preserving the marine environment, adding that environmental protectors must do what is required immediately, especially those concerned in the regulatory authorities, as there is overfishing, snail collecting, and the destruction of beaches with sewage and oil waste from industrial areas, not to mention medical waste.



A view of a beach in Kuwait.

Kuwait supports various humanitarian projects in Gaza

GAZA, Aug 22, (KUNA): Palestine Tomorrow's Society for Community Development announced Tuesday that it will execute humanitarian projects in Gaza with the support of Kuwaiti Al-Bunyan Association For Community Development charity organization.

Chairperson of Tomorrow's Society Manal Syam said in a press release that the projects funded by the Kuwaiti Association are vital for the poor and illness people in Gaza strip.

Five private hospitals will be provided with medical care supplies to enhance the quality of medical services, Syam added.

Other projects aim to provide stable income for poor families where the women are breadwinners

by distributing sewing machines to work on and enhance their economic status.

Syam also noted that the Kuwaiti Association is in charge of securing fresh water projects to Palestinian families' homes in addition to rehabilitation and restoration of housing units.

The chairperson hailed the Amir of Kuwait and its people for the brave embrace of the Palestinian cause.

She affirmed that Kuwaiti institutes are one of the major contributors for the Palestinian people expressing gratitude for Al-Bunyan Association for Community Development for their new projects in Gaza strip.

Initiatives using innovative methods

Kuwait will present enhanced environmental awareness, sustainability in Expo 2023 Doha

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 22, (KUNA): Kuwait's participation in Expo 2023 Doha for horticulture will enhance environmental awareness and sustainability in the country, said the Environment Public Authority (EPA).

In a press statement on Tuesday, EPA Acting Director General and Kuwait's general commissioner to Expo 2023 Doha Engineer Sameera Al-Kanderi said that Kuwait seeks to achieve balance between economic development and preserving natural environment.

During the event, Kuwait will present a number of initiatives on protecting the environ-



KUNA photo
Engineer Sameera Al-Kanderi, EPA Acting Director General and Kuwait's general commissioner to Expo 2023 Doha.

presented using innovative methods with different events to bring environmental awareness to visitors and encourage them to take serious measures to protect the environment, said Al-Kanderi. She added that Kuwait is committed to achieve the UN's sustainable development goals and is cooperating on an international level in the field of horticulture and environmental development.

The Expo 2023 Doha for horticulture is the first event of its kind to be held in a GCC country. The expo will kick off on October 2 until March 28, 2024 under the theme "Green Desert, Better Environment."

ment, fighting desertification and creating a sustainable environment in the country, she noted.

The content will be

TGS presents Mazen Al Ansari

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 22: This Thursday, The Guest Show (TGS) is honoured to feature Mazen Al Ansari, former Assistant Undersecretary for Foreign Media at the Ministry of Information.

Al Ansari has a long successful track record in broadcast media. He has been in the business of communication and broadcast for more than three decades. Over the years, he moved through the ranks of the Ministry of Information looking after its Foreign Media division. He is also actively involved in representing Kuwait at various Expos.

Apart from media and broadcasting, Al Ansari has another passion - golf. To him goes the credit for popularising golf as a sport in Kuwait. In this episode of The



The Guest Show poster.

Guest Show, Mazen Al Ansari speaks to Chaitali B Roy about his journey, the changing business of communication, the impact of social media on traditional media, the importance of honesty

and credibility in media, the role of media towards fulfilling Kuwait Vision 2035, his passion for golf, its development as a sport in Kuwait and the rise of young, talented Kuwaiti golfers.

Africa Cyber Surge II operation

Kaspersky assists INTERPOL in operation to 'disrupt' cybercrime in African nations

DUBAI, Aug 22: Kaspersky has supported INTERPOL with threat intelligence data in its Africa Cyber Surge II operation, which enabled investigators to identify compromised infrastructure and apprehend threat actors suspected of cybercrimes across the African region. The operation resulted in the arrest of 14 perpetrators and the identification of network infrastructure, linked to financial losses of more than \$40 million.

The Africa Cyber Surge operation is a continuous multi-stakeholder effort aimed at fighting cybercrime and protecting communities in the region. The first part of the Africa Cyber Surge operation, in which Kaspersky has also taken part, was carried out from July to November 2022, and resulted in a series of operational and investigative activities against the threat actors behind the cybercrimes in the African region.

The Africa Cyber Surge II operation was launched in April 2023 and lasted for four months, spanning across 25 African countries. The action was undertaken by INTERPOL's Cybercrime Directorate, under the auspices of the INTERPOL Africa Cybercrime Operations desk, and INTERPOL's Support Programme for the African Union (ISPA) in relation to AFRIPOL. The effort was also supported by the UK Foreign Commonwealth and Development Office, the German Federal Foreign Office, and the Council of Europe.

Together with INTERPOL's other private sector partners, Kaspersky has shared with the international agency indicators of compromise (IoCs), including malicious command and control servers, phishing links and domains, and scam IPs. As a result, INTERPOL streamlined

cooperation between African law enforcement agencies to investigate and disrupt cyber criminals suspected of cyber extortion, phishing, business email compromise and online scams.

"The Africa Cyber Surge II operation has led to the strengthening of cybercrime departments in member countries as well as the solidification of partnerships with crucial stakeholders, such as computer emergency response teams and Internet Service Providers. This will further contribute to reducing the global impact of cybercrime and protecting communities in the region," said Jürgen Stock, INTERPOL Secretary General.

"In its mission to build a safer world, Kaspersky has been giving due credit to the importance of multilateral cooperation, involving the private sector, international law enforcement and national authorities," commented Yuliya Shlychkova, Public Affairs Director at Kaspersky. "Only by harnessing the power of effective private-public partnership, can we give an impetus to the further strengthening of the cybersecurity industry in the African region to ensure that African countries can realize their outstanding potential without hindrance and regard for cybercrimes."

"As digital systems, Information Communication Technologies and Artificial Intelligence grow in prominence, it is urgent that public and private actors work hand in hand to prevent these technologies from being exploited by cybercriminals. Coordinated operations such as Cyber Surge are necessary to disrupt criminal networks and build individual, organizational and society-wide levels of protection," said AFRIPOL's Acting Executive Director, Ambassador JalelChelba.

Decision-makers ...

Continued from Page 1

There is no doubt that getting rid of these restrictions is easy, if there is a will to do so. For example, they are today talking about housing cities, when they should instead learn from the delay in issuance of building orders for about 30,000 homes in various new areas. Therefore, the tedious conditions will prevent the implementation of these projects, something that the neighboring countries solved years ago.

Also, there are laws that restrict people's freedom. As soon as someone publishes an article, a tweet, or even an opinion, restrictions are placed on him because the law that was put in place for the interests of some parliamentary blocs in the past is still stifling people.

Indeed, there must be a revolution against all outdated laws, as there is no solution for the government except to work with an open mind, be a pioneer in that matter, and undermine the legal legacy inherited from the deep state, as it has brought all institutions to the point of impotence and even paralysis.

Iran armed

Continued from Page 1

Iran has in the past captured U.S. drones or pieces of them, but there's no evidence that it has taken a General Atomics' Reaper, which is flown by the U.S. Air Force and allied American nations as a "hunter-killer" drone that can operate at high altitudes for long hours and fol-

low a target before attacking. North Korea in July showed off drones mirroring the Reaper, possibly designed from publicly available information about the aircraft.

In December 2011, Iran seized an RQ-170 Sentinel flown by the CIA to monitor Iranian nuclear sites after it entered Iranian airspace from neighboring Afghanistan. Iran later reverse-engineered the drone to create their own variants.

In 2019, Iran shot down a U.S. Navy RQ-4A Global Hawk in the Strait of Hormuz amid high tensions over its collapsed nuclear deal with world powers.

The Reaper also carries special significance for Iran, as one reportedly carried out the 2020 strike in Baghdad that killed Qassem Soleimani, a top Iranian general in its paramilitary Revolutionary Guard.

Iran separately said it had provided two types of ballistic missiles to its army and the Guard on Tuesday, including one named for Soleimani.

Iran has unveiled a series of drones it describes as capable of long-endurance flights over the last several years. It remains unclear how they've been used in combat.

But other Iranian drones have been a key element of Russia's continued war on Ukraine. Tehran has offered a series of contradictory explanations about the drones, first denying they supplied them to Moscow and then claiming they sold drones only before the war began. However, the volume of drones used in the conflict show a steady supply by Iran of the bomb-carrying weapons in the war.

In June, the White House said Iran is providing Russia with materials to build a drone manufacturing plant east of Moscow as the Kremlin looks to lock in a steady supply of weaponry.

August

Room Promotion

Weekdays (Saturday - Wednesday)	
Queen Cabana (2 persons inclusive of breakfast) per night.	2 Bedroom Chalet (4 persons inclusive of breakfast) per night.
NOW	NOW
BHD 57.173/-net	BHD 128.000/-net
Weekends (Thursday & Friday)	
Queen Cabana (2 persons inclusive of breakfast) per night.	2 Bedroom Chalet (4 persons inclusive of breakfast) per night.
NOW	NOW
BHD 65.000/-net	BHD 145.000/-net

Promo period from 1st – 31st August 2023 Terms & conditions apply*

LOCAL

'Increase in pace of deportation of expats is to protect country'

Narcotics Control Dept seizes 2-kg of pure heroin

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 22, (Agencies): The pace of deportation expatriates who violate the residency law, those involved in criminal and misdemeanor cases, and those who are administratively deported for the public interest, has been accelerated by a deci-

sion issued by the First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Talal Al-Khaled with the aim of consolidating security and purifying the country from marginal labor and anyone who attempts to transgress the law, reports Al-Qabas daily.



Al-Qabas photo

Some of the expatriates being taken for deportation.



Muraleedharan

Muraleedharan to visit Kuwait

India's Minister of State for External Affairs and Parliamentary Affairs, V. Muraleedharan will pay an official visit to Kuwait on Aug 23-24, 2023. This will be his second official visit as Minister of State for External Affairs to Kuwait.

During the visit, the minister will hold high level discussions with Kuwaiti ministers and dignitaries. He will also interact with various Indian community organisations and

a wide cross section of members of community including from the fields of business, health, education and other professionals.

India and Kuwait share historically warm and close bilateral ties and this visit is expected to further deepen the strong partnership between the two countries since India is amongst the largest trading partners of Kuwait and Kuwait is a major supplier of oil for India.

CITRA blocks 2,426 violating websites

CSC lifts ban on hiring foreigners for 773 jobs in Ministry of Health

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 22: The Civil Service Commission (CSC) has lifted the ban on hiring non-Kuwaitis for 773 vacancies in the Ministry of Health, reports Al-Anba daily.

The daily obtained a copy of the CSC's letter to the ministry; stating that the ban was applied on 46 slots for doctors, 708 for nursing staff, 13 for technicians and six for pharmacists.

The CSC instructed the Health Ministry not to fill up these positions until the end of the legal period for paying the leave balance of the outgoing staff.

It added the Ministry of Finance should not remove these job slots from the budget of the Ministry of Health for the next fiscal year.

Websites blocked: The Communications and Information Technology Regulatory Authority (CITRA) has blocked 2,426 websites since the beginning of the year in response to the escalating trend of websites non-compliant with laws in terms of content and regulatory standards, reports Al-Rai daily.

The daily added, during the same period, five requests were granted for the removal of these blocks. Within the framework of vigilant oversight, CITRA collaborates with other government institutions and relevant entities to identify websites that warrant blocking. To facilitate this, the authority has enacted regulations that delineate procedures for obstructing prohibited electronic content. This effort aligns with its mandate to formulate internet access policies and protocols.

The sources highlighted that since the start of the year, CITRA received a total of 2,431 website-blocking reports from various sources. Notably, government agencies led the roster of informants during this period, accounting for 1,651 reports, constituting roughly 68 percent of the overall tally.

Private entities followed suit with 688 reports, contributing approximately 28.3 percent, while individual submissions made up the remainder with 92 reports, totaling about 3.8 percent.

The submitted reports to CITRA encapsulated a range of concerns, spanning breaches of local laws, intellectual property and publishing right infringements, instances of malware, electronic phishing, and inappropriate content.

Among the counterfeit websites subjected to blocking were approximately 33 imitating the Ministry of Commerce, 22 posing as Kuwait Post, 14

operating under the guise of the Kuwait Stock Exchange, and three fraudulent websites falsely using the names of the Ministry of Interior and other governmental institutions.

□ □ □

Problems to cut salaries: Despite the government's issuance of directives aimed at significantly reducing the salaries of oversight bodies' boards of directors even prior to the elections, the concerned ministries have not taken substantive actions in this regard for various reasons. One of the primary reasons is the hesitancy to nominate competent individuals for these positions, reports Al-Rai daily.

Reliable sources said the directives that were issued called for salary reductions; however, implementing these reductions within the current councils proves challenging due to legal considerations stemming from previous judicial rulings related to Kuwaiti employees. This indicates that the implementation may be postponed until the end of the terms of current councils and upon the approval of new council formations.

The sources emphasized the need for a gradual and deliberate implementation approach. The projected savings resulting from salary reductions within these bodies are estimated to range between 3 to 5 million dinars, a relatively modest figure.

However, this endeavor also carries the risk of compromising the quality of work. It was noted that addressing this matter necessitates a balanced approach, ensuring fairness in remuneration, which holds considerable significance. It has been recognized as a pivotal issue and is considered one of the government's focal points in the upcoming period across ministries and agencies.

Nevertheless, the distinctive nature of oversight bodies might call for a unique arrangement.

The sources highlighted that individuals who hold stable financial and administrative positions are unlikely to accept nominations for these bodies unless the benefits offered can cover their specific responsibilities, as customary.

There is an implication that immediate implementation of the salary reduction decision could lead to an influx of legal claims and lawsuits, as employees seek reassurances about the preservation of their rights and job-related remuneration.

Deportees

The number of deportees is likely to cross the 35,000 barrier by the end of 2023.

Dozens of drug users and promoters were arrested during the past week and referred to the deportation center.

The source highlighted the strict instructions issued by Sheikh Talal Al-Khaled to intensify efforts to tighten the security, adjust the demographics, and purify the country from random employment, adding that penalties will be applied on any company or sponsor that covers up for violators.

He explained that the General Administration for Residence Affairs Investigation came at the forefront of the security departments that referred expatriates for deportation due to the expiry of their residency permit or for the violation of the labor law, and other reasons. The Public Security Sector ranked second in referring expatriates for deportation.

The current year witnessed the largest movement of deportation of expatriates.

The number of expatriates deported due to the use and peddling of narcotic substances has increased significantly since the beginning of this year.

The plan drawn up by the General Department of Residence Affairs Investigation about six months ago bore fruit and resulted in the arrest of thousands of marginal workers, residency law violators and those involved in crimes.

2-kg heroin seized: The Ministry of Interior has announced on Tuesday a significant achievement by the General Department for Narcotics Control. Their proactive efforts have successfully thwarted an attempt by drug dealers and promoters to smuggle approximately two kilograms of pure heroin into the country.

In a statement released by the General Department of Security Relations and Media, the ministry explained that this accomplishment is a result of the comprehensive security endeavors carried out by the criminal security sector. The intensified focus on search and investigation operations has been instrumental in preventing the entry of narcotic substances into the nation. These measures are crucial in safeguarding the population against the hazards posed by such illicit activities.

The ministry reported that the diligent efforts of the Anti-Narcotics unit led to the disruption of the aforementioned smuggling operation. An individual of Asian nationality was apprehended while attempting to introduce around two kilograms of pure heroin into the country. This illicit substance was concealed within a postal parcel dispatched through an air freight company. Ingeniously, the contraband was hidden within steel tubes to evade detection.

The ministry affirmed that the apprehended suspect and the seized contraband have been handed over to the appropriate legal authority for necessary legal actions. The ministry underlined the determination of the security forces to proactively combat drug dealers and smugglers. A strong message is being sent to anyone attempting to jeopardize the well-being of the nation's youth; there will be zero tolerance for such actions.

The ministry called upon the public to collaborate with security personnel by promptly reporting any suspicious activities or negative phenomena. They can do so by dialing the emergency phone number (112) or utilizing the hotline of the General Administration for Drug Control at 1884141. By working together, the aim is to create a safer environment for everyone in the country.

diwaniya



A DIGEST OF PUBLIC OPINION

'Motives tied to govt's bid to evade responsibilities over employment'

"AN announcement has been made regarding the resurgence of the privatization initiative, commencing with the Shuaiba station. Concurrently, licenses for various professions have been unveiled, and a commitment to bolster the local product has been declared," columnist **Khaled Abdullah Al-Qabas** wrote for Al-Qabas daily.

"This series of events unfolded over a span of three days. The motives behind these actions extend beyond mere economic objectives; and, they signify the government's attempt to evade its responsibilities pertaining to public employment. This move comes after a series of unsuccessful administrations that were unable to advance the development of indigenous talent within this sector.

Noteworthy points include -- remuneration doesn't solely correspond to labor; it can also function as a means of wealth distribution; the Gulf nations have invigorated their public sectors, rendering them integral components of their national economic landscape; these nations serve as prime examples of how such sectors can flourish.

"It's unlikely that the private sector will be able to significantly accommodate domestic employment. Nationals face competition from a substantial influx of expatriates willing to accept lesser benefits.

"Europe leans on expatriates to fuel its private sector, with its own citizens predominantly occupying supervisory roles. The public sector is primarily indigenous. A considerable portion of their populace benefits from subsidies and light occupations. Their commitment to their citizens is underscored by the absence of abundant resources like oil.

"Regarding the unveiling of professional licenses, it's worth noting that from firsthand experience, its effectiveness is questionable, saying a conducive environment should be provided by the government to enable citizens to choose vocations that align with their passions.

"Given these considerations, any form of privatization is met with resistance, and the potential for catastrophic failure over an extended period is evident. To succeed, the private sector must guarantee through legislation that Kuwaitis receive fair wages, reasonable working hours, and job security.

"Failing such measures, the government must bear the responsibility of governing the state in alignment with the values of a society that transcends material wealth. The prosperity derived from such wealth should correspond to affording citizens stimulating, gratifying, opulent, and comfortable work environments.

