



MPs raise Durra field sovereignty, file black magic bill

Opinion

Narjes, wipe your tears... Allah is with you

By Ahmed Al-Jarallah

Editor-in-Chief, the Arab Times

NARJES AHMED represents a good example of the unjustified injustice shown to a category of people who were born, brought up and educated in Kuwaiti schools, and do not know another country apart from this one. There is no reason to prevent this outstanding student Narjes from achieving her dream of studying medicine.

This girl is not the only one who lived through the long suffering of deprivation, as there are thousands who were born and educated in Kuwait, and lived all their lives here but eventually find themselves stranded because there are some who refuse to recognize their humanity in the country of humanity!

Isn't this the slogan that we sang before the world, while it looks at us with a different eye because we did not grant the legitimate rights to this group?

All that Narjes Ahmed dreams of is to serve the country in which she lived, like any person who seeks to return the favor to those who embraced it.

However, there are those who deliberately prevent this, because the complex of privileges controls his behavior and his decision, as if the life he is living makes him believe that he is living in the Garden of Eden, and he will not allow anyone to share it with him.

In this regard, I remembered the story of a British doctor in 1920. The Medical Association in England held a graduation ceremony for a batch of new doctors. The ceremony was witnessed by the British Prime Minister at the time. During the ceremony, the Doctors Syndicate gave necessary advice to the new graduates.

He said, "After midnight on a stormy night, a lady knocked on my door and said - "Doctor, help me, my child is sick. He is in a very serious condition. Please do anything to save him." I hurried to help, not concerned about the extreme cold and heavy rain.

Her dwelling was on the outskirts of London. After an arduous journey, I found her home, which consisted of a small room. The child was lying in a corner groaning and in pain. After I did my duty towards the patient, the mother handed me a small bag containing money.

I refused to take it, and returned it to her while kindly apologizing. I considered my role as a human duty, and even pledged to the child that God would grant him a cure."

The narrator had hardly finished speaking when the Prime Minister David Lloyd George jumped from his seat and went to the podium, saying, "Mr Captain, allow me to kiss your hand. For twenty years I have been looking for you, as I am that child you mentioned in your speech."

He then said to the audience, "May my mother be happy in her final resting place, and be content; for her only commandment to me was that I should find you and repay you for the favor you had done to us in time of our poverty. You saved my life."

I don't know, but isn't it possible that Narjes Ahmed could heal one of those who struggle to deprive her of the opportunity to study what she wants?

In all countries of the world, governments work to benefit from creative people, and even entice them to come to them, because they realize that these are the ones who write their true history with creativity.

The United States has tens of millions of immigrants to it, and it benefits from them and grants them its nationality. The same happens in Australia, Britain, France, and other countries, which are not controlled by the complex of nationality and the purity of national identity.

Kuwait, on the contrary, educates people who do not know any other homeland, and then expels them, based on the fear of asking them for a plot of land and a house. We must bear in mind

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Day by Day

THERE must be a fund dedicated to the needs of the "House of Judgment", supervised by elderly men who are wise.

This fund must distance itself from the members of the "House of Ruling", to transform their youth into symbols to help stabilize the state, stay away from bickering, and not look at what one has and the other does not.

In fact, this is what is happening in the ruling houses of the Gulf countries and the world. Yet ... tomorrow is another day.

Zahed Matar

US Independence Day lauded

KUWAIT CITY, July 4, (KUNA): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah sent on Tuesday a cable of congratulations to US President Joseph Biden, on his country's 247th Independence Day.

In the cable, His Highness the Amir commended the historical and strategic relations linking Kuwait and the US, expressing both nations' keenness on bolstering ties and cooperation in all possible domains to serve their mutual interests.

His Highness the Amir wished the US president well-being

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By Saeed Mahmoud Saleh
Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, July 4: The National Assembly Secretariat General issued a statement, denying the allegation posted on some Twitter accounts about the cancellation of the sessions slated for July 11-13, 2023.

The Secretariat affirmed that the abovementioned sessions will push through.

Meanwhile, MPs Muhammad Al-Regaib, Khalid Al-Tamar, Ahmed Lari, Jarrah Al-Fawzan and Fahd Al-Masoud have submitted a proposal to allocate two hours of the upcoming session for deliberations on the recent price hikes.

MP Osama Al-Shaheen sent a letter to the Assembly on assigning the Foreign Affairs Committee to follow up the Kuwaiti-Iranian dispute over the Durra offshore oil field. He voiced objection to the Iranian activities, stressing that Durra field is located in Kuwaiti territorial waters.

He hailed the prompt response of the ministries of Foreign Affairs and Oil regarding the issue, adding that the people of

Time set for Sweden

Kuwait and the lawmakers are committed to protecting the sovereignty of the nation by monitoring the government's steps in this regard.

MPs Muhammad Hayef Al-Mutairi, Adel Al-Damkhi, Mubarak Al-Tasha and Hamad Al-Obaid submitted a bill about the punishment for those convicted of practicing black magic - 10 years imprisonment and KD 10,000 fine.

According to the bill, the death penalty will be imposed in case the magic leads to committing crimes punishable by death.

A total of 37 MPs have proposed allocating three hours of the session slated for July 11 to deliberate on the country's official stand regarding the burning of a copy of the Holy Quran in Sweden.