"Notably, the past six decades have witnessed a select few benefiting from this abundance, while the majority grapples with exclusion, conflict, inadequate services, and prejudicial treatment.

"In conclusion, efforts to establish a new power structure wherein both government and commerce reign over the populace, and are in turn subject to their dominion, is categorically rejected. Conversely, any progress from a populist perspective is praiseworthy and essential."

Also:

"A short while ago, the Education Committee of the National Assembly organized a panel discussion to promote a proposed law that activates the Supreme Education Council. Its aim is to govern the educational system by limiting conflicts of interest, minimizing the powers of the competent minister, and distributing educational tasks according to an organizational structure that guarantees soundness and correctness of decisions," columnist Dr. **Khaled Al-Saifi** wrote for Al-Anba daily.

"The method of presenting the law to the specialists and those interested, and transmitting it on the screen of the Council's channel, is considered an appreciated initiative that established a positive precedent in involving public opinion in the formation and development of legislative work, as the attendees discussed and expressed their observations on the law presented in an effective manner that is expected to be met with a similar interaction from the adopters of the law and members of the educational committee.

"Despite our participation in the discussion of the

law, the time did not allow us to present all the observations and ideas, the most important of which is the dismantling of the Ministry of Education (the ministries of Education and Higher Education) and placing its responsibility under the management of several ministers instead of the current situation, where the amount of responsibilities and tasks are entrusted to one minister.

"It will not help him in running the ministry and following up on its daily work, not to mention development and improving its performance according to well-studied plans and procedures that are feasible and beneficial to the educational body in the country, and with paths that keep pace with the ongoing challenges and are linked to the labor market and its requirements.

"How can we expect the success of a minister responsible for this number of public and private universities, many colleges and institutes, 1,300 schools and cultural offices abroad, an academic accreditation body and a research institute, and the affairs of thousands of affiliates of these institutions, including students, teachers, teaching and training staff members, administrators, researchers and scholarship students, and the consequences of that?

"This is in addition to holding meetings with committees in parallel with attending the long sessions of the National Assembly and what this entails in terms of political alignment and parliamentary pressure? It is a heavy legacy and a great burden that no one person can be held accountable for, regardless of his abilities, experience and administrative wisdom.

"This dilemma does not have a ready and clear solution, except that the intervention made by a member of the National Assembly a few days ago related to amending the constitution to allow an increase in the number of government ministers, opened the way for suggesting that the sectors affiliated to the ministries of Education and Higher Education be distributed to more than one minister, for example the responsibility of public education, which is represented in schools and educational areas, is to be assigned to a separate ministry.

"Likewise, government universities and colleges must have a full-time minister, a third minister specialized in external and internal scholarships, and another minister for scientific research who supervises research institutes, studies, and specialized libraries.

"These ministers must be placed under a higher council for education headed by the prime minister. Thus, we will have a mini-government for educational institutions that will guarantee joint coordination in their work and draw up general policies for education."

□ □ □

"His Highness the Prime Minister took good steps when he decided to freeze exceptional pensions and issued a directive on the need to make programs for the improvement of the living conditions of retirees, provided all those concerned are covered," columnist **Abdulmohsen Al-Husseini** wrote for Al-Anba daily.

"The correct decision of His Highness the Prime Minister is in response to the question of MP Dr Jenan Bushehri. Obviously, he wants his decisions to be in line with the people's wishes. His decision is based on what he deems to be the retirees' need -- someone who will pay attention to their needs and feelings. This group is considered one of the most important human components.

"This decision came at the right time as it aims to improve the conditions of retirees. His Highness the Prime Minister felt the need to take care of retirees. We salute His Highness the Prime Minister for his kind initiative. We hope that he will continue adopting development projects in line with the political leadership's plan to correct the path in the interest of the people.

"We must also salute Bushehri for adopting projects beneficial to the citizens. We hope this will be a good initiative for the National Assembly and Council of Ministers to continue their march towards improving the conditions of retirees, employees and all segments of society, in order to achieve the desired goal of improving the living conditions of all citizens.

"As stated by His Highness the Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad -- may God protect him: 'There is no longer room for wasting efforts in conflicts, settling scores and fabricating crises.'"

— Compiled by Mai Elsoukay

'Undertaking signing must'

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 22: The Acting Undersecretary of the Ministry of Education Osama Al-Sultan issued a circular to mandate those covered by the provisions of the disclosure of financial assets in the state authorities to sign an undertaking to submit disclosure declarations upon assuming the covered job capacity and upon its end, reports Al-Rai daily.

He stressed that all ministry employees in leadership positions and at the manager or higher levels must submit an updated financial disclosure statement within 60 days from the end of every three years for those who remain in office.

Al-Sultan indicated that the forms designated for this purpose are available on the website of the Kuwait Anti-Corruption Authority (Nazaha) - www.nazaha.gov.kw.

In the circular, he explained the steps for applying and obtaining the financial disclosure form on Nazaha site or on the government's Sahel application, for those required to sign form No. 1 and submit an undertaking for presenting the first financial disclosure declaration or updating it in order to assume the capacity upon appointment, promotion, and secondment, or those who lost the capacity.

RECALL INFORMATION

Mercedes-Benz Cars
MODEL: EQS (297 platform) & S-Class (223 platform)
Model year: 2022

RECALL REASON
Mercedes-Benz AG has determined that on certain S-Class (223 platform) and EQS (297 platform) vehicles, the monitoring software of the Electronic Stability Program (ESP) might not meet specifications. Under certain conditions, the ESP monitoring software could erroneously determine a fault condition. In that event, the ESP fault response would limit the functionality of the vehicle's dynamics control systems (ABS, ASR, ESP, EBD) and the speedometer would indicate a speed of 0 km/h (0 mph), regardless of the actual vehicle speed. Thus, the risk of an accident would increase. Legal requirements might not be met.

REMEDY
As a precautionary measure, monitoring software of Electronic Stability program (ESP) 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 1-887-888
Mercedes-Benz Service Centre - Al Shuwahh Industrial Area - 9 Street
Mercedes-Benz Service Centre - Al Shuwahh 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.

O-RAN ALLIANCE welcomes Saudi's Salam Mobile as newest operator member

The O-RAN ALLIANCE, fulfilling its mission to transform Radio Access Networks (RAN) to be open, intelligent, virtualized and fully interoperable, today announced that Salam Mobile has joined as its 33rd operator member, extending the world-wide community of mobile network operators committed to deployment of O-RAN.

Salam Mobile recently announced plans to collaborate with the Open RAN ecosystem within the Open RAN network deployment and operations to power Salam's ambition to transform its existing mobile offering by providing a richer customer experience and

unlocking new possibilities for Saudi Arabia's digitally driven generation in support of the Kingdom's digital transformation journey.

"Operators are continuing to advance open RAN around the globe, as demonstrated by increasing membership in the O-RAN ALLIANCE," said Alex Jinsung Choi, Chairman of the Board, O-RAN ALLIANCE. "We are especially pleased to welcome Salam Mobile as the second member from the Middle East region, where we see significant potential for this technology to help operators develop and launch innovative and sustainable services." "We believe that the future of the tel-

ecom industry will be more open, virtualized, cloud-native, intelligent, and software-centric. Salam joined O-RAN ALLIANCE to collaborate with the Open RAN ecosystem and build a fully automated, resilient, and self-driven open radio access network," said Ahmed H. AlGhamdi, CTO of Salam.

Salam is a leading homegrown telecommunications company based in Saudi Arabia, recently recognized as the Kingdom's fastest growing and most innovative telecom brand. Salam has operated one of the region's most established telecom networks since 2005. It provides market-leading next-

generation enterprise and wholesale ICT solutions for business, government, and local and international carriers, as well as fixed and mobile services for Saudi Arabia's new digital generation.

The O-RAN ALLIANCE is a world-wide community of more than 300 mobile operators, vendors, and research & academic institutions operating in the Radio Access Network (RAN) industry. As the RAN is an essential part of any mobile network, the O-RAN ALLIANCE's mission is to re-shape the industry towards more intelligent, open, virtualized and fully interoperable mobile

networks. The new O-RAN specifications enable a more competitive and vibrant RAN supplier ecosystem with faster innovation to improve user experience. O-RAN based mobile networks at the same time improve the efficiency of RAN deployments as well as operations by mobile operators. To achieve this, the O-RAN ALLIANCE publishes new RAN specifications, releases open software for the RAN, and supports its members in integration and testing of their implementations.

For more information, please visit www.o-ran.org. (Business Wire)

Market Movements

22-08-2023

	Change	Closing pts		Change	Closing pts
UAE - DFM	+0.37	4,088.52	PHILIPPINES - PSEI	-1.24	6,212.39
JAPAN - Nikkei	+0.92	31,856.71	SAUDI - Tadawul	-0.27	11,377.55
PAKISTAN - KSE 100	+0.14	47,516.39			
EGYPT - EGX 30	+1.65	18,216.63			

Business

SRMG Ventures announces strategic investment in Anghami, MENA's leading music and entertainment streaming platform

RIYADH, Saudi Arabia, Aug 22, (Business Wire): SRMG Ventures, the venture capital arm of SRMG, has announced a \$5 million investment in Anghami, the leading music and entertainment streaming platform in the MENA region. An investment by the MENA region's largest integrated media group in Anghami marks a significant development in the region's rising music and audio industry. SRMG Ventures will bolster Anghami's growth trajectory through its extensive media reach, content library, and portfolio of leading assets in audio/podcasts and enable it to capture a larger share in the fast-growing sector that is forecasted to reach \$700M in 2026.

SRMG Ventures Announces Strategic Investment in Anghami, MENA's Leading Music and Entertainment Streaming Platform (Graphic: AETOSWire)

Anghami has established itself as the region's leading music and entertainment streaming platform. With 120 million registered users (a significant increase from 75 million users in 2021), a substantial subscriber base and a catalogue comprising more than 100 million songs, Anghami is the go-to platform for Arabic and International music, podcasts and entertainment.

Since launching in 2012, Anghami has broadened its portfolio beyond mu-

sic streaming. It now provides in-house productions, branded music and video content, concerts and live events, a record label for Arab artists, podcasts, a music lounge with live entertainment, exclusive and original Arabic content, along with its renowned music streaming service.

SRMG Ventures' investment in Anghami reflects its unique and leading position in the promising music and audio segment of the media industry. The MENA music and audio industry is forecasted to grow at a CAGR of 11%, outpacing the global market. This rapid growth, further highlighted by the rising prominence of Arab stars and local talent, coupled with the strategic presence of international labels including Warner, Universal, and Sony, is cementing MENA's position as a pivotal player in the global music landscape.

Anghami's breadth of data and its leading distribution capabilities present compelling collaboration opportunities with SRMG. Billboard Arabia, the latest addition to SRMG's media portfolio, will introduce several charts using data from the leading digital streaming platforms - including Anghami - to highlight the artists and songs driving the global and regional music industry. In addition, Thmanyah, Independent Arabia, and Hia, all notable audio content creator outlets under SRMG,

are already present within the Anghami platform, setting the stage for continued collaboration between SRMG and Anghami.

"Audio consumption is growing fast in the MENA region. In 2022 alone, the market size for audio increased by 35%. This demand coupled with the commercial opportunity it presents makes digital audio and media one of the investment priorities for SRMG Ventures. These opportunities are also demonstrative of our strategy and commitment to support and develop the media ecosystem, act as a catalyst for further growth and enhancement of SRMG's offerings and services. Today, Anghami has been able to secure one of the largest user bases in audio streaming in the region, and has developed an impressive platform with extensive technological capabilities - a testament to the leadership of founders Elie Habib and Eddy Maroun. We're looking forward to working closely with the Anghami team to realize our shared vision of elevating the region's media and entertainment industry."

"This investment from SRMG Ventures marks a significant milestone for Anghami. We have continually evolved to meet our audience's changing demands and support the region's rising entertainment and music industry. Working together with SRMG, a

leader and innovator in regional media, Anghami will be able to unlock further opportunities to champion the music ecosystem. This partnership will propel regional artists to greater heights, expand their global reach, and create new touchpoints for our users and artists alike."

SRMG Ventures' investment in Anghami aligns with the Group's strategy to invest in businesses and areas of commercial growth, focusing on media creators, immersive and interactive entertainment, and digital media platforms and enablers that are at the forefront of technological and creative innovation. SRMG Ventures' inaugural investments included Telfaz11, a Saudi based creative media studio, and Vuz, a leading VR-enabled social media application. As part of the investment agreement, SRMG will be invited to join Anghami's board of directors and will have the opportunity to increase its investment in Anghami in the future.

SRMG is the largest integrated media group from the MENA region. With a +50-year legacy responsible for many regional firsts, SRMG has built a portfolio of over 30 outlets - including Asharq Al-Awsat, Asharq Network which includes Asharq News and Asharq Business with Bloomberg, Arab News, Independent Arabia, Sayi-

daty, Hia and more.

Through its diversified platforms, SRMG brings quality news and information to an audience of millions across 4 continents in 7 languages. SRMG provides access to the biggest stories and issues, including exclusive news and in-depth analysis in an innovative way to help convey all regional and global events.

A champion of regional creativity, ideas, and innovation, SRMG has now expanded beyond media - diversifying its business to include book publishing, events and experiences, research and advisory, content production, venture capital and more. Leveraging its experience and knowledge of the region - and supported by global talent and partners - SRMG aims to unlock the possibilities of the future.

For more information, please visit: <https://www.srmg.com>, : Media Contact: Senior Communications Manager, SRMG Email: anthony.dykes@srmg.com

Mobile: +966 53 780 3028

The first, most established and fastest growing music technology platform in the Middle East and North Africa region, Anghami is the go-to destination for Arabic and International music, podcasts and entertainment. With an extensive ecosystem of music, podcasts, events and more, An-

ghami provides the tools for anyone to create, curate and share their voice with the world. Launched in 2012, Anghami was the first music-streaming platform in MENA to digitize the region's music. Today, it has the largest catalog comprising more than 100 million songs and licensed content from leading Arabic labels, independent artists and global distributors, available for 120 million registered users. Anghami has established 40+ telco partnerships to facilitate subscriptions and customer acquisitions, in parallel to building long-term relationships with, and featuring music from, major music labels including Universal Music Group, Sony Music Entertainment, Warner Music Group and the Merlin Network. Anghami is constantly licensing and producing new and original content. Headquartered in Abu Dhabi, Anghami has offices in Beirut, Dubai, Cairo, and Riyadh and operates in 16 countries across MENA. It has recently expanded into the US and Canada, with Europe in the pipeline. It is the only service available in English, Arabic and French, and remains close to its customer base, not only thanks to its pan-regional presence but also via the 56 million user data points it generates every day.

To learn more about Anghami, please visit: <https://anghami.com>.

Wall St drifts a day after a rare 'climb' for August

Asian stocks follow Wall Street higher

NEW YORK, Aug 22, (AP): Wall Street is holding relatively steady Tuesday ahead of a couple potentially market-shaking events later in the week.

The S&P 500 was 0.1% lower in midday trading, coming off a rare August gain that was powered by Big Tech stocks Monday. The Dow Jones Industrial Average was down 132 points, or 0.4%, at 34,333.1, as of noon Eastern time, and the Nasdaq composite was 0.3% higher.

Stocks have struggled this month as yields have shot upward in the bond market, which cranks up the pressure on other investments. The yield on the 10-year Treasury drifted up and down Tuesday, a day after reaching its highest level since 2007.

Nvidia, one of Wall Street's most influential stocks, swung from an early gain to a loss of 2.5% ahead of its earnings report on Wednesday, one that could be pivotal for the stock market.

The chipmaker has been at the center of Wall Street's frenzy around artificial-intelligence technology, which investors believe will create immense profits for companies. Nvidia's stock has already more than tripled this year, and it likely faces a high bar to justify the huge move.

Analysts expect Nvidia to say on Wednesday that its revenue swelled by nearly \$4.5 billion to \$11.19 billion during the spring from a year earlier.

Another Big Tech stock, Microsoft, was the strongest single force pushing the S&P 500 higher. It rose 0.6% as U.K. regulators consider a revamped bid by the company to buy video game maker Activision Blizzard, which would be one of the biggest deals in tech history.

Also pushing upward on the S&P 500 was Lowe's, which rose 3.6% after reporting stronger profit for the latest quarter than analysts expected. The home improvement retailer also stood by its forecast for results over the full year, and it said it gave over \$100 million in bonuses to its front-line workers.

On the losing side of Wall Street, Dick's Sporting Goods plunged 24.2% after its profit for the latest quarter fell well short of expectations. It also cut its forecast for earnings over the full year,



A person walks in front of an electronic stock board showing Japan's Nikkei 225 index at a securities firm Tuesday, Aug. 22, 2023, in Tokyo. (AP)

citing "inventory shrink." That's a term the industry uses to refer to theft and other losses of goods that never become sales.

Macy's fell 13.1% despite reporting stronger results for the latest quarter than Wall Street expected. It also stood by its financial forecasts for the full year, though it said economic conditions look uncertain.

In the bond market, the 10-year Treasury yield ticked down to 4.32% from 4.34% late Monday. It's the center of the bond market and helps set rates for mortgages and other important loans.

The two-year Treasury yield, which moves more on expectations for the Federal Reserve, rose to 5.01% from 5.00%.

More fireworks could come later this week, when Fed Chair Jerome Powell is scheduled to give a highly anticipated speech. He'll be speaking Friday at an event in Jackson Hole, Wyoming, the site of several major policy announcements by the Fed in the past.

Europe

In early trading, the FTSE 100 in London rose 0.2% to 7,274.01. The CAC 40 in Paris advanced 0.9% to 7,265.01 and the DAX in Frankfurt added 0.9% to 15,749.52.

Asia

Asian stocks followed Wall Street higher on Tuesday as traders waited for signs of interest rate plans from this week's Federal Reserve conference.

Tokyo, Hong Kong and Seoul rose. Shanghai declined. Oil prices edged lower.

Wall Street's benchmark S&P 500 index rose Monday for its first gain in five days as tech stocks rallied.