MP Majed Al-Mutairi submitted a bill on establishing Nawaf Al-Ahmad University for Applied Sciences. The bill states that the College of Basic Education at the Public Authority for Applied Education and Training (PAAET) will be the headquarters of the university.

MP Meteb Al-Ra'athan Al-Anzi criticized the decision of the

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Kuwait hits Israel aggression



A Palestinian man waves Palestinian and Syrian flags in front of an Israeli army vehicle during a military raid in the Jenin refugee camp, a militant stronghold, in the occupied West Bank, Tuesday, July 4, 2023. Inset: Palestinians carry a wounded man shot by Israeli fire shortly after he threw a bomb toward an Israeli army vehicle during a military raid in the Jenin refugee camp, a militant stronghold in the occupied West Bank, Tuesday, July 4, 2023. (AP)

NewsWatch

KUWAIT CITY: Kuwait has handed Egypt's ambassador Osama Shaltout a note of protest urging immediate legal action over footage on social media showing the Kuwaiti flag being set on fire, the foreign ministry said on Tuesday.

Kuwait's embassy in Cairo carried out a similar measure calling for the perpetrators behind the incident to be brought to justice in a way that is "reflective of the solidarity of bilateral ties," said a ministry statement. (KUNA)

ANKARA: Turkey's foreign minister said Tuesday that Swedish authorities' failure to prevent Quran-burning protests in the country is raising security concerns and questions about Sweden's credentials for possible NATO membership.

But Hakan Fidan said Turkey would still approve Sweden's membership in the military alliance if Stockholm "completes its homework" and presses ahead with efforts to address Turkey's concerns. (AP)

ANKARA: Egypt and Turkey took a further step toward restoring full diplomatic ties on Tuesday by dispatching ambassadors for the first time in years, the latest step in the reconciliation between the two regional powers.

In a joint statement, the two countries announced the appointment of Salih Mutlu Sen as Turkish ambassador to Cairo and of Amr El-Hamamy as the Egyptian ambassador to Ankara.

"This step aims to establish normal relations between the two countries once again and demonstrates their mutual determination to work towards enhancing their bilateral relations for the best interest of both the Turkish and Egyptian peoples," the statement said. (AP)

BEIRUT: The U.N. peacekeeping force on the Lebanon-Israel border said Monday its commander is in contact with officials in both countries over tensions regarding two tents set up by the militant Hezbollah group last month.

Israel filed a complaint with the United Nations in June claiming that Hezbollah had set up tents several dozen meters (yards) inside of Israeli territory. (AP)

PARIS: France has returned 35 people - 10 women and 25 minors - from a sprawling camp in northeast Syria housing thousands of people

linked to Islamic State extremists. Al-Hol Camp - named after a town near the Iraqi border - holds about 51,000 people, including many widows, wives and children of Islamic State fighters. Iraqis make up nearly half the population, but a sizeable minority are from outside the Middle East. (AP)

THE HAGUE: The global chemical weapons watchdog said Tuesday it found no evidence to support a claim by Syria that its forces were attacked using toxic gas in 2017.

The Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons said that its fact-finding mission concluded that "there are no reasonable grounds to determine that chemicals were used as a weapon" in two incidents in July and August 2017 in Masasneh, a village in the central province of Hama.

Syria asked the OPCW to investigate after reporting a "mortar attack with poisonous gas" on its army in the town in fighting with rebels. (AP)

LONDON: UK Prime Minister Rishi Sunak hosted Crown Prince Salman Bin Hamad Al Khalifa, Prime Minister of Bahrain, at Downing Street Monday for a bilateral meeting.

The leaders welcomed the signing of a new Strategic Investment and Collaboration Partnership today between the UK and Bahrain, said Sunak's office in a statement. The agreement aims to facilitate additional investment of more than GBP one billion into the UK, support the diversification of Bahrain's economy and drive greater cooperation between both countries in clean technology, business services and manufacturing. (KUNA)



Britain's Prime Minister Rishi Sunak, left, welcomes Crown Prince of Bahrain, Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa to 10 Downing Street, ahead of their meeting, in London, Monday July 3, 2023. (AP)

Palestinian wounds eight in Tel Aviv

KUWAIT CITY, July 4, (Agencies): The State of Kuwait strongly condemns the Israeli occupation forces' aggression on a refugee camp in the West Bank's city of Jenin, which resulted in martyrdom and injury of many Palestinians, the foreign ministry said Tuesday.

Kuwait categorically rejected this "blatant escalation and ongoing assaults carried out by the occupation forces against the Palestinian people, which represent a new series of their systematic violations of international humanitarian law and international agreements," the ministry added in a statement.

Kuwait, it said, called anew on the international community and UN Security Council to intervene, and live up to their political, legal and humanitarian responsibilities to stop this aggression, and to provide international protection for the Palestinian people in line with the international law.

The Arab League extraordinary session at the level of permanent delegates kicked off Tuesday, at the request of Palestine, to discuss the Arab movement to confront the continuous Israeli aggression on the city of Jenin.

Egypt's permanent representative to the Arab League, Chairman of the current session, Mohammad Orfy, affirmed in his speech that the brutal killing taking place in Jenin, using the Israeli war machine, would reduce to a large extent the chances of reviving the peace process.

He also added that the practices of the Israeli occupation in Jenin are a clear and explicit "violation of international law" and international legitimacy and hinder the efforts exerted to achieve the necessary calm and settlement for the same purpose that the peoples of the region and the world aspire to.

Orfy said that what is happening in Jenin is somehow linked to the continuous violations of Al-Aqsa Mosque, which are being subjected to at an accelerating pace, under public directives, and not only in disguise, by extremists.

For his part, Jordan's delegate to the League of Arab States, Amjad Al-Adayleh, affirmed the "total rejection" of all the repeated Israeli aggression and condemnable crimes committed against the Palestinian people without the slightest regard for humanitarian standards and international legal charters and constants.

He also stressed the need to stop the Israeli attacks on the occupied Palestinian territories, stop the continuous incursions into Palestinian cities, protect them from repeated attacks, and provide protection for the Palestinian people.

In latest development, a Hamas militant drove his car into a crowded bus stop in Tel Aviv on Tuesday and began stabbing people, wounding eight in an attack praised by Palestinian militant groups as a response to Israel's ongoing military operation in the occupied West Bank.

Police chief Kobi Shabtai told reporters that an armed civilian shot and killed the assailant.

The attack came as Israeli troops pressed ahead with their hunt for Palestinian militants and weapons in a West Bank refugee camp Tuesday, after military bulldozers tore through alleys and thousands of residents fled to safety. The two-day Palestinian death toll rose to 10.

The large-scale raid of the Jenin camp, which began Monday, is one of the most intense military operations in the occupied West Bank in nearly two decades. It bore hallmarks of Israeli military tactics during the second Palestinian uprising in the early 2000s and came as Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu faces growing pressure from his ultranationalist political allies for a tough response to recent attacks on Israeli settlers, including a shooting last month that killed four people.

Meanwhile, the Palestinian Health Ministry said Tuesday that the two-day death toll rose to 10, with two more deaths reported overnight. The Israeli military has claimed all were militants, but did not provide details.

During Tuesday's operations, the military said it had seized weapons and demolished tunnels beneath a mosque in the Jenin refugee camp.

A spokesman for the Israeli military, Rear Adm. Daniel Hagari, said Monday that Israel

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Prayer Timings

Fajr	03:18	Asr	15:26
Sunrise ..	04:53	Maghrib ..	18:51
Zohr	11:52	Isha	20:23

Local

Expected weather for the next 24 hours:

By Day: Very hot with light to moderate freshening at times northwesterly wind with speeds of 15-50 km/h causing rising dust.

Weather

By Night: Hot to rather hot with light to moderate northwesterly wind with speeds of 15-35 km/h.	Abdaly	46	27
	Jahra	47	31
	Salmiyah	42	33
	Ahmadi	43	34
	Nuwaisib	47	28
	Wafra	46	28

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

Kuwait FM, delegation visit France

Schengen visa, total exemption of Kuwaitis top talks agenda

KUWAIT CITY, July 4: The Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Salem Al-Abdullah held a session of official talks with the Minister of Foreign Affairs and European Affairs of the French Republic Catherine Colonna within the framework of the official visit that he and the accompanying delegation are making to the capital, Paris, reports Al-Rai daily.

According to a statement issued by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the minister, at the outset of the meeting, conveyed regards of the political leadership in the State of Kuwait to the French Republic and its wishes for continued growth, progress and prosperity for France and its friendly people.

Sheikh Salem also expressed his deep pride in the close relations between the two friendly countries and the advancement and development they have reached in all fields.

He praised the prosperity and continuous progress witnessed as a result of the bilateral cooperation between the State of Kuwait and France at all levels. He also praised the distinguished level of cooperation between the two friendly countries in the humanitarian and joint development fields.

The ministry explained that the session of official talks dealt with all aspects of the close historical relations that bind the two countries, the frameworks for strengthening and developing them at various levels, and the need for introducing areas of bilateral cooperation to new horizons that are in the interest of the two countries and people.

The issue of exempting Kuwaiti citizens from

the Schengen visa topped the topics of the official consultations that took place recently, and the joint efforts towards mobilizing European support to obtain the full exemption for Kuwaiti nationals, and discussing future entitlements in this framework.

In this regard, the French Foreign Minister expressed her country's position in support of exempting Kuwaiti citizens from the Schengen visa, and the positive impact of this file in maximizing common and inter-related interests at various levels.

On the other hand, the French minister expressed her praise for the high level of cooperation between the State of Kuwait and France at all levels, and her aspiration to continue the pattern of this strong cooperation between the two countries and to elevate it to broader and more comprehensive horizons and dimensions.

She praised the wisdom of the State of Kuwait, its balanced foreign policy, its efforts in consolidating the pillars of maintaining security and peace in the region, and its principled and firm stances in international forums.

The minister expressed appreciation for the efforts and unremitting endeavors offered by the State of Kuwait and its humanitarian projects and aid to support development and people around the world.

Also, during the talks session, they discussed aspects for intensifying joint coordination between the State of Kuwait and the French Republic towards many regional and international issues, and ways to continue joint efforts in establishing the foundations of international peace and security.

In this context, Sheikh Salem expressed appreciation for the historical commitment of the French Republic in preserving the security and safety of the State of Kuwait and its endeavors towards es-

tablishing stability and peace in the region.