Traders hope officials at the Fed's summer Jackson Hole, Wyoming, conference say they are finished raising interest rates that are at a two-decade high. But forecasters warn they might say inflation isn't under control yet.

Fed Chair Jerome Powell "may even mention that further rate hikes cannot be entirely ruled out," said Clifford

Bennett of ACY Securities in a report.

The Nikkei 225 in Tokyo rose 0.8% to 31,802.54 and the Hang Seng in Hong Kong advanced 0.2% to 17,653.43. The Shanghai Composite Index lost 0.1% to 3,090.13.

The Kospi in Seoul added 0.2% to 2,515.07 while Sydney's S&P-ASX 200 was less than 0.1% lower at 7,113.30.

India's Sensex opened up 0.1% at 65,280.66. New Zealand and Singapore declined while other Southeast Asian markets advanced.

Oil

In energy markets, benchmark U.S. crude lost 20 cents to \$79.92 per barrel in electronic trading on the New York Mercantile Exchange. Brent crude, the price basis for international oil trading, shed 19 cents to \$85.27 per barrel in London.

Currencies

The dollar declined to 145.94 yen from Monday's 146.11 yen. It rose to \$1.0915 from \$1.0899.

Surpasses 2019 figure

Dubai International Airport sees 41.6m passengers in H1 of 2023

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates, Aug 22, (AP): Dubai International Airport, the world's busiest for international travel, announced Tuesday it served 41.6 million passengers in the first half of this year - exceeding figures for the same period in 2019 as travelers return to the air after the lockdowns of the coronavirus pandemic.

The airport, home to the long-haul carrier Emirates in skyscraper-studded Dubai, long has served as a barometer for the aviation industry worldwide. The new figures at the airport known as DXB reflect figures offered by the International Air Transport Association that traffic worldwide is at 94% of pre-COVID levels.

"Dubai International Airport has once again recorded for the ninth year running that it is the world's busiest international airport with a very, very strong first half," Paul Griffiths, the CEO of Dubai Airports, told The Associated Press. "The most important part of that is that we've reached 100% of our pre-pandemic numbers, the same numbers as recorded in the first half of 2019."

The 41.6 million passengers is up some 50% from the 27.9 million recorded the same time last year, as airlines now have more planes and routes running again.

Passenger traffic this year largely has been driven by the airport's standard travel destinations - India, Saudi Arabia, the United Kingdom and Pakistan. Russia has also been a major market as Dubai remains one of the few places still open to Russians amid Moscow's war on Ukraine.

Dubai was among the first cities to reopen to tourists in the pandemic. That helped boost the city-state's tourism industry, as attractions like the Burj Khalifa, the world's tallest building, and the sail-shaped Burj Al-Arab luxury hotel draw both visitors and transit passengers out of airport lounges.

Dubai surpassed its pre-pandemic, half-year tourist figures this year with 8.55 million international visitors. Dubai hotels saw an average occupancy of 78% during that period - ranking among some of the world's top destinations.

"What happened pre-pandemic is we saw 60% transit and 40% point to point, but that's actually reversed," Griffiths said. "What we're now seeing is 60% of that traffic number is point to point and 40% is transit. So that's a very notable statistic and underpins the appeal of Dubai as a very, very

strong tourist destination." Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport remains the planet's busiest passenger airport overall.

Emirates also saw its most profitable year ever in 2022, earning \$2.9 billion as passengers returned to its long-haul Boeing 777s and its double-decker Airbus A380s. The return of the A380 has seen the average number of passengers per flight jump at DXB to 214, Griffiths said.

Griffiths said given the demand, the airport has bumped its projected passenger numbers for 2023 to 85 million, just shy of 2019's annual traffic of 86.3 million passengers. The airport saw 89.1 million passengers in 2018 - its busiest-ever year before the pandemic. DXB had 66 million passengers pass through it in 2022.

For Dubai International Airport, however, the swift business also revives a major challenge forgotten during the pandemic - it is boxed in. The airport sits in the northern reaches of Dubai, bracketed by two major highways to the east and west and vast neighborhoods to its north and south. That prohibits expanding the size of the two-runway airfield.

"We are landlocked on all four sides because I think back in the '60s when this airport was a very small single runway field, no one really saw at that time the huge development" coming, Griffiths said of DXB. "I think it's testament to the developments we have undertaken that within that landlocked site, we've been able to produce real estate, which has become the world's busiest international airport."

He said the airport has a plan to spend as much as \$2.7 billion to expand and upgrade its three terminals and increase the number of remote aircraft parking spaces on the airport's apron. Those improvements "will probably see us right for about the next 12 to 13 years," he said.

That likely will extend the horizon further for major work at Al Maktoum International Airport at Dubai World Central, the city-state's second airfield some 45 kilometers (28 miles) away in its far southern reaches. While used by commercial airlines when Qatar hosted the 2022 FIFA World Cup, the second airport that opened in 2010 largely sees cargo and private aircraft flights.

Dubai International Airport now serves 257 destinations across 104 countries.

Apache Corp. plans to invest USD 1.4 bln in Egypt in '24 - CEO

CAIRO, Aug 22, (KUNA): Apache Corporation plans to invest around USD 1.4 billion in Egypt in 2024, its CEO and President John Christmann said Sunday.

He made the remarks during a meeting with Egyptian Prime Minister Dr.

Mustafa Madbouli to discuss Apache's future plans and investment, the premier said in a statement.

Christmann said Apache, which has strong friendship and business relationship with Egypt, upgraded its work mechanisms in Egypt that con-

tributed to increasing oil production by 10 percent to over 150,000 barrels per day.

Apache, he said, was committed to its investments in Egypt and was looking forward to sustainable partnership with Cairo.

Madbouli said Egypt looked forward for more investment by Apache as well as expanding its oil and gas exploration operations.

He commended the partnership with Apache, whose relationship with Egypt over two-decade old.

Komainu receives Virtual Asset Service Provider licence

Komainu, a regulated digital asset custody service provider built by institutions for institutions, today announced that it has been granted the operating licence by the Virtual Asset Regulatory Authority (VARA) in Dubai after securing its MVP licence last November.

Achieving this final step in VARA's licencing process allows Komainu to offer its full suite of custody services, including in-

stitutional staking and collateral management via its Komainu Connect platform to clients in the Emirate.

Located in Dubai, Komainu MEA FZE is further commitment from Komainu to the continued build-out of a substantial organisation to achieve its goals in the region.

"We see tremendous opportunities to scale our business here amid a significant boom in

assets driven by fund formation and exchange launches," said Sebastian Widmann, Komainu's Head of Strategy. "Dubai has a vibrant digital asset ecosystem and impressive talent pool, and we are proud to contribute to the growth of this innovative financial hub. Our presence and desirable regulatory status in the region marks another differentiator for us as we execute the next phase of our business." (PR Newswire)

Thailand threatening to shut down Facebook

A Thai Cabinet minister is threatening to try to shut down Facebook in the country, saying the social media platform does not do enough to screen the advertisements it runs, leaving people vulnerable to costly scams.

Chaiwit Thanakamansorn, Thailand's minister of Digital Economy and Society, said in a statement Monday that he is ready to go to criminal court by the end of the month arguing

for Facebook to be shut down in Thailand.

He said Thai authorities have already appealed to Facebook parent company Meta to take down fraudulent ads, leading to more than 5,000 being blocked, but that the problem persists.

He said ads or fake profiles on Facebook frequently purport to represent reputable financial and investment advisers offering high profits, luring people into

scams in which they lose their money.

Reached by phone on Tuesday, Meta in Thailand asked for queries to be sent by email to its press department, which did not immediately respond to a request for comment on the minister's allegations.

It was not immediately clear how quickly the court might rule on the case if it is filed by the ministry. (AP)

Bank wins title for the tenth year in a row

World Finance grants KIB the 'Best Islamic Bank in Kuwait' award

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 22: Kuwait International Bank (KIB) was crowned the "Best Islamic Bank in Kuwait in 2023" by UK-based World Finance magazine, holding the title for the tenth consecutive year. The award came in recognition of the Bank continually delivering outstanding Islamic banking products and services, with exceptional customer service.

As one of the world's leading media platforms in the economic and financial field, World Finance has been holding its annual Islamic Finance awards program since 2007. The awards honor several of the most prominent financial and banking institutions globally, based on some of the highest standards and best practices from within the world of business and finance.

After its nomination alongside a curated list of numerous top banking institutions, KIB emerged victorious. The World Finance Awards jury selected KIB based on specific criteria and several factors. KIB was recognized for being a leader in the industry, delivering Sharia-compliant financial products and services, ensuring continued growth and profitability, diversifying personal and corporate banking and finance products, expanding its market presence and coverage, demonstrating corporate governance transparency and disclosure, and supporting dedicated CSR initiatives. According to World Finance, what truly sets KIB apart is its pledge to building long-term relationships with its customers and unparalleled commitment to customer service quality.

In a statement, KIB expressed its honor and pride to be recognized as the Best Islamic Bank in Kuwait for the tenth consecutive time by a globally reputed body like World Finance. This award is a testament that the Bank has maintained a remarkable consistency in its efforts to provide the best products and services that suit all its customers' needs, stemming from KIB's slogan, 'Bank for Life.' The

Bank also highlighted its accomplishments in the field of investment, its advanced digital banking experience, and its track record in various community initiatives.

Concluding its statement, the Bank dedicated the award to the entire KIB team, saying that the achievement would not have been possible without their commitment and collaboration. The Bank also affirmed that this recognition would fuel its drive to continue meeting the requirements of the banking sector while sustaining its position as a leading banking institution in Kuwait.

About KIB

Kuwait International Bank (KIB) is a bank that operates according to the Islamic Shari'ah, based in the State of Kuwait. Incorporated in 1973, and originally known as Kuwait Real Estate Bank, KIB made the transition to its current Islamic operating model in 2007. In 2018, KIB embarked on a new phase of its journey full of innovation and development. As part of its new strategic direction, the Bank focuses on offering a next-level customer experience under the slogan: "Bank for Life".

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

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



'Best Islamic Bank in Kuwait' award

Initiative aligns with guidelines set by CBK

ABK introduces a new 'complaint' submission feature on mobile app

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 22: Al Ahli Bank of Kuwait (ABK) recently announced the launch of a new feature on its mobile app, allowing customers to submit complaints directly through the application. This development aligns with the guidelines set by the Central Bank of Kuwait (CBK), ABK's digital transformation plan, and the Bank's commitment to enhancing customers' overall banking experience.

Upon submission of a complaint through the mobile app, customers will receive an automated SMS confirmation. The grievances will be meticulously investigated and handled by ABK's dedicated Complaints & Customer Protection Unit (CCPU). Upon review, customers will be notified via SMS when the Bank's reply is ready. A written reply will be sent to customers within 15 working days via the mobile app as a PDF file, allowing them to easily review and print the response for their records.

Loai Muqames, CEO-Kuwait at ABK, shared his thoughts on the introduction of this new feature, stating, "We continuously strive to improve our customers' banking experience and provide them with innovative solutions. The ability to submit complaints through our mobile app is a significant step towards delivering greater convenience and efficiency in handling customer feedback and concerns."

Muqames added, "By embracing digital transformation and leveraging technology, ABK aims to strengthen its relationship with customers and provide them with seamless and efficient banking services."

The addition of this new feature supports the 'Let's Be Aware' banking campaign goals. Aiming to enhance awareness about their rights as banking consumers, the campaign, like the new app feature, ensures that customers are protected. The Kuwait CEO stated, "This falls in line with ABK's dedication to empowering and promoting transparency in the



Mr. Loai Muqames CEO – Kuwait at ABK

banking sector."

Muqames concluded, "The introduction of the complaint submission feature on ABK's mobile app highlights the Bank's endeavor to achieve excellent customer service and continuous improvement. ABK remains dedicated to meeting expectations while adhering to the highest industry standards."

Since its establishment in 1967, ABK has progressed to become one of the leading Kuwaiti banks in the region that is today known for offering a simpler banking experience. The Bank offers personal, corporate, and private banking of which includes a wide array of products and services. ABK also provides a broad range of local, regional, and global investment solutions and services through its subsidiary, ABK Capital. Enjoying equal stability and strength, the Bank also offers the convenience of banking across the region, servicing other markets in Egypt and the UAE.

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

American Airlines pilots ratify a new contract that includes big pay raises

DALLAS, Aug 22, (AP) — American Airlines pilots have approved a new contract that will raise their pay by more than 40% over four years and increase company contributions to retirement plans, their union said Monday.

The Allied Pilots Association said that 73% of pilots who took part voted in favor of the four-year contract, which it valued at \$9.6 billion.

"This contract is a big first step toward restoring the wages, benefits, and work rules that were lost during the past two decades while our profession was under continuous assault," said union President Ed Sicher. He said pilots deserved to be compensated in line with the "tremendous amount of responsibility" they take with every flight.

CEO Robert Isom said the agreement will help American immediately expand its pilot training and provide pilots with more opportunities for career advancement.

American has about 15,000 pilots. Airline unions are enjoying leverage to get big pay raises because a boom in travel is lifting airline revenue. Texas-based American earned \$1.3 billion in the second quarter alone, helped by strong ticket sales, record revenue, and a drop in the price of jet fuel. Pilot unions have been in particularly strong position because of a shortage that is being felt most keenly at smaller carriers.

Pilots at American rejected an offer last November. They reached another agreement in late July, which was renegotiated again after United Airlines approved a tentative deal with its pilots. Pilots at Delta Air Lines won big pay raises earlier this year.

Pilots at Southwest Airlines are still in negotiations.

Wage rates for American pilots will rise at least 41% and perhaps more if United pilots ratify their agreement, according to a spokesman for the Allied Pilots Association.

The union said its new contract with American includes \$1.1 billion in one-time payments and ratification bonuses and immediate pay raises averaging 21%. Annual raises, plus increased company contributions to retirement plans, will raise the value of total compensation by more than 46% over four years, according to the union.

It also includes more vacation benefits and changes designed to give pilots more predictable schedules, the union said.

Airline industry labor contracts do not expire - that's part of a federal law designed to make strikes nearly impossible. Rather, they become open for change or "amendable" at their conclusion. Bargaining on the next contract for American's pilots could begin as soon as November 2026.

KFH pioneer in digital banking innovation

40% growth in the usage of KFHonline services

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 22: Kuwait Finance House (KFH) strategy for digital transformation is paying off and has gained significant momentum. The executive plans and programs have reached global recognition charting the most important aspects of KFH's digital development based on several major areas, including Artificial Intelligence (AI) and co-operating with Fintech companies in products and services, and developing the infrastructure of flexible smart systems and programs that support giving customers an easy banking experience.

KFH's digitalization efforts have encompassed electronic payment services, online account opening and card issuance with distinguished privileges. KFH has also improved its hardware performance to include novel features such as instant card printing, selling, and buying gold in addition to the many branchless banking transactions. KFH's efforts signify its goal to meet customers' aspirations, enhance their banking experience and service quality, rationalize operational costs and increase financial inclusiveness.

This is achieved by expanding access to bank accounts and benefiting from technology to offer customers a wide range of services they can enjoy anywhere and anytime. These efforts have also led to the advancement of benefits offered to customers with greater impact on their businesses, affirming KFH's digital excellence at the banking level with high global and competitive standards. Customers can access KFH's digital banking services through many alternative channels, such as



KFHGo

KFHGo smart branches, KFHOnline (mobile application and website), self-service devices (XTMs) and social media channels.

KFH Go Branches

KFH Go branches contribute to meeting the growing needs of customers and keeping pace with the latest modern technologies at the highest quality standards, which confirms the bank's leadership in digital transformation and adopting innovation in introducing digital banking and financial solutions.

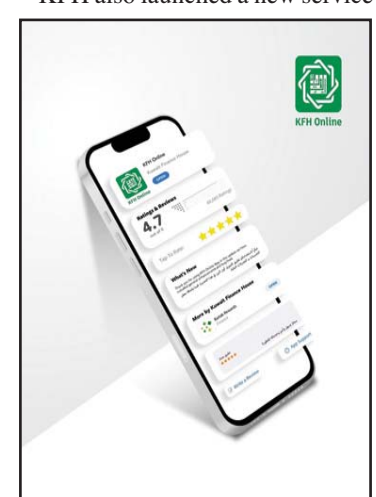
KFH continues to enhance the role and services of KFH Go smart branches as one of the most important means of providing technical services for customers, as well as representing a qualitative advance in the concept of the branch in its traditional form.

KFH has 10 KFH Go smart branches distributed as follows: KFH Auto-Shuwaikh showroom, the Avenues, Abdullah Al-Salem, Jabriya, AlSalam, Ishbiliya, Kuwait Airport, Abu Fatira, Mangaf and Sabah Al-Ahmad." KFH seeks to increase the number of these smart branches to meet the needs of customers in most areas of Kuwait due to their continuous success of KFH's services. KFH continues its efforts to enhance service delivery channels, whether through KFHGo, KFHOnline, social media channels, robotics, Artificial Intelligence (AI) and many other alternative channels.

KFH Go smart branches allow customers to benefit from a diversified range of interactive banking

services round the clock including instant cheque book and banking cards issuance without prior request, receiving 10g gold biscuit, opening account (Gold, saving, AIRabeh, Self-Service), selling and buying gold, printing IBAN certificate, requesting commercial transactions (Murabaha), requesting credit and prepaid cards, updating information and phone number, activating banking cards, opening deposits and accounts, cardless cash withdrawal through self-service or a video call with KFH agent using the civil ID, cardless cash deposit using the civil ID through a video call with KFH agent. In addition, KFH Go smart branches allow customers to deposit cheques by self-service or through a video call with KFH agent, transfer funds between own accounts and to KFH or other banks' beneficiaries.

KFH also launched a new service



KFH mobile banking app

that allows customers to request part of their salaries in advance electronically through KFHOnline without the need to visit branches, and the required amount will be settled from next month's salary according to the terms and conditions. As part of its corporate social responsibility, KFH provided this service to support customers suffering from financial instability to ensure a more stable economic environment.