During the official talks session between the foreign ministers, they discussed the latest developments on the regional and international arenas, exchanged views on a number of vital and important issues in the region, and discussed frameworks for enhancing joint coordination on them, foremost of which are developments in the Syrian crisis file, and the international efforts and endeavors to find a political solution to end the suffering of the Syrian people, as well as developments on the scene in Iraq and Yemen.

The crisis in Ukraine and its repercussions at the regional and international levels was one of the topics of the discussions, along with ways to enhance joint cooperation to face its consequences, as well as other regional and international issues of common concern.

The two ministers reaffirmed the joint commitment to promoting stability and security in the region, working towards preserving the international order, devoting the values and principles of international law, and maintaining international peace and security.

The bilateral talks culminated in the signing of a number of memorandums of understanding between the two countries, including a memorandum of understanding for the establishment of a joint strategic dialogue between the government of the State of Kuwait and the government of the French Republic, and a memorandum of understanding between the Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development and the French Development Agency for cooperation in the field of development, and the joint statement of the first session of the strategic dialogue between the State of Kuwait and the French Republic, which all reflect the determination of the two countries to develop and consolidate bilateral relations in all fields and at various levels.



Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Salem Al-Abdullah and Minister of Foreign Affairs and European Affairs of the French Republic Catherine Colonna during the meeting.

Other Voices

19 questions for charities

By Ahmad alsarraf

The Ministry of Social Affairs, the body that monitors the activities of charity associations, has submitted 19 questions to the boards of directors of these associations and foundations, all of which relate to the measures it follows in combating money laundering and terrorist financing.

The ministry also asked to know about its projects and methods of collecting and disbursing the money it collects in the form of donations, in the pursuit of the ministry, or rather the desire of external, international parties, to confront the crimes of money laundering and terrorist financing, and the need to expand the use of automated systems, which limit, as much as possible, from human intervention.

It was clear from the questions that they depend mainly on knowledge of the approved procedures related to combating money laundering and terrorist financing crimes, the financial powers of the various job grades in the association, the previous internal violations of the employees, the activities and projects licensed at home or abroad, in addition to the number of Knet devices used and electronic donation devices, and how to transfer money, whether through a company or an employee authorized by the association.

The ministry emphasized that these measures come within the framework of the efforts of government agencies to prepare for the international review process, which awaits Kuwait next November, from the Middle East and North Africa Financial Action Task Force (MENAFATF), to assess its experience in combating money laundering and terrorist financing.

The well-known charity evaluation form also includes questions not only about financing terrorism, but also about the extent to which there are approved organizational structures for associations and foundations, financial and administrative regulations regulating work, and a clear guide to performance governance, in addition to the extent to which there is a clear guide or list of financial authorities and powers

for various job grades.

The association or the foundation, the number of monthly meetings of its boards of directors, the availability of printed hard copies of these minutes, the methods of collecting donations and transferring funds, the limits of the powers of any member of the board of directors of the association or the foundation in any supervisory positions in the country, the number of bank accounts approved for the association, and the financial powers and powers to its employees.

By answering questions, checking the monthly or quarterly trial balance of the association or foundation, and the presence of an internal audit department, it is possible to find out if the association has special risks that deserve attention!

What the international authorities do not know, or know, is that "all" of these charities and foundations, with the exception of four or five out of 50, are structures affiliated with two religious political parties, or run by those who strongly sympathize with them, as the state is today almost in the grip of the Muslim Brotherhood.

It is natural to assume that the ministry will not be able to impose what it wants on it, especially with regard to its vague answers.

Most of the boards of directors of these politicized charities have gained extensive experience over a period of nearly a hundred years, in how to dodge, and not disclose everything, as this is not in their interest, as a large part of their operations is confidential. The real thing is to take money from the well-to-do, or those looking for a wage, and hand it over to the person in need, the sick, the needy, or the incapacitated. Its role is more complex than that, and the evidence is the complexity of its financial operations, the multiplicity of its associations and branches, despite the strong similarity in its objectives, and its refusal to disclose the sources of its funds or publish their budgets, or what the "in charge of them" get in terms of commissions or percentages of money they receive as donations, which are in the tens of millions, after it was once in the hundreds of millions!

This deliberate obscurity is the biggest evidence that there are many things that most of these associations seek to cover up.

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Development plan discussed

'Good quality childhood vital; subsidies for needy only'



KUNA photo

Kuwait's Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Salem Abdullah Al-Jaber Al-Sabah (left) shaking hands with his Hungarian counterpart Peter Szijarto after signing the MoU on tourism.

Kuwait, Hungary FM's discuss 'Schengen' waiver for citizens

KUWAIT CITY, July 4, (KUNA): Kuwait's Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Salem Abdullah Al-Jaber Al-Sabah discussed the issue of Schengen visa waiver for Kuwaiti nationals with his Hungarian counterpart.

In a joint press conference on Tuesday with Hungarian Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade Peter Szijarto in the capital Budapest, Sheikh Salem expressed his gratitude to Hungary for its support to the Kuwaiti case.

A statement issued by the Foreign Ministry mentioned that Sheikh Salem's visit to Hungary comes at a time when the two countries are celebrating 59 years of diplomatic ties.

Regional and international issues of common interest were discussed during the meeting, with the Ukrainian crisis at the helm. The Kuwaiti top diplomat re-asserted Kuwait's firm belief in peaceful resolution of conflicts, and that he hopes for Russia and Ukraine to meet at the negotiations table.

Kuwait is a main ally to the international anti-terrorism coalition, stressed the Foreign Minister presenting the state's positive role in combating radicalism.

The minister held Monday an official negotiations session with Hungarian counterpart where the two discussed the various dimensions of the sturdy bilateral relations tying the two nations and modes of pushing these relations to further developments.

The visit encompassed signing of a Memorandum of Understanding on tourism.

The issue of Schengen visa waiver for Kuwaiti nationals took precedent at the talks where Hungary, represented by its foreign minister, asserted its full support to the case.

Sheikh Salem began his European tour on June 26, first landing in France then to Italy, Austria and Hungary.

The top diplomat sat through numerous meetings with officials, and held political talks to discuss vital issues and bolster bilateral ties.

The Minister of Foreign Affairs discussed with the Hungarian Parliament Speaker Laszlo Kovier ways to upgrade

bilateral ties and expand cooperation in a variety of domains.

Both sides mulled strengthening bilateral cooperation and developing political ties to build a sustainable partnership. They also discussed ways to enhance cultural and legislative cooperation.

They reaffirmed keenness to take friendship and bilateral relations to broader horizons in order to realize the common interests of the two countries.

The Kuwaiti top diplomat Sheikh Salem stressed the strength of relations that bind the two countries and their peoples and the common denominators that unite them, especially since they are democratic countries that deeply believe in the universal human values and the importance of stability, dialogue, peace and neutrality. Speaker of the Hungarian Parliament Kovier praised the friendly and historical relations between Kuwait and Hungary and the continuous expansion of mutual cooperation.

He stressed eagerness to deepen the historical friendship in a way that serves common interests and meets the aspirations of the two friendly peoples.

Both sides reviewed the recent regional and international developments of common interest.

They asserted the importance of supporting international efforts to maintain the world security and stability.

Sheikh Salem Al-Sabah held official talks with Szijarto.

Exempting Kuwaitis from Schengen visa requirements and rallying European support for such move was of the main topics discussed in the meeting, according to a foreign ministry statement.

The Hungarian top diplomat, noted the statement, underlined his country's "full" support for the Kuwaiti request, pointing to his country's efforts in this regard; within its partnership with the European Union.

Both sides saw eye-to-eye and exchanged views on a host of vital issues, including neutral and peaceful approach to solving conflicts that would respect and reserve countries' sovereignities; a matter that would reflect on international peace and security.

KUWAIT CITY, July 4: Within the framework of coordination among all sectors of the Ministry of Social Affairs to implement the projects included in the development plan for the 2023/2024 fiscal year, and to discuss its views on the government's work program for the years 2023/2024 and 2026/2027, the Acting Undersecretary of the ministry Abdulaziz Sari held the first coordination meeting with the team responsible for the preparation and follow-up of the development plan in the presence of representatives of the Supreme Council for Planning and Development Affairs, reports Aljarida daily.

The attendees reviewed the projects listed for the 2023/2024 fiscal year, which include the establishment and completion of the mobile unit building for the elderly in Ishbiliya area, and the completion of the mechanization of the ministry's sectors.

The social safety network aims to ensure the subsidies provided by the state reach the most needy people, as per a performance mechanism that guarantees fairness and transparency in the distribution of wealth, with the cooperation of the World Bank, at a total cost of KD 860,000 over a period of five years.

As for the second initiative, it is related to early childhood development. It aims to provide the necessary opportunity for children to obtain good quality early childhood development and care according to modern educational curricula so that they are ready for the primary stage. This will be implemented with the cooperation of UNICEF at an estimated cost of 1.076 million.

The third initiative is related to improving and developing cooperative work by amending some organizing decisions and developing national competencies. It will be implemented through specialists in cooperative work, provided that the implementation period is two years without any financial cost to the state budget.

In addition, the meeting discussed the government's work program, which includes the application of governance in the public sector. This is in implementation of the directives of the Council of Ministers for combating administrative corruption and enhancing the principles of transparency and integrity in the work and activity of government agencies.

The Ministry of Social Affairs is the first entity to form a team specialized in corporate governance. It is currently reviewing the legislation, regulations and systems in force in the ministry to make observations and recommendations in line with the principles of governance. This is in preparation for measuring the rate of application of governance in the ministry, and measuring the extent to which its concepts are understood by leaders and officials.

The ministry has trained more than 130 supervisory employees since the implementation of the approved plan and schedule for the governance team.

The research and study of legislation related to the sectors of cooperation, social development, legal affairs, planning and administrative development, and the minister's office has been completed. The governance team has finished submitting preliminary reports to the concerned sectors regarding observations and recommendations on the legislation in force in the sectors, some of which stated therein was taken into account and issued in the form of ministerial and administrative decisions.

'Submit complaints': The Ministry of Commerce and Industry urged citizens and expatriates to submit reports or complaints regarding prices and other commercial violations through the Sabel application, reports Al-Jarida daily.

The ministry confirmed that the price control teams are continuously inspecting markets to monitor the prices of various commodities.