KFH also introduced a range of innovative services, most notably the new "Digital Print" service to end paper-based transactions in retail banking. Further, KFH launched the "QR Code Cash Deposit" service through KFHOnline application and ATMs. KFH also applied 360T solutions for a centralized and integrated FX trading transactions for all the Group banks (Turkiye, Germany, Saudi Arabic, Malaysia, and Bahrain) through KFH-Kuwait.

40% growth in the usage of digital services

KFH made great strides in its digital transformation strategy, with customers executing more than 135 million digital banking transactions through KFHOnline on mobile and website during the first half of 2023, a growth rate of about 40% compared to the same period of the previous year. This remarkable growth in the volume of customer use of digital banking services confirms KFH's leadership in providing innovative digital financial solutions that enhance the customer banking experience and give it a competitive advantage.

KUFPEC makes a new oil discovery in Geisum and Tawila West concession

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 22: Kuwait Foreign Petroleum Exploration Company, K.S.C.C. (KUFPEC) is pleased to announce that its wholly owned subsidiary, KUFPEC Egypt Limited (KUFPEC Egypt), has made a new oil discovery in the Geisum and Tawila West Concession in the Gulf of Suez, Egypt.

KUFPEC CEO Mohammad Salem Al-Haimer stated "the discovery was made through the GNN-11 exploration well which was drilled into a fault block to the east of the GNN oil field development. The well encountered 165 feet of good quality vertical net pay in the Nubia formation, and this is the first time the Nubia

has been found to be oil bearing in the GNN area of the Concession". The producing reservoir is in the main GNN field and is located in the Nukhul formation.

The well was drilled by the recently installed GNN Early Production Facilities and has been successfully placed on production at a rate of over 2,500 BOPD. As a result of the new well, and the successful drilling campaign conducted to date in the field, the gross oil production from the Concession has reached 23,000 BOPD, compared to 4,000 BOPD before the GNN field was developed.

GNN-11 is the fourth well to be completed by the Early Produc-

tion Facilities which have been installed in the central area of the field, including a conductor support platform, a mobile offshore production unit and a 10-inch oil export pipeline, tied back to the existing Geisum Star production complex. Further, there are 3 remaining well slots on the platform, which will be used to complete the current phase of the exploration and development drilling program.

Cheiron (through its PICO GOS affiliate) holds a 60% working interest and operatorship of the Concession, with KUFPEC holding the remaining 40% interest. The field activities are run by the PetroGulf Misr Joint Operat-

ing Company.

The GNN field was discovered by the JV partners in 2019. The discovery came after the implementation of an extensive, multi-year exploration and development campaign by the JV parties and demonstrated the significant remaining exploration potential of the region, despite the Gulf of Suez being a relatively mature hydrocarbon province.

KUFPEC is an international upstream company engaged in exploration, development and production of crude oil and natural gas outside the State of Kuwait and is a wholly-owned subsidiary of Kuwait Petroleum Corporation.



Patrons of the Dim Sum.

Elevate your Palate: Dim Sum delights take center stage at Sintofo

Soaring above the city at Four Seasons Hotel Kuwait at Burj Alshaya, rooftop hot-spot Sintofo 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.

From 4:00 to 11:00 pm every evening 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 Shitake 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 soul-

ful Asian melodies to the lively pulse of contemporary beats, sets the tone for an evening where the dining experience transcends the plate. It's shared laughter over succulent Lobster Dim Sum, stories passed around as eagerly as the dishes, flowing as easily as the mocktails, and the sense of belonging accompanying each shared plate. Everyone, from families and friends to workmates, is invited to enjoy a feast for the taste buds alongside community, connection and the authentic moments that make life delicious.

Leaders of emerging economies meet in South Africa

Putin stays away over arrest warrant

JOHANNESBURG, Aug 22, (AP): Russian President Vladimir Putin will be notably absent when Chinese President Xi Jinping and other leaders from the BRICS group of emerging economies start a three-day summit in South Africa on Tuesday.

The bloc, consisting of Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa, is holding its first in-person meeting since before the COVID-19 pandemic, but Putin will participate via video call after his travel to South Africa was complicated by an International Criminal Court arrest warrant issued for him in March over the abduction of children from Ukraine.

Xi, Brazilian President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi and South African President Cyril Ramaphosa will attend in person as the bloc - home to 40% of the world's population and responsible for more than 30% of global economic output - mulls a possible expansion.

That will top the agenda at Wednesday's main summit meeting in Johannesburg's financial district of Sandton. More than 20 nations have applied to join the bloc, according to South African officials, including Saudi Arabia, Iran and the United Arab Emirates.

Saudi Foreign Minister Prince Faisal bin Farhan will be at the summit, as will Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi.

The five BRICS countries will have to agree on the criteria for new members before any countries are admitted, but a bigger BRICS is seen as a policy favored by China and Russia as a kind of coalition amid their deteriorating relations with the West.

The BRICS group was formed in

2009 by Brazil, Russia, India and China. South Africa was added in 2010.

Overall, around 1,200 delegates from the five BRICS nations and dozens of other developing countries are expected in Johannesburg, including more than 40 heads of state, according to Ramaphosa. United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres also is expected to attend.

Kremlin spokesperson Dmitry Peskov stressed that Putin will fully participate despite appearing virtually and will make a speech. Russia will also be represented in person by Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov.

At the summit, there will be calls for more economic cooperation and collaboration in areas such as health, education and climate change - but under a growing sentiment in the developing world that it is not being served by what it sees as Western-led institutions such as the U.N., the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund.

Ramaphosa met with Xi in the capital, Pretoria, on Tuesday ahead of the summit. The South African leader said he was seeking "Chinese support for South Africa and Africa's call for the reform of global governance institutions, notably the United Nations Security Council."

Africa and South America have no permanent representatives on the Security Council despite being home to nearly 2 billion people.

Xi, who has gradually resumed foreign travel after the lifting of his country's strict COVID-19 restrictions, joined Ramaphosa to watch a ceremonial parade by soldiers at the Union Buildings, the official seat of the South African government. He then planned to travel 60 kilometers (37 miles) through South Africa's most important economic province of Gauteng to the summit in Johannesburg.

Xi made brief comments, saying China was ready for more cooperation with Africa's most advanced economy "to take our comprehensive strategic partnerships to new heights."

BRICS officials have pushed back at characterizations that the bloc is taking an anti-West turn under the influence of China and Russia, saying it is rather looking out for the interests of the Global South.

But the BRICS stance is at odds with the United States and its Western allies on a number of issues, not least over Russia's invasion of Ukraine. The European Union called on Xi, Lula, Modi and Ramaphosa to use this week's gathering to condemn Russia and Putin for the war in Ukraine, but that's unlikely to happen.

If anything, BRICS has been a forum for Russia to express its anti-Western rhetoric, with Lavrov using a BRICS foreign ministers meeting in June to lambast the West for its "hegemony" and using "financial blackmail" to serve its "selfish interests."

A small protest against Russia's invasion of Ukraine was held Tuesday at a public park more than 3 kilometers



Chinese President Xi Jinping, (center left), with South Africa's President Cyril Ramaphosa attend a signing ceremony by their cabinet ministers at Union Building in Pretoria, South Africa, Tuesday, Aug. 22, 2023. (AP)

(1.8 miles) from the summit venue. The U.S. and EU will be closely monitoring events in Johannesburg, with the long list of countries lining up to join BRICS suggesting that the bloc's calls for a reorganization of the global governance structure might be hitting home with many.

Ahead of the meetings, the U.S. stressed its close ties with India, Brazil and South Africa.

Not officially on the agenda but an issue for closed-door negotiations will be food security, with the developing world especially eager to use its BRICS ties with Russia to seek more grain shipments out of both Russia and Ukraine.

Ramaphosa led a mission of African leaders to Russia and Ukraine in June, meeting Putin and Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy to press for more grain exports to Africa, with little result.

There's added urgency after Russia halted a deal allowing Ukraine to export through the Black Sea last month, exacerbating hunger and pushing food prices higher. Putin later announced free Russian grain shipments to six African nations and might offer more shipments this week, some analysts say, as a means of gaining favor among the dozens of developing nations represented at the BRICS summit.

The summit officially began with a business forum on Tuesday morning, and Xi, Lula, Modi and Ramaphosa were expected to arrive at the Sandton Convention Centre for the first meet-

ing of the leaders in the afternoon. They will hold a retreat Tuesday evening at the luxury Summer Place estate in Johannesburg's plush Hyde Park suburb.

Russia and China will look to gain more political and economic ground in the developing world at a summit in South Africa this week, when an expected joint dose of anti-West grumbling from them may take on a sharper edge with a formal move to bring Saudi Arabia closer.

"If Saudi Arabia were to enter BRICS, it will bring extraordinary importance to this grouping," said Talmiz Ahmad, India's former ambassador to Saudi Arabia.

Even an agreement on the principle of expanding BRICS, which already consists of a large chunk of the developing world's biggest economies, is a moral victory for the Russian and Chinese vision for the bloc as a counterbalance to the G-7, analysts say.

Both favor adding more countries to bolster a kind of coalition -- even if it's only symbolic - amid China's economic friction with the U.S. and Russia's Cold War-like standoff with the West because of the war in Ukraine.

"BRICS expansion has become the top trending issue at the moment," said Chen Xiaodong, China's ambassador to South Africa. "Expansion is key to enhancing (the) BRICS mechanism's vitality. I believe that this year's summit will witness a new and solid step on this front."

The U.S. has stressed its bilateral ties with South Africa, Brazil and India in an attempt to offset any outsized Russian and Chinese influence emanating from BRICS. In the buildup to the summit, the State Department said that the U.S. was "deeply engaged with many of the leading members of the BRICS association."

The European Union also will closely follow happenings in Johannesburg, but with almost sole focus on the war in Ukraine and the bloc's continued effort to draw united condemnation for Russia's invasion from the developing world, which has largely failed so far.

With Xi, Lula, Modi and Ramaphosa coming together, European Commission spokesman Peter Stano said the EU was calling on them to use the moment to uphold international law.

"We look forward to their contribution to make Putin stop his illegal, destabilizing behavior," Stano said. If a BRICS foreign ministers meeting in Cape Town in June, the precursor to the main summit, is anything to go by, there will be no public criticism of Russia or Putin over the war. A planned protest by the Amnesty International rights group and the Ukrainian Association of South Africa outside the Sandton Convention Centre will likely be the only condemnation heard.

If anything, Russia might see the summit as an opportunity to leverage some favor.

Having halted a deal allowing the passage of grain out of Ukraine last

month, Putin might use the BRICS gathering to announce more free Russian grain shipments to developing countries, as he has already done for several African nations, said Maria Snegovaya, senior fellow at the Europe, Russia, and Eurasia Program at the Washington-based Center for Strategic and International Studies.

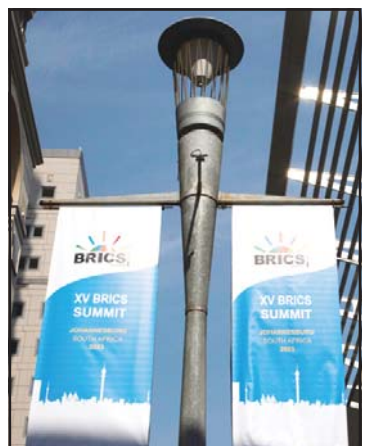
It would allow Putin to demonstrate "goodwill" to the developing world, Snegovaya said, while cutting Ukraine out of the process.

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said Putin would have "full fledged participation" in the summit despite appearing on a video link and would make a speech.

What's also likely to be aired regularly over the three days in Johannesburg is the developing world's gripes over current global financial systems. That has streamlined in the months and weeks leading up to the summit into a criticism of the dominance of the U.S. dollar as the world's currency for international trade.

"None of this is the big sword that's going to slay the dollar. That's not the play," said van Staden. "It's not one big sword wound, it's a lot of paper cuts. It won't kill the dollar, but it's definitely making the world a more complicated place."

"They don't need to defeat the dollar ... and they don't need to defeat the G-7. All they particularly want to do is raise an alternative to it. It's this much longer play."



Banners for the upcoming BRICS, Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa summit hang from a pole outside the Sandton Convention Centre in Johannesburg, South Africa, Saturday, Aug. 19, 2023. (AP)

Adjusted results beat WS views

Macy's swings to loss and posts sales decline in second quarter

NEW YORK, Aug 22, (AP): Macy's swung to a loss and reported a sales decline in the second quarter as worries about inflation continue to make shoppers pull back on clothing and other discretionary purchases.

However, the results, announced Tuesday, beat Wall Street expectations. Macy's reaffirmed its annual sales and profits forecasts, noting uncertainty about the economy in the second half. Shares were down less than 1% in premarket trading Tuesday.

Macy's is one of the last remaining retailers to report second-quarter results in an earnings season that shows how still high inflation, despite some easing, is forcing shoppers to continue to cut back on discretionary items like clothing in order to afford their larger grocery bills.

Target reported its first quarterly sales decline in six years last week, dragged down by cautious spending in addition to backlash by some customers to its Pride merchandise.

Home Depot, the nation's largest home improvement retailer, said last week that sales continue to decline, with a fall-off in big-ticket items like appliances and other things that often require financing. That's become a problem with interest rates rising rapidly over the past year, making

credit cards a much bigger burden for consumers.

But Walmart racked up another strong quarterly sales gain as its low-prices continue to attract budget-conscious consumers looking for deals in a tough economic environment. The nation's largest retailer boosted its annual outlook last week after reporting better-than-expected second-quarter results sending shares higher.

Macy's reported a loss of \$22 million, or 8 cents per share, in the quarter ended July 29. That compares with a profit of \$275 million, or 99 cents per share, in the year-ago period.

The loss includes a non-cash settlement charge related to the transfer of pension obligations for certain retirees and beneficiaries under the company's pension plan. Adjusted earnings for the latest quarter were 26 cents per share.

Revenue fell to \$5.28 billion from \$5.83 billion from a year ago.

Analysts had expected a profit of 14 cents on sales of \$5.06 billion.

Comparable sales - those from stores and digital channels opened at least a year - were down 8.2% in the quarter. The figure excluded licensed owned businesses like cosmetics.

UK will investigate again

Microsoft revamps deal for video game maker Activision Blizzard

LONDON, Aug 22, (AP): British competition regulators opened a new investigation Tuesday into Microsoft's revamped bid to buy video game maker Activision Blizzard, representing the last major hurdle to closing one of the biggest deals in tech history.

The Competition and Markets Authority said it has until Oct. 18 to decide whether to approve the deal or escalate its preliminary investigation into an in-depth review. The companies agreed earlier to extend the transaction's deadline to that same date.

Xbox maker Microsoft has been on a quest to acquire Activision, maker of the popular Call of Duty game franchise since announcing the \$69 billion deal in January 2022.

The companies have secured approvals from antitrust authorities covering 40 countries, including the European Union.

The blockbuster deal faced pushback in the United States, but the Fed-

eral Trade Commission lost a court fight to stop it, effectively clearing the way for it to proceed.

The purchase is now only held up in Britain, where authorities moved to block it earlier this year over worries about competition being stifled in the emerging cloud gaming market, where players can avoid buying pricey consoles and stream games to their tablets or phones.

Under the restructured deal, Microsoft will sell cloud streaming rights

outside of the European Economic Area for all current and new Activision games released over the next 15 years to French game studio Ubisoft Entertainment, Microsoft President Brad Smith said in a blog post. The European Economic Area includes the EU's 27 nations, Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein.

In an unprecedented move, the U.K. watchdog had delayed its final order to block the deal. That allowed it to consider an EU decision to accept Microsoft's pledge to automatically license Activision games to cloud gaming platforms and a licensing deal between Microsoft and rival Sony, maker of the PlayStation console.

The CMA said Tuesday that it found those developments wouldn't have changed its original decision and imposed an order to block the deal. At the same time, it's considering the new Microsoft proposal, which "is substantially different from what was put on the table previously," said Sarah Cardell, CEO of the U.K. watchdog.

"This is not a green light," Cardell said. "We will carefully and objectively assess the details of the restructured deal and its impact on competition, including in light of third-party comments."

The regulator's decision to launch a new investigation instead of approving the deal was an unexpected move and raises the prospect of another lengthy review, said Alex Haffner, competition partner at U.K. law firm Fladgate.

"In reality, however, it is hard to believe Microsoft would have taken this new course without a high degree of confidence it will now in due course (finally) get a regulatory green light from the CMA," he said by email.



In this file photo, a sign outside the Activision building in Santa Monica, Calif., June 21, 2023. (AP)

Exactech announces FDA 510(k) clearance for advanced Activit-E™ knee replacement polyethylene.



FDA approves Exactech's Activit-E polyethylene

Exactech, a developer and producer of innovative implants, instrumentation, and smart technologies for joint replacement surgery, announced 510(k) clearance from the US Food and Drug Administration for its new, advanced Activit-E™ polyethylene for the Truliant® knee replacement system. "After years of research and development in polyethylene, Activit-E represents a breakthrough achievement for Exactech," said Adam Hayden, CMO and SVP, Large Joints Business Unit at Exactech. "It is the next generation of highly crosslinked poly-

ethylene with vitamin E antioxidant that is intended to further our primary goal of providing immense benefits to our patients." Activit-E brings an optimized balance of material strength and toughness through chemically crosslinked polyethylene, while eliminating the need for gamma irradiation technology used in previous generations of polyethylene. The material is designed to maintain active oxidative resistance and long-term, high-performance, including strength and stabilization. This new generation polyethylene is the

latest, first-of-a-kind innovation by Orhun Muratoglu, Ph.D., Director of the Harris Orthopaedic Laboratory at Massachusetts General Hospital in Boston. Muratoglu invented the first crosslinked polyethylene, and the first of multiple generations of vitamin E, antioxidant polyethylene for leading orthopaedic companies. "We replaced gamma radiation crosslinking with peroxide crosslinking and stabilized the poly with vitamin E to provide strength, flexibility, and toughness where it is needed most: total knee arthroplasty. (AP)

NerdWallet

Explore ways to cover costs

Create a 'care plan' for older parents or yourself

By Liz Weston
NerdWallet

At some point, most older people will need help getting through the day. Someone turning 65 today has a 70% chance of eventually requiring assistance with basic living activities, such as bathing, dressing and using the toilet, according to the US Department of Health and Human Services.

That's the grim reality. Even grimmer is that Medicare typically doesn't pay for such help. Plus, families often don't try to figure out how to provide this care until there is a health crisis, which can lead to unnecessary stress, conflicts and escalating costs, says certified financial planner and physician Carolyn McClanahan of Life Planning Partners in Jacksonville, Florida.

Making a care plan well in advance allows families to get organized, locate appropriate resources and figure out ways to pay for care before a crisis hits.

"A care plan is thinking through the logistics of what you're going to need as you age, so that when the poop hits the fan with aging, then you are prepared," McClanahan says.

Deal with denial first

The biggest barrier can be our own wishful thinking, says Katy Butler, author of the books "The Art of Dying Well" and "Knocking on Heaven's Door." We want to picture a perfectly healthy life followed, if absolutely necessary, by a quick and painless death.

The reality may be quite different, and that can be awful to contemplate, Butler acknowledges.

One way to cope is to plan for temporary rather than permanent disability. For example, what kind of help might you or your loved one need after a hip or knee replacement? How well is the home set up for recovery? Who would help with household tasks? Contemplating a two- or three-month disability with an eventual return to health is less daunting, but involves much of the same planning as a more lasting decline, says Butler, who lives in Mill Valley, California.

"I think that really would help people visualize without terrifying them," Butler says.

Where you'll get care

Many people want to remain in their current homes as they age, something called "aging in place." That typically means relying on family members for care, or using paid workers, or both.

If family members will be tapped, discuss the logistics, including whether and how much they will be paid. If home health aides will be hired, consider who will supervise

the process. Costs can mount quickly. Nationally, a full-time home health aide costs an average of \$5,148 a month, according to long-term care insurer Genworth. (You can use Genworth's cost of care calculator to estimate costs in your area.)

Explore ways to cover costs

Are there savings that can be tapped? Does the older person have long-term care insurance or can they get a reverse mortgage? Will other family members chip in? Does the older person qualify for government help, such as veterans benefits, Medicaid or state programs? Benefitscheckup.org, a site run by the nonprofit National Council on Aging, can help you search for resources that help people age in place. Families may want to consult an elder law attorney for personalized advice. (You can get a referral from the National Academy of Elder Law Attorneys at www.naela.org.)

Also consider whether the current home is "aging friendly," McClanahan says. An occupational therapist can suggest adaptations that could allow the older person to remain in the home if they're disabled. Some changes might be simple, such as removing throw rugs that could cause falls, while others - like widening doorways or constructing a walk-in shower - might be part of a larger remodel. The sooner you get this evaluation, the more time you will have to plan and pay for it, McClanahan says.

"I recommend everybody do this when they hit their 50s if they're planning on staying in their home," she says.

Consider the community

Even if the home supports aging in place, the neighborhood might not, Butler says. Consider how the older person will socialize, get groceries and make it to health appointments if they can no longer drive.

An independent living or senior living facility could provide more amenities, but these typically don't provide long-term care, Butler says. Is the older person OK with moving again later, or should they start with an assisted living or continuing care facility that can provide more help?

Once you have a plan, write down the details and consider sharing it with family members or other people who may be involved, McClanahan suggests. Revisit the document periodically as circumstances change.

"Aging planning is not a one and done thing. It's an ongoing process," she says. (AP)

Study uncovers patient behaviors leading to preventative care barriers

One in four American adults would rather not know they have cancer

WHIPPANY, N.J., Aug 22: A new study from The Harris Poll, commissioned by Bayer, suggests fear factors have an impact on diagnoses and preventative care - one in four American adults would rather not know they have cancer (27%) and nearly a third (31%) avoid doctor visits due to fear of what they might learn.

In addition to fear factors, many American adults site lack of knowledge about key physical health topics, demonstrating the need for greater education on disease risks:

- 49% are not knowledgeable about prostate cancer
- 49% didn't know that a man's race impacts his risk for prostate cancer
- 38% are not very knowledgeable about breast cancer
- 48% were unaware that breast density impacts cancer risk/diagnosis

As one of the top life sciences companies in the US, Bayer's latest study is designed to uncover patient behaviors and barriers, as well as medical and preventative gaps that the company can help solve for through awareness, education, advocacy and innovation.

"The increase of fear and anxiety, heightened by a lack of education and in some cases trust barriers, creates an environment where people may not access basic preventative care to ensure early diagnosis," said Sebastian Guth, President, Bayer US and President, Pharmaceuticals, North America. "This is compounded by the fact that around 27.4 million people of all ages (8.3%) don't have access to health insurance. Companies like Bayer have a responsibility to provide resources that increase health education on the importance of understanding disease risks, early disease screenings and preventative health care."

Bridge

With a goal to help bridge some of these gaps, Bayer partners with patient advocacy groups to increase trust and education around risk factors and healthcare solutions. As part of this commitment, Bayer has partnered with organizations like Zero Prostate Cancer, Target Cancer Foundation and Prostate Cancer Foundation to raise awareness and help individuals understand the resources available to them and their risks for specific disease.

Bayer has also supported the National Kidney Foundation, including sponsoring its "Are You the 33%?" campaign. With the common goal of

LINKÖPING, Sweden, Aug 22: AMRA Medical, the global leader in body composition analysis, is pleased to announce a set of significant strategic changes aimed at accelerating growth in critical areas while solidifying our position as the gold standard for body composition analysis in clinical areas of research.

A key part of this strategic redirection involves welcoming Olof Dahlqvist Leinhard, one of AMRA's founders and Chief Scientific Officer, as the new CEO. Olof's deep research knowledge and innovative vision promise to accelerate AMRA into furthering key areas of research and continuing to push advancement in the field of body composition analysis.

The changes at the helm are complemented by a refocused strategic direction from AMRA's board members. The board has reasserted their dedicated, long-term focus on neuromuscular disease (NMD), musculoskeletal (MSK), and metabolic

(MET) research. This emphasis on core areas of expertise signifies AMRA's commitment to remain at the forefront of critical research.

While AMRA is successfully offering commercial applications such as the BCP Scan, providing body composition profiling within Health & Wellness, the strategy allows for strengthening of the clinical evidence for other applications like the MAS Scan. MAS Scan supports clinicians in their diagnosis by providing a muscle assessment score, which includes muscle volume and fat measurements. AMRA is currently conducting clinical studies using MAS Scan in liver transplant and end-stage liver disease.

Development

Olof Dahlqvist Leinhard, CEO of AMRA Medical commented: "Our standardized MRI body composition and muscle biomarkers help differentiate new therapies under development for metabolic disorders, and

provide early proof of treatment effect in neuromuscular diseases. Ultimately, we are committed to bringing our biomarkers into clinical care where we see a great unmet need for diagnostic techniques able to provide early and precise information, guiding treatment decisions in obesity related, liver, and muscular diseases."

A cornerstone of AMRA's strategic plan involves the continuation of its strong partnerships with industry and academic centers, clinical services, and industry organizations. Through these collaborations, AMRA is actively fostering innovation and driving significant advancements in medical research and technology.

"AMRA remains firmly rooted in our mission to transform data into health and improve the quality of life for patients worldwide," said Olof. "Our renewed strategy and leadership position us to execute this mission effectively. We are excited about the future."

improving health outcomes for people living with chronic kidney disease, the partnership raises awareness among the 1 in 3 people at risk for developing chronic kidney disease and encourages dialogue with doctors to help improve early diagnosis and intervention.

Additionally, the company is using its science-based innovation and scale to help tear down health barriers for Americans through commitments such as The Nutrient Gap Initiative, which expands access to vitamins and minerals to underserved communities. Vitamin and mineral deficiencies are a major public health problem and through intervention, education and advocacy, Bayer aims to reverse the cycle of malnutrition - to help people grow properly, raise healthier families and lead better lives.

For those who don't regularly visit their healthcare provider or have access to one, self-care offers the first and often last line of healthcare for many people. Health education programs and access to Bayer products, from Claritin and Aleve to Aspirin and Astepro, or One A Day, can offer a lifeline for people to help take care of themselves.

This survey was conducted online within the United States by The Harris Poll on behalf of Bayer from June 6-8, 2023, among 2,079 US adults ages 18+. The sampling precision of Harris online polls is measured by using a Bayesian credible interval. For this study, the total sample data is accurate to within +/- 2.8 percentage points using a 95% confidence level. For complete survey methodology, including weighting variables and subgroup sam-

ple sizes, please contact Nicole Hayes.

Bayer is a global enterprise with core competencies in the life science fields of health care and nutrition. Its products and services are designed to help people and the planet thrive by supporting efforts to master the major challenges presented by a growing and aging global population. Bayer is committed to driving sustainable development and generating a positive impact with its businesses. At the same time, the Group aims to increase its earning power and create value through innovation and growth. The Bayer brand stands for trust, reliability and quality throughout the world. In fiscal 2022, the Group employed around 101,000 people and had sales of 50.7 billion euros. R&D expenses before special items amounted to 6.2 billion euros.

MEDICAL CLASSIFIEDS

Take care of your health

To advertise in this page please call: (+965) 24813566 Ext.: 513 or E-mail: advt@arabtimesonline.com

We Accept All Major Insurance

For Appointments +965 55443382 24340122

ROYAL CITY CLINIC A CARING MISSION ISO 9001:2015

ACCREDITED

Scan for location

مركز شفاء الجزيرة الطبي SHIFA AL JAZEERA MEDICAL CENTRE FARWANIYA الفروانية

DENTAL & COSMETIC DEPARTMENT

- ◆ SCALING & GUM TREATMENT
- ◆ COSMETIC SMILE RECONSTRUCTION
- ◆ GUM & ORAL SURGERY
- ◆ BAD BREATH TREATMENT
- ◆ SURGICAL TREATMENT
- ◆ ROOT CANAL TREATMENT
- ◆ COSMETIC FILLING
- ◆ FIXED & REMOVABLE DENTURES
- ◆ CROWN TREATMENT
- ◆ SIMPLE & SURGICAL EXTRACTION

Dr. Shajahan V.M BDS, MDS Dental Surgeon

Dr. Ayham Askar BDS Dental Surgeon

Dr. Raina Fernandes BDS Dental Surgeon

Working Time: From 9am to 1pm & 5pm to 9pm
Ph: 24 734 000

Behind Maghateer Commercial Complex & Opp. Police station - Farwaniya
www.shifaaljazeera.com.kw

Trump's debate decision tests Fox News ability to pivot again

NEW YORK, Aug 22, (AP) — If 2023 has taught anything to the people running Fox News, it's the importance of being able to pivot.

The decision by former President Donald Trump to skip Wednesday's first debate of the 2024 presidential primary season likely deprives Fox of a huge late-summer audience. Even worse for the network, Trump has talked of appearing in an online interview with former Fox star Tucker Carlson at the same time.

Trump's announcement on Sunday wasn't necessarily a surprise. Fox debate moderators Bret Baier and Martha MacCallum had been preparing for two events — one if he were there and one if he wasn't.

Several Fox personalities this summer publicly urged Trump to attend the event, and Fox executives privately made the same argument to the former president. His former press secretary, Kayleigh McEnany, called Trump's decision a "huge political miscalculation" Monday on Fox.

Despite Trump's lead over other Republicans in polls, MacCallum cautioned potential viewers against dismissing a debate without him as a junior varsity event. She cited a recent poll by The New York Times and Siena College, taken July 23-27, that showed nearly half of Trump backers in Iowa said they were open to other candidates.

"I don't think as members of the media or people who watch politics it's our place to say, 'Oh, this is over, these people aren't going to be the nominee,'" she said. "It's way too soon to say that."

Trump's first appearance in a GOP primary debate brought 24 million viewers to Fox in 2015. It would be next to impossible to reach those numbers again, given his novelty has worn off and cord-cutting has diminished cable news audiences. Yet when only 12.5 million watched a January 2016 Fox debate that Trump skipped, that gave an indication of his drawing power.

This summer's debate has been anticipated as a beacon for Fox News, which endured months of embarrassing headlines earlier this year related to Dominion Voting Systems' defamation lawsuit for the network's coverage of bogus claims by Trump after the 2020 election.

Impact

As the trial was about to start, Fox agreed to pay \$787.5 million to Dominion in a settlement.

The lawsuit had little discernible impact on Fox's viewers, but when Fox fired Carlson with no explanation a week later, those fans hit back hard. The network never publicly explained why Carlson was fired, although his appearance in court papers released with the Dominion case led to several public theories being advanced.

As it has in the past, Fox relied on its bench in establishing a new lineup that debuted in July, giving prime time shows to Jesse Watters and Greg Gutfeld, popular panelists on "The Five." Their shows sandwich Sean Hannity on the schedule, offering a continuation of biting

conservative commentary.

Fox's prime-time audience averaged 2.5 million this year through Carlson's firing, and 1.6 million for the nearly two months before the new lineup premiered. Its prime-time audience has since rebounded to 2.2 million, according to the Nielsen company.

"There has been a sense of stabilization with the new lineup," said Steve Krakauer, publisher of the "Fourth Watch" newsletter and author of "Uncovered: How the Media Got Cozy with Power, Abandoned its Principles and Lost the People."

How much Trump's four criminal indictments will be discussed on-stage in Milwaukee is an open question, in part dependent upon what his opponents want to talk about.

Even without Trump's participation on Wednesday, "he will be on the stage even if he's not on the stage," Baier said in an interview.

The Siena College-Times survey suggests that it wouldn't be a popular topic among regular Fox viewers. The poll found 78% of people who regularly get news from Fox said Trump has not committed any serious federal crimes, and that 80% said that the GOP should stand behind Trump in the cases.

Krakauer said Fox would hardly be unique among the media in wanting to give its audience what it wants, and suggested there may be some "indictment fatigue" among the audience.

Even a debate that avoids the indictments as a major topic would

Media

Variety



South Korean girl group IVE attends KCON at the Los Angeles Convention Center on Friday, Aug. 18. (AP)

Music

Fans celebrate K-pop idols and K-culture

LA KCON a microcosm of K-pop influence

LOS ANGELES, Aug 22, (AP) — Hours before doors would open, thousands of K-pop fans lined up in downtown Los Angeles, stretching long city blocks in the warm August sun. In pleated skirts and platform shoes, toting the clear bags that have become arena staples, they danced and traded homemade stickers, banners, bracelets and photocards. Inside was their paradise: an IRL space to commune over their URL passions.

If anything, the 2023 LA KCON was a microcosm of K-pop's macro influence on the music industry as a whole.

Held from Friday to Sunday at the Los Angeles Convention Center and adjacent Crypto.com Arena, an estimated 140,000 fans from all over the world celebrated their favorite K-pop idols across three days of panels, premium meet-and-greets, interviews, dance breaks, concerts, and more.

Inside the convention center, fans carried lightsticks of their favorite groups, showed off DIY shirts with simple, direct slogans like "I HEART MINGI", collected sticker books and K-beauty products, and lined up for teokbokki.

KCON started 11 years ago in Irvine, California, drawing 10,000 people to its inaugural celebration of Korean culture, says Steve Chung, chief global officer of organizers CJ ENM. Now it's a global event, taking place in multiple countries: So far in 2023, KCON has hit Thailand, Japan and the U.S.

"We've welcomed something like half a million people in those (11) years all throughout the world," he says.

In Los Angeles, panels were held on K-pop songwriting and cup sleeve creations (K-pop fan events are held at cafes on an idol's birthday, anniversary, or some other special date). Up-and-coming groups like NMIXX led dance classes on one stage, while another stage allowed rookie groups to introduce themselves to a wider audience.

Over the course of the weekend, The Associated Press spoke to an incredible diversity of fans who, among them, drove 12 hours straight from Utah, flew in from the UK and South America and represented a range of ages, genders, races, and socioeconomic backgrounds.

"The culture of inclusiveness is huge," said 40-year-old Anya Holston from Florida who got into K-pop through

her daughter. "We've made so many friends, being here."

At \$500 a day, premium tickets allowed attendees to access a "Red Carpet" area, where acts posed for portraits and answered two or three questions in a 30-minute window — along with entry to the convention and concert. For an additional \$100, fans could pay for "Hi-Touch" — a quick meet-and-greet where fans and performers high-five — with one group of their choice. With renewed concerns about the spread of COVID-19, "Hi-Touch" became "Hi-Wave" (exactly what it sounds like, to the chagrin of a few fans hoping for that physical connection; others were happy with the sheer proximity).

Those experiences served as a welcome reminder of a facet of the music industry that K-pop knows remarkably well, and far better than most: fandom is this business' most lucrative and enduring resource.

As Peyton Tran, a 17-year-old L.A. native and dancer told AP at KCON, "It's just cool to see how much people can support these businesses out here."

Fandom

In 2023, the music industry faces unique challenges, including what Mark Mulligan, a MIDiA Research music industry analyst, has referred to as the "fragmentation of fandom." New artists suffer a kind of competition unheard of before the streaming age, a direct effect of algorithmic listening. Think of it this way: It is rare for a new act to reach the level of monolithic pop star — the ranks of Taylor Swift, Beyoncé, Harry Styles, all who started performing pre-streaming — because listenerhip is hyper-specific.

In K-pop, where companies are typically fully integrated institutions — a record label and a talent agency all in one — and hyper-consumerism is welcomed, business focuses on building a community of superfans and inspiring those loyal listeners to advocate for their group, fueling a sense of participation beyond their purchasing power. It doesn't hurt that K-pop audiences have a tendency to coordinate global fan actions on their own and create rituals and events, communicating on bespoke fandom platforms like WeVerse and Vlive.

Niche doesn't mean small; it means specialized. KCON is proof.

At the concerts, held all three nights for the first time,

fans witnessed K-pop groups and soloists from across "generations": Taemin from the second-generation boy band SHINee.

Rain — the first K-pop idol to take off internationally, and now a manager himself — fourth-generation boy bands ATEEZ and Stray Kids, and rookie groups like XG and ZEROBASEONE.