Meanwhile, Al-Anba daily has reported that the ministry is updating the ration card to amend information on the nationality of beneficiaries.

Sources explained that the old system has no nationality data, so the beneficiaries should visit the commercial control centers in their respective residence areas to amend the data. Sources said the beneficiaries should present their original civil identification cards, indicating the update is scheduled for the whole month of July.



Abdulaziz Sari

Mechanism for '23-'24 year defined

Monitoring private schools exams

KUWAIT CITY, July 4: Minister of Education, Dr. Hamad Al-Adwani has issued a decision on the necessity of activating the supervision of exams in private schools, starting from the next academic year 2023-2024 defining the mechanism for monitoring private schools during exams, reports Al-Qabas daily.

He also spoke of the need to tighten control over the exams, and called for assigning a sufficient number of assistant directors and heads of departments who are not part of the exams conducting committees, to supervise the proper conduct of exams.

The daily quoting the minister said this comes as a continuation of the approach to control the examination committees which the ministry has succeeded in achieving.

The decision stated, "The General Administration of Private Education will take action against private schools if the decisions or regulations issued by the Ministry of Education are violated in any form."

Power use up: The Ministry of Electricity and Water said the load index recorded, yesterday, a slight increase in current consumption rates recording more than 15,600 megawatts, reports Al-Jarida daily.

Meanwhile, the ministry has com-

pleted preparation for the organizational structure for all its sectors which will be submitted to the Kuwait University for review and matching the job description with each specialization, which then will be sent again to the ministry before forwarding the same to the Civil Service Commission.

Reliable sources told the daily that this is done based on the agreement signed previously by the ministry with the university to cooperate in the field of restructuring MEW and overhauling the organizational structure and job description for each organizational unit.

The MEW sources noted that the structure includes the creation of new departments, the most prominent of which include the renewable energy management.

On the other hand, the Minister of Electricity, Water and Renewable Energy, Dr Jassim Al-Ustad met the senior officers of the ministry to discuss the plans and projects of all sectors, in the midst of assistant undersecretaries at all sectors reviewed the visions and plans in each sector.

Informed sources in the ministry said, "The assistant undersecretaries have provided an overview of their development projects included in the ministry's plan, and the projects being implemented and others to be implemented in the future."

diwaniya ديوانية

A DIGEST OF PUBLIC OPINION

'Are decisions of Ministry of Foreign Affairs issued from within the ministry?'

"LAST November, Kuwait, through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, nominated its representative to head the largest Islamic university in Africa, in response to an invitation it received from the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, which thanked Kuwait for this nomination on the eighteenth of May this year, and sent a letter to our representative, the Permanent Delegate of the State of Kuwait at the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, and an invitation was attached to him that he should attend the meeting on the nineteenth of June, to be elected as the president of the university, after he was recommended and appointed as a member of its board of trustees, columnist **Bader Khaled Al-Bahr** wrote for **Al-Qabas** daily.

"Three days later, our representative sent the letter of the organization to the Department of International Organizations Affairs at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and a copy to the deputy minister, with a recommendation to send an invitation to attend the meeting to the person concerned.

"When no action was taken by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, this aroused the concern of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, so it sent a reminder letter four days before the date of the meeting, confirming that the candidate's presence is very important, but it appears from the sequence of events that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs may have ignored this letter, and it is likely that it did not notify the concerned person officially, who learned about the matter from other sources, so he took the initiative to address the ministry, asking it to respond to the letter of the organization to facilitate his mission, which the ministry has not paid attention to, to date.

"The reader might say, what is the importance of raising a topic of this kind in an article? However, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation is considered a broad interface that includes fifty-seven countries, and constitutes the collective voice of nearly two billion Muslims.

"Therefore, it is a significant weight that we can resort to diplomatically, as a formality when we resort to the Arab League during the invasion, to exert pressure to achieve our interests, or when we need cover for an international politician to confront imminent threats in the region.

"By the way, we remind the Ministry of Foreign Affairs that its statement of condemnation last week, which was nothing more than a formality regarding the recent incident of burning the Qur'an in Sweden; Saudi Arabia went further in its regard by submitting an official request to the Organization of Islamic Cooperation to hold an emergency conference in the city of Jeddah to take action on the issue, which made Sweden, according to what has been reported recently, apologize and open an investigation for fear of sanctions led by the Kingdom, so that the ministry realizes the size of this organization, which is not appropriate for it to ignore.

"On the other hand, it is also not appropriate for the ministry to repeat practices that would have led to the resignation of a former foreign minister, or to continue working with cadres that did not improve their performance, in addition to the need to stop unjustified policies, including, for example, supporting the presence of embassies in the country for all countries of the world if possible, under the pretext of intensifying and consolidating international recognition of Kuwait, which made us exhaust the public treasury with exorbitant costs to open embassies for poor coun-

tries while bearing their operating expenses, while we are not linked to any interests.

"This is what the Palestinian embassy mostly enjoys, which must be stopped immediately, as the black history of this organization is sufficient justification for its termination! In addition to ending the presence of embassies of countries that do not add any political weight to Kuwait, the absence of diplomatic representation for all countries does not mean that there is no recognition of Kuwait, as there is not a single country in the world that does not recognize us as an independent entity.