XG performed songs like the Kesha — channeling "TGIF," with production pulling heavily from the current liquid drum-and-bass/UK garage trend in global pop music, a welcomed retro-futuristic sound from a group and convention with eyes set on the future.

Notably, these concerts placed a lot of emphasis on K-pop girl groups, reflecting a recent trend in listenership. Historically, boy bands were thought to be more lucrative — but girl groups like IVE, ITZY, NMIXX, Kep1er, (G)I-DLE, and EVERGLOW proved that's vintage thinking in their explosive KCON sets.

A particularly unique and effective moment during the concert was called the "Dream Stage," where a few dozen fans who auditioned to perform a dance with a K-pop group earlier in the day were brought out to do exactly that.

On the second day of the convention, iHeartRadio's KIIS-FM set up a new, open-to-the-public "K-pop Village," where the K-pop-curious could experience free performances from newer acts — like LEO, who made his U.S. debut on the outdoor stage.

"2023 is like a crossover event. The last 10 years has been about sort of serving the endemic fanbase of people who already know K-pop and who love K-pop," Chung says. "As evidenced by the iHeartMedia partnership, it's really like a crossover moment where K-pop goes mainstream."

On the last day of the convention, not even Tropical Storm Hilary could stop the most devoted fans from lining up in the rain to see their favorite acts. On the train the night before, the AP asked a K-pop fan from Massachusetts, who publishes fan cam videos on YouTube under the name Toadcola, if he was worried about the weather. Not so much.

But, if the weather canceled his flight home, he thought that wouldn't be so bad: maybe, just maybe, the idols would be stuck at the airport with him.

SANTA FE, NM: A New Mexico judge has set a 2024 starting date for the trial of movie armorer **Hannah Gutierrez-Reed** in the fatal shooting of a cinematographer by actor **Alec Baldwin** during a rehearsal on the set of a Western film.

State district court Judge **Mary Marlowe Sommer** on Monday scheduled the trial to run from Feb 21 through March 6 in Santa Fe, New Mexico. The first day begins with jury selection.

Gutierrez-Reed has pleaded not guilty to charges of involuntary manslaughter and evidence tampering in the fatal shooting of cinematographer **Halyna Hutchins** during a rehearsal on the set of "Rust" on Oct. 21, 2021.

An attorney for Gutierrez-Reed has described the fatal shooting as a tragic accident and says the film's armorer committed no crime. Gutierrez-Reed is currently the sole criminal defendant.

Prosecutors are weighing whether to refile a charge against Baldwin after receiving a new analysis of the gun fired at Hutchins. Special prosecutors dismissed an involuntary manslaughter charge against Baldwin in April, saying they were informed the gun might have been modified before the shooting and malfunctioned.

Baldwin has said he pulled back the hammer — but not the trigger — and the gun fired, fatally wounding Hutchins and injuring director **Joel Souza**.

In March, "Rust" assistant director and safety coordinator **David Halls** pleaded no contest to a conviction for unsafe handling of a firearm and received a suspended sentence of six months of probation. He agreed to cooperate in the investigation of the shooting.

Defense attorneys said they plan to present evidence that Gutierrez-Reed asked Halls to call her back into rehearsal if Baldwin planned to use the gun. They say that didn't happen before Hutchins was shot.

The filming of "Rust" resumed this year in Montana, under an agreement with the cinematographer's widower, **Matthew Hutchins**, that made

him an executive producer. (AP)

MARIETTA, Ga: A Georgia sheriff pleaded guilty to groping TV judge **Glenda Hatchett** during a law enforcement conference last year and resigned from office Monday.

Bleckley County Sheriff



Hutchins



Baldwin

Kristopher Coody pleaded guilty to a misdemeanor charge of sexual battery in **Cobb County** State Court, news outlets reported. Hatchett addressed the court, saying the ordeal had "cut me to the core."

"For this man to come up and violate me the way he did is unspeakable," Hatchett said.

Hatchett is an **Atlanta** attorney and star of the reality courtroom shows "Judge Hatchett" and "The Verdict With Judge Hatchett." In 2016, she represented the family of **Philando Castile**, a black driver who was shot dead by a police officer in a Twin Cities suburb, in a highly publicized lawsuit.

During a January 2022 conference of the Georgia Sheriff's Association, while Hatchett was being introduced to a group of sheriffs at a hotel bar, Coody groped her, prosecutors said.

Thomas Brown, a former **DeKalb County** sheriff, said Hatchett came to the conference as his guest. (AP)

People & Places

Music

'Epoch' nostalgic

Troubadours back with resilience and gratitude

Turnpike Troubadours, "A Cat in the Rain" (Bossier City Records/Thirty Tigers)
When a band steps aside just as it appears to be peaking, it sets itself up for a unique challenge. That's what the Turnpike Troubadours did a few years ago, taking a hiatus to deal with personal challenges after their first five albums had turned them from an Oklahoma roadhouse band into a phenomenon. But the Troubadours are back with "A Cat in the Rain," their first new album since 2017. And they've returned with the kind of ferocity that feels destined to put them right back on that long-term upward trajectory.



Felker

The album combines the Troubadours' signature blend of country and rock — the tight sound built around the plaintive singing and vulnerable lyrics of front-man Evan Felker — with a new message of resilience and gratitude. The fresh material will only endear them to their extremely devoted fans, and it's compelling enough to introduce a really good band to newcomers.

On "Brought Me," a Felker composition, he spells out how happy the band is to be back.

"Oh now, still beats steady, this heart I handed you for free/Should you ever need a thing, it won't be hard to find me/Standing at the ready, with a dance or two still left in me/Wager that it won't appear that I forgot who brought me."

The earnestness is palpable. The band's bass player, R.C. Edwards, says it's a love song to Felker's wife. Felker himself describes it as a message to fans who stuck with the band through difficult times, including his own fight for sobriety. It's probably both.

But stick with them they did. The Troubadours have been touring to sold-out shows, adding dates to meet demand and bonding warmly with concert halls full of people who know every word to every song and sing them right back at the band.

That's quite an achievement for a group that always conveyed a sense that its default venue should be a country dance hall with beer-soaked, boot-scuffed wood flooring. It's a tribute to a red-dirt sound that was always too smart, maybe even too heartfelt to fit in neatly with some of the metrics-tested country emerging inauthentically from Nashville.

More than anything, though, it's a sign that the Troubadours haven't lost a step in their time away. They're back with more of the sound that won over all those people in the first place — resilient, weathered by life's difficulties and, ultimately, still on the rise.



"Epoch," DeYarmond Edison (Jagiaguwar Records)

Before Justin Vernon burrowed in the woods to make the music that became the Grammy-winning Bon Iver, he had an indie folk band with his childhood buddies that changed their lives forever.

DeYarmond Edison, a moniker taken from Vernon's actual middle names, lasted a mere two years. It evolved from the high school act Vernon played with brothers Brad Cook and Phil Cook in Eau Claire, Wisconsin. The split came suddenly in 2006 in Raleigh, North Carolina, when the quartet — then including Joe Westerlund — reached a creative impasse.

But the band's spirit lives on in "Epoch," a five-LP, 83-song compilation out Friday that includes previously unreleased tracks, live recordings, and other epilogues to the two studio albums by DeYarmond Edison. Hints of Counting Crows, Sufjan Stevens and even Lead Belly are tucked in a wide-ranging release, which spans teenage battle-of-the-bands nostalgia to gospel to blues.

The boxed set is packaged with a 60,000-word mini-book by music writer and friend of the band Grayson Haver Currin. It details the impulsive move these innocent Midwesterners made to stretch themselves in the South — and their wistful post-breakup reflections. The Cooks and Westerlund stayed in North Carolina to form Megafauna, eventually graduating to other ventures. An ailing Vernon felt the pull of home and famously wintered in a family cabin to heal and carve out his own path and sound.

Currin's eloquent report is required reading to fully appreciate this wandering collection of coming-of-age tunes that carry many of Bon Iver's genes. Without it, the albums could overwhelm a casual fan.

There are 20 songs from an art gallery residency the band played in North Carolina. "A Satisfied Mind" features Vernon's first use of his now-familiar falsetto at Brad Cook's suggestion. In a subset of Vernon's solo recordings, "hazelton" starts with a cascading guitar that birthed the 2011 hit "Holocene."

The 83rd track, "Set Me Free," sounds like a nine-minute elegy to the band, except it was recorded in its infancy. In the lyrics, "I've been dragging my feet in the sand / They've been bleeding all over this land," it sounds as if the band knew what had to happen to set everyone free.

Also:

LOS ANGELES: Irish singer-songwriter Hozier's third studio album, "Unreal Unearth," out Friday, Aug. 18. The 16-track collection is loosely based on Dante's "Nine Circles of Hell" and features the slinky "De Selby (Part 2)," "Unknown/Nth," "All Things End," "Eat Your Young" and "Francesca," which builds to a thrilling, Phil Spector Wall of Sound-like climax. "I'm proud of this record and enjoyed watching it come to life over the past year," Hozier wrote to fans. Also listen for Brandi Carlile on "Butchered Tongue." ()

If oldies are more your style, look no further than "Reinventing Elvis: The '68 Comeback," a new feature-length documentary about the making of the television special that revitalized Elvis Presley's career. When it aired on the night of Dec. 3, 1968, nearly half of the entire TV-watching audience tuned in to see Presley, clad in an iconic black leather suit, deliver some of the greatest performances of his life. The special landed on Paramount+ on Tuesday. (AP)



This image released by the Santa Fe Opera shows British tenor Freddie de Tommaso as Mario Cavaradossi in Puccini's 'Tosca' at the Santa Fe Opera on Aug. 12. (AP)



Robert Lamm, of Chicago, performs on Saturday, Aug 19, at The Greek Theatre in Los Angeles. (AP)



Bose



Martinet

Variety

REDMOND, Wash: Charles Martinet, the original voice of Mario in Nintendo games since the 1990s, is stepping down.

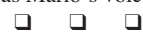
Nintendo of America confirmed Monday that Martinet will now serve in the role of "Mario Ambassador," traveling around the world to promote the beloved plumber, signing autographs and performing Nintendo character voices.

"It's been a privilege working with Charles to help bring Mario to life for so many years and we want to thank and celebrate him," Nintendo said in a statement.

In addition to being the original voice of Mario, he's also voiced Luigi, Wario and Waluigi in the video games. While he did not voice Mario in the recent movie, he did have a small role as Mario's dad.

In a question and answer session at a Canadian gaming and comics expo two years ago, Martinet told the audience "I want to voice Mario until I drop dead" in response to a fan's question, according to gaming blog The Game Crater. But he added "if someday I think I am no longer capable of doing it, I will tell Nintendo to look into finding someone else."

Nintendo did not give say why Martinet is stepping down or who would replace him as Mario's voice. (AP)



MEXICO CITY: Spanish pop star Miguel Bosé said Monday that 10 armed assailants burst into his house in Mexico City and tied him up, his two children and household staff for more than two hours while they ransacked the premises.

Bosé wrote in his Instagram account that he and his children are okay following the Friday home-invasion robbery. But he described the ordeal as "very tense, uneasy, and unpleasant." Bosé said the assailants took his vehicle and other possessions before leaving.

He added that he was not thinking of leaving Mexico because of the crime.

The city prosecutor's office said in a statement Monday that agents went to the gated community where the robbery occurred on the city's west side but were not allowed in and that nobody had filed a crime report. It said the singer's stolen SUV was recovered miles away.

It was one of two violent events in Mexico City involving foreigners over the weekend.

On Saturday, thieves on a motorcycle shot to death a man from India on an expressway, apparently to steal \$10,000

Stage

De Tommaso reflects on his 'star is born' moment

UK sensation makes US opera debut

SANTA FE, N.M., Aug 22, (AP): "British Tenor Saves Night at Opera," proclaimed the Daily Mail.

The opera was Puccini's "Tosca," and the tenor was then-28-year-old Freddie de Tommaso, jumping in at London's Royal Opera House when the scheduled singer withdrew after Act 1 because of illness.

That was nearly two years ago. Now de Tommaso has just made his US debut at the Santa Fe Opera in the same role, appearing to enthusiastic applause on Aug. 12, five days after a bout of laryngitis forced him to cancel his first performance. His final performance is Saturday.

And he'll return in the 2024-25 season for another debut, this time at the Metropolitan Opera, where he'll again be Tosca's lover, Mario Cavaradossi.

In an interview at the opera house here, de Tommaso reflected on his career so far and the "star is born" moment in London that first brought him headlines.

"So many people thought I was like an understudy or somebody they found walking down the street whistling 'Tosca,' and that wasn't the case," he recalled. In fact, he had been part of the second cast and was already scheduled to perform the role three nights later.

"But it was incredibly exciting," he said, his animated tone reflecting his exuberant personality. "From the moment I put my costume on until I took my bow two hours later, it felt like about 90 seconds."

De Tommaso's exposure to opera began while he was growing up in Tunbridge Wells, where he sang in his school choir. His mother took him to performances and his Italian-born father, who ran a restaurant, serenaded diners with Luciano Pavarotti recordings.

Once he decided to study singing seriously, he applied to the Royal Academy of Music. Mark Wildman, who became his teacher, remembers hearing him audition.

"My first impression of his voice was that it was a robust but rough-hewn diamond of a baritone voice with a surprisingly easy top for one so young," Wildman said. "He looked like a singer: big broad shoulders, barrel-chested, together with a very strong physique and a voice that matched."

That easy top got easier and higher as de Tommaso's studies progressed, and Wildman eventually suggested his pupil might actually be a tenor.

"I will remember his face lighting up as if he'd just received his most desired present on Christmas Day! And there was no holding him back," Wildman said.

De Tommaso immersed himself in recordings of great tenors and borrowed what he could: Franco Corelli ("so virile"); Mario del Monaco ("The dramatic aspect"); Carlo Bergonzi ("I don't think you'll hear any more elegant singing"); Giacomo Lauri-Volpi ("His high C was literally huge.")

"So I kind of made a trifle of singers," de Tommaso said, a joking reference to the traditional English dessert in which a chef embellishes sponge cake with whatever ingredients he likes, from fruit to jelly to custard to cream.

Demand

De Tommaso's breakthrough came at age 23 when - on a lark, to hear him tell it - he entered the 2018 Tenor Viñas International Singing Competition in Barcelona. He ended up winning three awards - the first prize, the Verdi Prize and the Domingo Prize.

The response was immediate. "It was mental, actually," de Tommaso said. "I remember afterwards being in the hotel in Spain and getting all these emails and Facebook messages from agents. Who are these people, I thought naively."

Among those listening in Barcelona was Peter Katona, casting director for the Royal Opera.

"I was quite startled when I heard him," Katona said. "It was immediately clear that he was above everybody else in terms of vocal quality. Often with young singers, there's something that is not quite there. With him, you could just lean back and enjoy his singing."

Now at 30, he's in demand at all the major European houses.

"It's almost a little frightening that everything has been going so well for him," Katona said. "With such a special talent one is always wary that he can pick the wrong role, overstretch. So far he hasn't put a foot wrong."

For the coming season he has two

new roles: Pollione in Bellini's "Norma" at Milan's La Scala and Gabriele Adorno in Verdi's "Simon Boccanegra" in Vienna.

And after his Met debut, he'll be a frequent return visitor to the New York house. Peter Gelb, the company's general manager, called him "part of a new wave of powerhouse tenors ... that we hope will become Met mainstays of the future."

At times de Tommaso finds it painful to turn down offers of new roles because they aren't suited to his voice in its current stage. "I feel like a horse that's ready to run, and when you're called back, it can be a bit frustrating," he said.

"One of the most important words I've had to learn to say is 'No,'" de Tommaso said, as he did when a German theater asked him to sing Radames in Verdi's "Aida." He told them simply: "It's too early."

Too early as well is the pinnacle of the Verdi tenor repertory, the title role in "Otello." It's his dream to tackle it in "maybe five to 10 years."

But sparingly. "These little bits of flesh, they can only take so much punishment for so long," he said pointing to his vocal cords. "And if you're singing the most dramatic parts like Otello, you can't keep it up forever. I would quite like to sing until I'm 55 or 60."

With all the pressures of a blooming international career, de Tommaso still marvels at the opportunities coming his way.

"What a job I have!" he said. "Just going around the world to places like Santa Fe, one of the most beautiful places I've ever been." He rattled off the list of other spots where he's performed this summer: Verona, Italy; Verbier, Switzerland; Peralada, Spain.

In Santa Fe, de Tommaso has been spending much of his time between rehearsals and performances playing golf.

"I'm not very good, but the reason I like it is my life is so hectic, and when you play golf you can't think about anything else but hitting that ball," he said. "Everything else takes a back seat just for the three hours."

With such a crowded schedule, de Tommaso said his manager has to remind him that he needs to take the occasional vacation. "After five or six days I get itchy feet," he said.

he had changed at a money exchange at the Mexico City international airport.

The Embassy of India said in a statement that "in the extremely regrettable

and tragic death of an Indian national," it is in touch with Mexico's law enforcement agencies, hoping the culprits will be apprehended soon and give justice to

the victim's family. (AP)

LOS ANGELES: ESPN and host Sage Steele have settled a lawsuit she filed after being disciplined for comments she made about the company's policy requiring employees to get vaccinated against COVID-19.

Steele posted on social media that she is leaving the Bristol, Connecticut-based company, where she has worked since 2007.

"Having successfully settled my case with ESPN/Disney, I have decided to leave so I can exercise my first amendment rights more freely," she wrote. "I am grateful for so many wonderful experiences over the past 16 years and am excited for my next chapter!"

Steele was taken off the air for 10 days in October 2021 and pulled from several high-profile assignments, including coverage of the New York City Marathon, the Rose Parade, and the annual ESPNW Summit, because she criticized ESPN and The Walt Disney Co.'s requirement that employees be vaccinated against COVID-19, according to her lawsuit, which was filed in May 2022 in Connecticut Superior Court.

She also was required to make a public apology, the lawsuit said. (AP)



Chinese Actress Zhu Hongxing, who played a role of Xiaoging in the film called White Snake, performs during China Film Festival in Lagos, Nigeria. Monday, Aug. 21. (AP)

Health

Protect newborns

US okays RSV shot for pregnant women

WASHINGTON, Aug 22, (AP) — US regulators on Monday approved the first RSV vaccine for pregnant women so their babies will be born with protection against the scary respiratory infection.

RSV is notorious for filling hospitals with wheezing babies every fall and winter. The Food and Drug Administration cleared Pfizer's maternal vaccination to guard against a severe case of RSV when babies are most vulnerable — from birth through 6 months of age.

The next step: The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention must issue recommendations for using the vaccine, named Abrysvo, during pregnancy.

"Maternal vaccination is an incredible way to protect the infants," said Dr. Elizabeth Schlaudecker of Cincinnati Children's Hospital, a researcher in Pfizer's international study of the vaccine. If shots begin soon, "I do think we could see an impact for this RSV season."



Schlaudecker

RSV is a coldlike nuisance for most healthy people but it can be life-threatening for the very young. It inflames babies' tiny airways so it's hard to breathe or causes pneumonia. In the US alone, between 58,000 and 80,000 children younger than 5 are hospitalized each year, and several hundred die, from the respiratory syncytial virus.

Last year's RSV season was extremely harsh in the US, and it began sickening tots in the summer, far earlier than usual.

Babies are born with an immature immune system, dependent for their first few months on protection from mom. How the RSV vaccination will work: A single injection late in pregnancy gives enough time for the mom-to-be to develop virus-fighting antibodies that pass through the placenta to the fetus — ready to work at birth.

It's the same way pregnant women pass along protection against other infections. Pregnant women have long been urged to get a flu shot and a whooping cough vaccine — and more recently, COVID-19 vaccination.

Effective

Pfizer's study included nearly 7,400 pregnant women plus their babies. Maternal vaccination didn't prevent mild RSV infection — but it proved 82% effective at preventing a severe case during babies' first three months of life. At age 6 months, it still was proving 69% effective against severe illness.

Vaccine reactions were mostly injection-site pain and fatigue. In the study, there was a slight difference in premature birth — just a few weeks early — between vaccinated moms and those given a dummy shot, something Pfizer has said was due to chance. The FDA said to avoid the possibility, the vaccine should be given only between 32 weeks and 36 weeks of pregnancy, a few weeks later than during the clinical trial.

If enough pregnant women get vaccinated, Pfizer has predicted the US could prevent as many as 20,000 infant hospitalizations a year and 320,000 doctor visits.

The only other option to guard babies from RSV: Giving them lab-made antibodies. The FDA recently approved a new drug that's the first one-dose version, recommended for all infants younger than 8 months before their first RSV season starts. Beyfortus, from Sanofi and AstraZeneca, is expected to be available this fall.

Cincinnati's Schlaudecker, a pediatric infectious disease specialist, said both the new antibody drug and the maternal vaccine are eagerly anticipated, and predicted doctors will try a combination to provide the best protection for babies depending on their age and risk during RSV season.

Another Cincinnati Children's physician who's cared for seriously ill RSV patients volunteered to participate in Pfizer's vaccine study when she became pregnant.

"The last thing a parent wants to see is their kid struggling to breathe," Dr. Maria Deza Leon said. "I was also at risk of being the person that could get RSV and give it to my son without even realizing."

Deza Leon received her shot in late January 2022 and her son Joaquin was born the following month. While she hasn't yet learned if she received the vaccine or a dummy shot, Joaquin now is a healthy toddler who's never been diagnosed with RSV.



Alzheimer's: Some private insurers are balking at paying for the first drug fully approved to slow mental decline in Alzheimer's patients.

Insurers selling coverage in North Carolina, Pennsylvania and New York, among other states, told The Associated Press they won't cover Leqembi with insurance offered on the individual market and through employers because they still see the \$26,000-a-year drug as experimental.

Their decision stands in contrast to Medicare, which will wind up covering most patients who take the drug. The federal coverage program mainly for people ages 65 and older announced shortly after Leqembi received full approval last month that it will cover the treatment while still tracking its safety and effectiveness.

Leqembi is the first medicine that's been convincingly shown to slow the cognitive decline caused by Alzheimer's disease, though only modestly. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration approved the IV drug for patients with mild dementia and other symptoms caused by early Alzheimer's.

That approval came after regulators reviewed data from a large study in which the drug slowed memory and thinking decline by about five months in those who got the treatment compared with those who got a dummy drug. Some Alzheimer's experts say the delay is likely too subtle for patients or their families to notice.

Coverage

Alzheimer's mainly affects the elderly. About 76% of the people taking Leqembi will be covered by Medicare, according to the Japanese drugmaker Eisai, which developed the drug and is co-marketing it with Cambridge, Massachusetts-based Biogen Inc.

But people under 65 — even, rarely, as young as their 30s — also can get diagnosed. They are more likely to have commercial coverage.

"That's why we're just dumbfounded that commercial plans are not covering it," said Christine Mann, chief operating officer of the Buffalo, NY-area Dent Neurologic Institute, which will provide the IV drug to patients. "It's almost like discrimination against these patients."

The full picture on commercial insurance is still emerging in the patchwork US system of coverage.

Companies saying no so far include Highmark, which provides Blue Cross and Blue Shield coverage in New York, Pennsylvania, Delaware and West Virginia; Blue Cross and Blue Shield of North Carolina, which has about 1.8 million commercial customers; and Philadelphia-based Independence Blue Cross.

Highmark and the North Carolina plan say they are still monitoring Leqembi and could re-evaluate their decision.

Independence Blue Cross made its decision after reviewing published, peer-reviewed studies and publicly available FDA materials.

"That re-evaluation made it clear to us that the existing evidence does not allow for conclusions to be drawn about the safety and effectiveness of Leqembi," said Dr. Heidi Syropoulos, a medical director with the insurer.

A Highmark spokesman said that company made its decision after also consulting with specialists to determine if the drug's benefit outweighs its side effects, which include brain bleeding and swelling.

Prominent insurers that will cover the drug for commercial plans include Kaiser Permanente and Elevance Health, the largest provider of Blue Cross-Blue Shield plans in the United States.



This image provided by Pfizer shows the RSV vaccine. US regulators on Monday, Aug. 21, approved the first RSV vaccine for pregnant women so their babies will be born with protection against the scary respiratory infection. (AP)



A SpaceX Falcon 9 rocket with the company's Dragon spacecraft on top is seen on the launch pad at Launch Complex 39A as preparations continue for the Crew-7 mission, Monday, Aug. 21, at NASA's Kennedy Space Center in Cape Canaveral, Fla. NASA's SpaceX Crew-7 mission is the seventh crew rotation mission of the SpaceX Crew Dragon spacecraft and Falcon 9 rocket to the International Space Station as part of the agency's Commercial Crew Program. (AP)



Tatyana



Bergeron

Discovery

'Shark bite victim had 5 ops': The 65-year-old woman who was bitten by a shark at a New York City beach has undergone five surgeries since the attack and will require more, her daughter said in a statement.

Tatyana Koltunyk's recovery from the Aug 7 shark bite will also take years of physical therapy and close medical monitoring, daughter Darya Koltunyk said.

"Though the full impact of her injury is not yet known, it has left her with a permanent disability," Darya Koltunyk said in an online statement posted on GoFundMe to raise money for her mother's medical care.

Tatyana Koltunyk was swimming off Rockaway Beach when a shark bit into her left leg, leaving a wound several inches wide and deep. Lifeguards pulled Koltunyk from the water and applied a tourniquet to her leg. She was taken to a hospital in critical condition.

Darya Koltunyk, a pianist and the outreach manager at Princeton University Concerts, said her mother will remain hospitalized for at least several more weeks.

Tatyana Koltunyk emigrated to the United States from Ukraine with her husband and then 3-year-old daughter in the 1990s. Koltunyk's husband died of a heart attack a few weeks after the family arrived, their daughter said.

Tatyana Koltunyk worked tirelessly to support her daughter on her own and had hoped to enjoy her retirement, her daughter said.

"She talked about swimming in the ocean every day, walking around the city with a new puppy, and traveling with us," Darya Koltunyk said, referring to herself and her husband, Gregg Kallor, a composer and pianist.

"My husband and I will do everything in our power to make her retirement as comfortable and enjoyable as we possibly can, but the road ahead will be extremely challenging for her and for our family," Darya Koltunyk said.

Experts said Koltunyk's bite was the most serious shark attack in New York waters in decades. (AP)



2 trapped wild geese survived: Only two of a flock of 15 wild Canada geese that landed and became trapped in the La Brea Tar Pits in Los Angeles in late July have survived after they were rescued and cleaned off.

Los Angeles Animal Services extricated the birds from the pits on July 31. More

The Conversation

Dead stars help 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 100 feet (30 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.

Detect

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 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. (AP)

than half had died, but the seven that were still alive were given to International Bird Rescue, a nonprofit that specializes

in rescuing and rehabilitating birds from oil spills. Of those, only two survived between transportation and rehabilitation



Los Angeles County-based NextVet intern Rowan Espino assists as Dr. Sarah Manion examines dog 'Tomo.' NextVet was created by Banfield Pet Hospital - part of the Mars Veterinary Health family of practices - to help address the chronic staffing shortages facing the veterinary profession. To inspire and help more students achieve their dreams of becoming a veterinary professional, Banfield this year doubled the size of the program to 30 students nationwide. Image taken on Monday, Aug. 14, in Pasadena, Calif. (AP)

operations.

After three washes for both and a chest graft for one, the two birds are on a steady track to healing. If all goes well, they will be released into the wild in about a month.

"It's heartbreaking to see accidents like this occur," said JD Bergeron, CEO of International Bird Rescue, in a news release. "Birds in a changing world face dwindling natural habitat and lack of habitat is a big problem for the wild animals that call Los Angeles home. It is natural for animals to become trapped in the tar, but in a huge city with little wildlife habitat, the lake can look very attractive to animals."

Famously host to a statue of mammoth succumbing to the tar, the La Brea Tar Pits are an ice age fossil site in the middle of Los Angeles. They contain species that represent the last 50,000 years of Southern California life. Still today, the pit attracts and inadvertently immobilizes mammals, birds and insects like "flies on flypaper," according to Bird Center's statement on the incident.

Bird Rescue's Director of Operations Julie Skoglund said the combination of the oil's elements and the birds' extreme stress were the leading causes in their deaths. The tar can burn the animals' skin, restrict their movement and put them at risk of suffocation. (AP)

SPORTS

MLLB Results/Standings

WASHINGTON, Aug 22, (AP): Results and standings from MLB games on Monday.

American League					National League				
East Division					East Division				
W	L	Pct	GB	W	L	Pct	GB		
Chicago Cubs	7	47	.621	—	Atlanta	80	44	.645	
Seattle	14	51	.595	3	Philadelphia	68	57	.544	
Houston	9	56	.552	8-1/2	Miami	64	62	.508	
Oakland	6	59	.528	11-1/2	New York	59	67	.468	
Arizona	4	64	.484	17	Washington	57	68	.456	
Central Division					Central Division				
W	L	Pct	GB	W	L	Pct	GB		
Minnesota	65	60	.520	—	Milwaukee	68	57	.544	
Cleveland	59	66	.472	6	Chicago	65	59	.524	
Detroit	57	68	.456	8	Cincinnati	64	61	.512	
Chicago	49	76	.392	16	Pittsburgh	56	69	.448	
Kansas City	40	87	.315	26	St. Louis	55	71	.437	
West Division					West Division				
W	L	Pct	GB	W	L	Pct	GB		
Texas	72	53	.576	—	Los Angeles	76	47	.618	
Houston	71	55	.563	1-1/2	San Francisco	65	60	.520	
Seattle	70	55	.560	2	Arizona	65	61	.516	
Los Angeles	61	64	.488	11	San Diego	60	66	.476	
Oakland	35	90	.280	37	Colorado	48	76	.387	

Henry appointed France Under-21s coach

Chelsea loan Lewis Hall to Newcastle

LONDON, Aug 22, (AP): Chelsea has loaned out of one of its most talented academy prospects amid another transfer window of big spending by the Premier League club.

Lewis Hall, an 18-year-old left back, joined Newcastle on Tuesday on a

season-long loan deal that includes an obligation for the Saudi-controlled north-east club to make the transfer permanent based on performance-related criteria.

SOCCER

Hall, a boyhood Newcastle fan, was named Chelsea's academy player of the year for the 2022-23 season. But he is deemed surplus at Chelsea, which has spent more than \$400 million on new players in this window to take its total outlay in the first three transfer windows in the new regime under Todd Boehly and Clearlake Capital beyond \$1 billion.

Former France forward Thierry Henry was appointed

coach of the national under-21 team.

The French Football Federation said Henry was given a two-year contract and he will also lead a France Under-23 side at the 2024 Paris Olympics, describing the event as a "major objective."

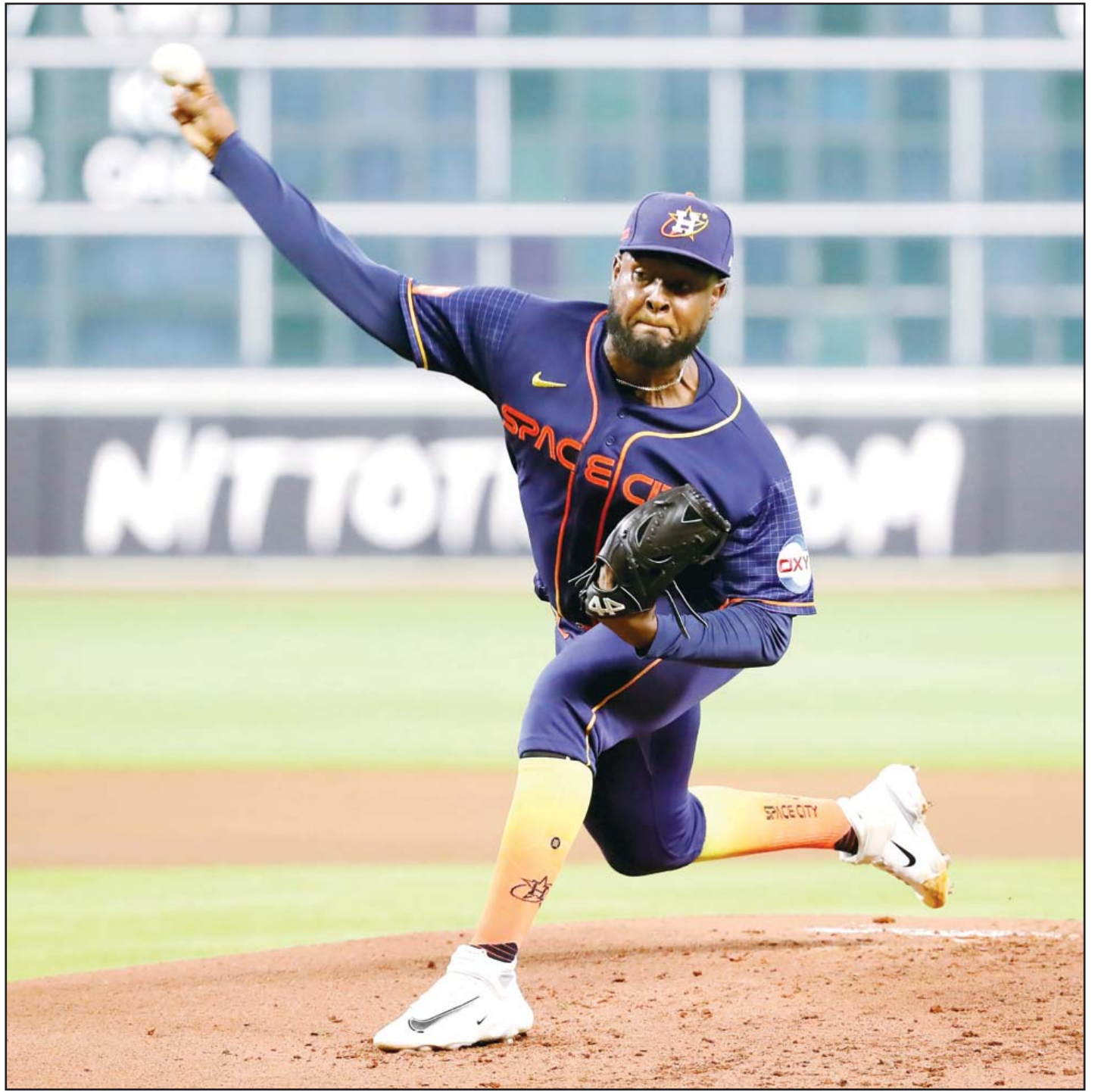
Henry's first match in charge will be a friendly at home to Denmark on Sept. 7 followed by Slovenia four days later in a first qualifying match for the 2025 European Championship.

The 46-year-old Henry had two spells as Belgium assistant coach, including at last year's World Cup, but was not kept on after Roberto Martinez was replaced by Domenico Tedesco as head coach in February.

Chelsea midfielder Carney Chukwuemeka has undergone surgery on a left knee injury he sustained in the loss to West Ham in the Premier League, the club said Tuesday. Chelsea didn't put a timeframe on the likely return of the 19-year-old Chukwuemeka, who has just broken into the team a year after joining from Aston Villa.

Chukwuemeka started against Liverpool on the opening weekend and scored a goal in the first half at West Ham before going off injured in the 45th minute.

Mets launch 3 homers to beat MLB-leading Braves



Houston Astros starting pitcher Cristian Javier throws against the Boston Red Sox during the first inning of a baseball game in Houston. (AP)

Change Name

I, KONDA LAKSHMINARAYANA S/O. K.SUBBARAYUDU, R/O., H.NO. 5/56, BHUVANAGIRIPALLI (V) UTUKUR (P), RAJAMPET (M), ANNAMAYYA (DT), A.P., HEREBY CHANGED MY SON NAME AS FROM KONDA THRIVENI SANKAR (OLD NAME) TO KONDA THRIVEN SHANKAR (NEW NAME).