"In view of the criticisms we referred to in previous articles, and what we alluded to now of the inability to make decisions and the delay in deciding them, it makes us wonder: Is appointing a former ambassador as a minister sufficient to run a ministry of this size? Does the ministry still receive its decisions from a sovereign authority higher than it, as was the case in the past? Are the decisions of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs issued from within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs?"

Also:

"Some people may view the military as tough and arrogant, as people who have been trained to be hard-hearted, but the reality is completely different, as inside these strong bodies often live soft hearts," columnist **Dr Abdul Mohsen Al-Jarallah Al-Kharafi** wrote for **Al-Qabas** daily.

"The soldier at heart is a human being, no matter how hard they train him to be, and despite the harshness that wars and training impose upon him, the soldier remains a human being as God Almighty created him with the same feelings and sentiments, just like all civilians.

"What drew me to this article is a beautiful scene of loyalty, which reflects the size of the sincere brotherhood between two Kuwaiti army officers.

"Perhaps the manifestations of brotherhood and friendship between officers and soldiers in general reflect the beautiful emotional relations between them, and I will suffice with one example in this article as the available space permits.

"This is an elegy for one of the retired officers, lamenting his brother, the retired officer, who passed away recently, in which he mentions his virtues and the beautiful time they lived together.

"Whereas, in 2000, that is, nearly a quarter of a century ago, the retired Brigadier General, Musaed Khalifuh, suffered a stroke that confined him to bed and retired Colonel Walid Ibrahim Al-Toura, lamenting his death and remembering his virtues and the beautiful time they lived together.

"It is worth noting, that we recall the great national role played by the retired Brigadier General Omar Khalifuh, with a good group of his military brothers, when they entered the Hawalli Traffic Department on the first day of the invasion, and the departments concerned with issuing the raw materials and seals used in printing driving licenses and car registration books, which were used in the State of Kuwait, as proof of identity alongside the civil card, so that those in the resistance cells would issue these identities to hundreds, if not thousands of military personnel, officials in sensitive positions, and some members of the ruling family, so that they could use them to move easily in Kuwait, or to facilitate their exit from the country, and thus they contributed to saving all of these from the oppression of the occupation.

"What should I say in the lamentation of a dear brother whom I have known for more than half a century, who brought together the virtues in

one body? Am I talking about his piety, his morals, or his cheerfulness and good manners? As for his patience, he spent twenty-three years on his bed, patient, hopeful, and satisfied with God's will and destiny.

"Difficult moments have passed for him, but the most severe of them is when the beloved brothers joined him before the Maghreb prayer to cheer him.

"All our condolences to the patient, the Mutasbah, Umm Umar, his righteous offspring, the family of his successors, and the honorable family of Al-Abd Al-Jader."



"Since ancient times, Kuwait has been playing an important and strong role in foreign relations and its position in the world, especially in the United Nations, through its accession as an important international entity in the progressive and developed revolution, in addition to the oil revolution, which gave it a prominent position in global economic forums and oil organizations like OIAPEC and OPEC, as well as in taking international decisions regarding the economies of the world," columnist **Dr Ghadeer Aseeri** wrote for **Al-Qabas** daily.

"Undoubtedly, the role of Kuwait has been evident in various important periods – from independence to the Gulf War and Corona. It has presented initiatives and proposals. Its role is not limited to discussing global issues. The future of Kuwait depends on this role, as it has been showing the same boldness and strength in dealing with issues related to civilization, development, human rights, peace and security.

"The Kuwaiti diplomacy efforts must be intensified in terms of visits and relations with major countries, which play a role in opening the global civil construction and influencing global currencies, particularly the value of the dinar.

"Countries in the modern world are keen on restoring the global economic map. This serves Kuwait interests in the political, security and economic fields. This is in addition to the need for advanced legislation, like that of modern countries which realized the need for sciences on local tourism and the tourism revolution taking place in the surrounding region and the civilized world. Kuwait has a vital role and place in this environment.

"The international vision of Kuwait must always keep pace with global developments. This should be the mentality of the local legislator in order to balance the surrounding developments and the country's international positions. Since the inception of Kuwait, it has a legacy that makes us distinguished in the outside world.

"Cooperation on economic, political, security, educational, health, tourism and industrial development adds value to Kuwait. Thus, parliamentarians must ratify laws compatible with recent developments, without courtesies that could make the country backward.

"The country's needs in the coming years in terms of laws differ from that of the last 10 years. Modernity is important at this stage of enacting laws. The minds and concerns of the next generation have changed, as well as the states and policies.

"There is an urgent need for the mentality of those who enact, think and legislate to be in line with balancing domestic politics and international developments."

— Compiled by Mai Elsoukary



Bader Al-Bahr



The Kuwait Fire Force hosting the high-level coordination meeting. KUNA photo

Top-level coordination meet held to set 'controls' for transporting highly flammable materials: KFF

KUWAIT CITY, July 4, (KUNA): The Kuwait Fire Force (KFF) hosted today, Tuesday, a high-level coordination meeting to discuss the development of standards and special measures to prevent the recurrence of truck accidents loaded with highly flammable materials in the future.