Former France forward Thierry Henry was appointed

MOVING MADE EASY!
Let Us Handle Your Packing and Removals!
AFFORDABLE RATES
Quality Service, Budget-Friendly!
Call us today to book your move or request a quote online.
Let's get you on the road to your new home!
شركة جلوبال فريجت سيستمز د.م.م.
GLOBAL FREIGHT SYSTEMS CO. W.L.L.
Telephone: Nisha 90079810 | Sreesh 98571513
Email: nisha@global-freight.net | relo@global-freight.net
Web: www.gfsrelo.com

Mariners dominate White Sox

ATLANTA, Aug 22, (AP): DJ Stewart, Rafael Ortega and Francisco Lindor homered as the New York Mets won for the seventh time in nine games, beating the first-place Braves 10-4 on Monday night despite two homers by Atlanta's Marcell Ozuna.

Going ahead to stay with a four-run fifth inning, the Mets bounced back from an embarrassing series at Citi Field just over a week ago, when they lost three of four games and were outscored 40-13 in the series.

David Peterson lasted 4 2/3 innings for the Mets, one out shy of qualifying for the win. That went to Phil Bickford (3-4), who struck out three in 1 1/3 innings.

After Ozuna's second homer of the game pushed the Braves to their first lead, 4-3 in the fourth, Jeff McNeil, Pete Alonso, Daniel Vogelbach came through with consecutive RBI singles against Allan Winans (1-1).

Mariners 14, White Sox 2

In Chicago, Cal Raleigh homered twice and drove in six runs, and Seattle beat Chicago for its seventh straight victory.

Luis Castillo (10-7) pitched seven innings of one-run ball in his third consecutive win.

Raleigh and Teoscar Hernandez opened the fifth with back-to-back homers off Touki Toussaint (1-6), increasing Seattle's lead to 7-1. Raleigh added a three-run shot in the eighth against Brent Honeywell, and Dominic Canzone also went deep.

Phillies 10, Giants 4

In Philadelphia, Bryce Harper hit an inside-the-park home run, three teammates went deep and Aaron Nola pitched seven strong innings to lead Philadelphia past San Francisco in a matchup of teams leading the National League wild-card race.

Kyle Schwarber, Alec Bohm and Edmundo Sosa also homered for the Phillies, who moved three games ahead of the Giants in the wild-card standings.

LaMonte Wade Jr. and Joc Pederson homered for the Giants, who have lost four of five and 11 of 15. Sean Manaea (4-4) took the loss.

San Francisco began play 1 1/2 games ahead of three fourth-placed teams in the race for wild-card spots. Arizona, Cincinnati and Miami entered Monday chasing a playoff spot with 64-61 marks.

Astros 9, Red Sox 4

In Houston, Chas McCormick homered twice and had four RBIs to lead Houston past Boston.

The Astros bounced back after a three-game sweep by the Seattle Mariners this weekend. Houston opened its four-game series with a victory over Boston, which was coming off a sweep of the New York Yankees.

Adam Duvall hit a three-run homer

off Cristian Javier (9-2) in the first to put the Red Sox up early. But Houston quickly jumped on James Paxton (7-4) to erase the deficit.

Yordan Alvarez drove in a run in the bottom of the first and the Astros scored three in the second to go on top 4-3. Yainer Diaz also homered for Houston.

Javier allowed seven hits and three runs in five innings for his second straight win.

Cubs 7, Tigers 6

In Detroit, Yan Gomes and Nick Madrigal hit doubles in the ninth inning and Chicago held on to beat Detroit for its third straight win.

Seiya Suzuki hit a homer for the second straight day and a three-run second inning helped the Cubs take an early lead.

Daniel Palencia (3-0) retired two batters and stranded two runners in the eighth to keep the score tied after Michael Fulmer gave up three runs in the inning against his former team. Mark Leiter Jr. pitched the ninth for his fourth save in six chances.

BASEBALL

Beau Brieske (0-1) allowed two runs on three hits in the ninth.

Pirates 11, Cardinals 1

In Pittsburgh, Joshua Palacios hit a three-run home run and had a career-high five RBIs to help Pittsburgh send last-place St. Louis to its fifth loss in six games.

Palacios' drive capped a four-run fourth inning to put the Pirates ahead 8-0 and chased starter Drew Rom (0-1), who was a loser in his big league debut.

Connor Joe tripled three times and rookie Endy Rodriguez also had three hits for the Pirates. Andrew McCutchen, Palacios and Arika Williams added two hits each as Pittsburgh finished with 16.

Padres 6, Marlins 2

In San Diego, Ha-Seong Kim hit a grand slam and a double, stole third and scored twice to lead San Diego to a critical win against Miami in a battle between two NL wild-card hopefuls.

The Padres (60-66) are four games

behind the Marlins (64-62) in the wild-card race.

San Diego starter Michael Wacha (10-2) worked 5 1/3 innings, giving up one run, five hits and striking out seven.

Marlins starter Ryan Weathers (1-8) lasted 3 1/3 innings, giving up five runs and five hits while walking five and striking out four.

Athletics 6, Royals 4

In Oakland, Brent Rooker hit a two-run home run off Dylan Coleman (0-2) in the bottom of the ninth inning to give Oakland a win over Kansas City in a matchup of teams with the worst records in the major leagues.

Zack Gelof, Jordan Diaz and Shea Langeliers also went deep for the MLB-worst Athletics (35-90), who snapped a three-game skid and won for the second time in 10 games.

The Athletics won in front of their fifth-smallest crowd of the season (3,095) and avoided falling 56 games under .500 for the first time since 1920.

Bobby Witt Jr. hit his 25th home run for Kansas City. The Royals (40-87) have dropped six of seven.

Diamondbacks 4, Rangers 3, 11 innings

In Phoenix, Tommy Pham lined a two-run double in the 11th inning after Ketel Marte hit a tying homer in the ninth, lifting Arizona over AL West-leading Texas.

The Rangers led 1-0 going into the ninth inning after Adolis Garcia hit his 31st homer and Jordan Montgomery scattered four hits over eight innings.

Texas went with Aroldis Chapman over Will Smith (1-5) to close out the game - and it backfired. Marte hit the first pitch he saw out to left for a solo homer to tie the game.

The Rangers went up 3-1 on Nathaniel Lowe's two-run single off Kevin Ginkel (7-0) in the 11th and sent out Smith for the bottom half.

Geraldo Perdomo hit a run-scoring double and, after Marte was held at third, Pham dropped a two-run double in right-center to extend the Rangers' losing streak to a season-high five games.

The Diamondbacks have won eight of 10 to pull within a half-game of San Francisco for the final NL wild card spot.



Seattle Mariners' Ty France hits a double during the second inning of a baseball game against the Chicago White Sox in Chicago. (AP)

ARAB TIMES

Subscribe to our service "Arabtimes WhatsApp" to stay updated on the latest local and international news and events

To activate this Free Service:

- 1- Save our number on your contacts 92220947
- 2- Send "Start" WhatsApp message to the number you saved.

www.arabtimesonline.com | arabtimeskuwait | arabtimeskuwait | arabtimeskuwait | Join us on Telegram





Sha'Carri Richardson, of the United States, celebrates after crossing the finish line to win the gold medal in the Women's 100-meter final during the World Athletics Championships in Budapest, Hungary. (AP)

Sports

Latest sports scores at — <http://sports.arabtimesonline.com>

Richardson caps comeback by 'winning' 100m title at worlds

BUDAPEST, Hungary, Aug 22, (AP): Track, and fame, can be brutal games. Nobody felt that more over the past two years than American sprinter Sha'Carri Richardson.

On a sultry Monday night a half-world away from where her problems began, the 23-year-old earned a gold medal at world championships in the biggest 100-meter race this side of the Olympics.

Her victory, in 10.65 seconds over Jamaicans Shericka Jackson and five-time world champion Shelly-Ann Fraser-Pryce, capped a comeback two years in the making and made good on the mantra she's been reciting all year - and repeated yet again after her latest victory: "I'm not back. I'm better."

Two summers ago after Olympic trials in Eugene, Oregon, Richardson's road to the Tokyo Games was road-blocked by a positive test for marijuana. Her name turned into a litmus test in a wide-ranging debate about race, fairness, the often-impenetrable anti-doping rulebook and, ultimately, about the sometimes razor-thin line between right and wrong.

Richardson said she soaked it all in, surrounded herself with supporters, tried to drown out the rest.

"I would say 'never give up,'" she said when asked what message this victory sent. "Never allow media, never allow outsiders, never allow anything but yourself and your faith define who you are. I would say 'Always fight. No matter what, fight.'"

For this victory, in a field featuring four of the eight fastest sprinters in history, she fought.

She fought when the vagaries of the track rulebook placed her in the so-called "Semifinal of Death," paired against Jackson and Marie-Josée Ta Lou, who came in ranked fifth and eighth all-time, in a race where only the top two finishers were guaranteed spots in the final.

ATHLETICS

Posing for the cameras, Grant Holloway counted out his back-to-back 110-meter hurdles world titles, raising one finger, then another, then another.

It was as easy as "1, 2, 3." Holloway made his race look almost that simple, too.

The American bolted to a fast start and never looked back Monday night at world championships, breezing to a victory in 12.96 seconds that elevated him into elite company. Holloway joined Greg Foster as the only 110 hurdler to win three straight world titles.

"Remarkable," Holloway exclaimed.

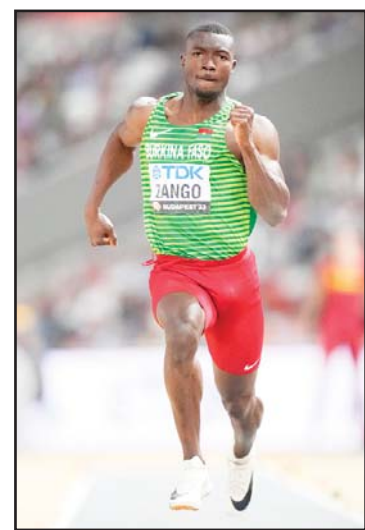
Before Holloway entered the scene, the mighty American hurdlers were in a little bit of a huddling funk (a funk for them anyway). They'd gone two straight worlds without a gold in the 110.

That wasn't like them.

"We were in a drought," said Holloway, who won his first world title in Doha in 2019 and again last summer in Oregon. "It was my goal is to get us out of the drought and I called it a res-



Grant Holloway, of the United States (center), crosses the line to win the gold medal in the Men's 110-meters hurdles final beside Shunsuke Izumiya of Japan (left), and Freddie Crittenden of the US (right), during the World Athletics Championships in Budapest, Hungary. (AP)



Hugues Fabrice Zango, of Burkina Faso, makes an attempt in the Men's triple jump final during the World Athletics Championships in Budapest, Hungary. Zango won gold. (AP)

toration phase. Now that we're out of the restoration phase, it's making sure I'm there."

He insisted his celebration shortly after the race while standing in the middle of the track was spontaneous. This wasn't a pre-planned sort of thing, because nothing can be planned with 10 hurdles standing in the way.

With the camera still zoomed in, Holloway held up all three fingers one final time before bouncing off to celebrate.

Rauf's 5-18 earns Pakistan big ODI victory over Afghanistan

HAMBANTOTA, Sri Lanka, Aug 22, (AP): Pakistan fast bowler Haris Rauf grabbed 5-18 as Afghanistan succumbed to a 142-run loss in their one-day international on Tuesday.

After bowling out Pakistan for 201 on a tricky, slow pitch, Afghanistan was all out at 59-9 in less than 20 overs. Afghanistan suffered its second lowest ODI total.

Shaheen Shah Afridi rattled Afghanistan's top order with the wickets of Ibrahim Zadran and Rahmat Shah off successive deliveries in his second over, then Shadab Khan took a brilliant catch of captain Hashmatullah Shahidi that left Afghanistan limping at 3-4.

Rauf's fiery pace and swing then routed the middle order.

Only Rahmanullah Gurbaz (18) and Azmatullah Omarzai (16), who retired hurt, reached double figures for the Afghans before Rauf claimed the last wicket and fell to his knees following the best figures of his ODI career.

"The spell of Haris was game-changing," Pakistan captain Babar Azam said. "We just wanted to bowl

as many dot balls as possible and hit hard lengths in the powerplay. We lost wickets up front and then Imam and Iftikhar got us to a decent total."

Pakistan's top order struggled against the experienced spin trio of Mohammad Nabi, Rashid Khan and Mujeeb Ur Rahman, who shared seven wickets.

Babar fell for a rare duck when he played the wrong line to Mujeeb's full-pitched delivery and was out plumb leg before, and Pakistan was reeling at 62-4.

Imam-ul-Haq survived three close catching chances to score 61 off 94 balls before he fell off Nabi's last delivery as he couldn't clear Rashid at mid-off. Imam and Iftikhar Ahmed shared a 50-run stand.

Shadab and Iftikhar held the innings together late in the innings until Iftikhar offered a tame catch at mid-wicket on 30 and Shadab couldn't beat the throw of Mujeeb and was run out for 39 at the non-striker's end in the 47th over.

Naseem Shah's 35 runs with Shadab for the ninth wicket just tipped Pakistan past the 200-run mark.

Acting PM calls WC champs inspiration for youth

BARCELONA, Spain, Aug 22, (AP): Spain's acting prime minister greeted the country's Women's World Cup champions at the presidential palace on Tuesday.

"You have achieved something very important. The girls who watch you see soccer as a place where they can develop athletically and personally," Pedro Sánchez said while posing for a group photo with the soccer team and later slammed the head of the Spanish Soccer federation for kissing a team member on the lips without her consent.

"The 21st century will be the century of women on all fronts, and the century of effective equality between men and women," he added.

Sánchez said the team members will be awarded Spain's golden medal of sports achievement in honor of their victory.

Players and staff landed late Monday in Madrid after a flight from Sydney, Australia, where Spain beat England 1-0 in Sunday's final. They were greeted by thousands in the Spanish capital in a celebration that lasted until past midnight.

Gender equality and women's rights have been cornerstones of Sánchez's leftist government. But Spain's Women's World Cup success has been marred by the forced kiss on the lips that the president Spanish soccer federation, Luis Rubiales, gave to player Jenni Hermoso during the medal ceremony following the final.

The incident caused an international outcry and several acting ministers of Sánchez's government have asked Rubiales for explanations. Acting Deputy Prime Minister Yolanda Diaz said Rubiales "has harassed and assaulted" a woman and called for his resignation.

Rubiales was forced to apologize in a video on Monday.

Rubiales was at the team greeting with Sánchez, who has yet to speak publicly about the incident.

During the celebrations on Monday in the capital, Hermoso avoided commenting on the incident. "We're world champions, aren't we?" she said. "Right now I think it's too much."

"What we saw is unacceptable," Sánchez said later Tuesday. "And the apologies offered by Mr. Rubiales are not sufficient, I would call them inappropriate, so he must continue taking further steps to clarify what we all saw."

The country's leading opposition party has joined in denouncing Rubiales' behavior, leaving him without any support from major public or political figures.

Asked if Rubiales should go, Sánchez said that it was not his call to make because the Spanish Soccer federation is not controlled by the government. But Sánchez did say Rubiales "has yet to be clear and compelling in his apologies."

Sánchez criticizes federation head

Coco Gauff's improved play makes her serious contender at US Open

WASHINGTON, Aug 22, (AP): After losing in the first round at Wimbledon last month, Coco Gauff holed up at her London hotel to be alone and think.

About what happened at the All England Club. About how she felt. About what she wanted to do to avoid that sort of result at the next Grand Slam tournament, the U.S. Open, which starts Monday in New York.

TENNIS

"I didn't leave the room for two days. I like literally didn't. I got my food ordered to the room," Gauff said in an interview with The Associated Press. "I realize: Those two days were necessary, because I got time to reflect and just allow myself to be sad. A lot of times on tour, we don't have time to allow ourselves to be sad, so then those emotions build up into the next match. And I think that those two days, honestly, probably helped me. I really completely changed my mentality."

That wasn't all she changed, and just look at Gauff now: Ranked No. 6, the 19-year-old from Florida must be counted among the leading contenders at Flushing Meadows for the sort of trophy she has set her sights on, and appeared destined to hold, for quite some time.

"Obviously the goal is to win a Slam," said Gauff, the runner-up to Iga Swiatek at last year's French Open, "but

I'm not going to be (thinking), 'OK, well, I'm supposed to be the U.S. Open champion.' That's not the mindset that I have. And when people put that on me, I have no choice but to accept it and just know that it comes from the heart."

With a new coaching arrangement, reworked footwork on her forehand and a commitment to aggression early in points, Gauff is playing as well as anyone. She has won 11 of 12 matches and her two biggest titles - in Washington and Cincinnati, both on hard courts - since that defeat against 2020 Australian Open champion Sofia Kenin at Wimbledon. One of the recent victories came over 2022 U.S. Open champion Swiatek, who claimed all 14 previous sets they played.

"Wimbledon was tough for all of us to digest," said Pere Riba, Gauff's full-time coach since last month, alongside temporary consultant Brad Gilbert. "But we talked about things she can improve. And Coco was open to that."

It was at Wimbledon in 2019 that Gauff became someone everyone noticed. Just 15, she was the youngest qualifier in tournament history, then beat Venus Williams while reaching the main event's fourth round.

The next two majors were also big deals: Gauff got to the third round at the U.S. Open before losing to defending champion Naomi Osaka, then eliminated Osaka - again the reigning champ - at the 2020 Australian Open.

Clearly, Gauff was no fluke. Clearly, she was a fast learner.



Spain's acting Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez stands with Spain's Women's World Cup soccer team after their World Cup victory, at La Moncloa Palace in Madrid, Spain. (AP)

FOOTBALL

The 2021 NFL rushing champ also wants an extension as he enters the final year of his rookie contract. Taylor is slated to earn \$4.3 million this season and has been one of the more vocal running backs in recent months who has complained about the low value placed on the position by teams.

Many running backs don't get second contracts and teams are generally unwilling to pay premium money for players whose careers tend to be shorter and younger, quicker, cheaper options are almost always available. As a result, only kickers and punters have lower franchise tags than the \$10.1 million for rushers.

Indy has not yet started negotiating a new deal for three reasons - it wants to make sure Taylor is healthy, it wants to see how Taylor fits in Steichen's new offense and it could use the franchise tag to keep Taylor in the locker room for two more seasons.