The Kuwait Fire Force stated in a press statement that the meeting, which was held in its headquarters building, was based on the directives of the First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Talal Khaled Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, during which the reasons that led to the fire of a truck loaded with highly flammable materials on Al-Ghazali Road last week were examined.

It said that the meeting, which was attended by the head of the fire brigade, Lieutenant General Khaled Al-Mekrad, the Undersecretary of the Ministry of Interior, Lieutenant-General Anwar Al-Barjas, and the relevant government agencies in the country, witnessed a discussion of the mechanism for setting standards and procedures from the concerned authorities in the country, each according to its competence, to prevent the recurrence of such incidents in the future.

It pointed out that the controls and procedures that apply to all trucks transporting highly flammable materials that are in force internationally have been put in place in a safe manner to ensure the safety of road users, in addition to setting specific dates for the exit of trucks to ensure the regulation of traffic safety.

It indicated that the team expressed its thanks to the representatives of the concerned authorities in the state for their efforts in preserving lives and property and achieving community security through coordination and

MoE tells staff

'Do not leave vehicles in parking lots after work'

KUWAIT CITY, July 4: The Ministry of Education has called on all its employees to "commit to security and safety procedures and follow the instructions issued by the Public Relations and Media Department of the Directorate-General of Fire Department (DGFDF), reports Al-Rai daily.

According to the instructions the employees are requested not to leave cars inside the parking lots after the end of the official working hours, and in the event of a malfunction to inform the building management to take the necessary action in this regard."

The Undersecretary of the Ministry, Osama Al-Sultan, has warned against smoking in the ministry's building, especially on the stairways, not to use incense or burn candles inside offices, and has banned the use of heaters inside the offices.

In a bulletin circulated to all ministry sectors, Al-Sultan emphasized on the need of wearing the visitors and employees ID when inside the ministry premises and that in the event of loss or non-compliance with the order the administration must be informed immediately.

teamwork so as not to repeat similar incidents.

Al-Mekrad wished the companies and factories concerned with the matter to cooperate in applying security and safety measures at their factories and the trucks that transport these materials to ensure their safety and preserve the wealth of the national economy.

Ministry received 13,000 divorce cases during '22: show statistics

Panel to continue 'power cut' to violating apartments

KUWAIT CITY, July 4: The Family Counseling Department of the Ministry of Justice received a total of 13,814 cases during the year 2022, of which 6,033 cases were provided with the "case search" service, and 597 of them ended in divorce, reports Al-Rai daily.

According to the annual statistics of the Ministry of Justice, the cases that ended in revocable divorce amounted to 4,131 cases, or 68.5 percent. The cases that ended in reconciliation between the spouses reached 1,305 cases, or 21.6 percent. The number of cases in which the divorce was finalized reached 597 cases, or 9.9 percent of the total 6,033 cases.

In conclusion, the Family Counseling Department received 13,814 cases during its morning branches in Farwaniya, Reqqa, Sulaibikhat, Ahmadi, Jahra, Mubarak Al-Kabeer and Hawally areas. They are distributed as follows:

- 6,033 cases for which the case search service was provided.
- 3,844 cases were presented to the Centers for Settlement of Disputes and Combating Domestic Violence.
- 3,356 cases were presented to family dispute experts.
- 581 cases were provided with the required legal advice.

According to the numbers, the Farwaniya and Capital Governorates had the largest number of cases that were examined, which amounted to 2,753 each, followed by Ahmadi Governorate with 1,060 cases, Jahra with 994 cases, Hawally with 757 cases, and finally Mubarak Al-Kabeer with 469 cases.



Campaigns to cut power: The Deputy Head of the Judicial Enforcement Team at the Ministry of Electricity, Water and Renewable Energy and a member of the Committee to Address the Phenomenon of Bachelors, Ahmed Al-Shammari, said inspection teams are preparing to resume the campaign to cut off power supply for bachelors' quarters in all governorates of Kuwait – bachelors who reside in model areas, reports Al-Anba daily.

Al-Shammari said the Ministry of Electricity is a key member of the committee that was formed in 2019, and its campaigns have met with success over the past years and added that last June, the number of violations exceeded 90, which is a record number for one month, during which the team members identified persons stealing power supply and illegal water connections in all commercial, investment, industrial, agricultural and private housing sectors.

He pointed out this month till date 6 reports have been filed, especially those related to bachelors quarters, and the judicial police teams coordinates with the committee to cut off illegal power supply, which poses a threat to the safety of the network and people living in those properties.

He stressed that there are deterrent penalties against foreign investors, which in some cases may lead to deportation, in the event that the committee seizes more than one property managed by the foreign investor, in addition to the existence of heavy financial fines from the Environment Public Authority that may reach 50,000 dinars for bachelors' real estate.

Al-Shammari said: We will not be complacent in the case of violations, and that the law is applied on everyone without exception.



Deputy PM and Minister of Defense Sheikh Ahmad Fahad with Lord Mark Lancaster. KUNA photo

'Defense', British official discuss collaboration

Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defense Sheikh Ahmad Fahad Al-Sabah met Tuesday with British Defense Exports Advocate, Lord Mark Lancaster, and discussed boosting defense collaboration. The Defense Ministry said in a press release that Sheikh Ahmad received Lord Lancaster in his office at Bayan Palace on occasion of his official visit to the country and talked about the latest developments on both regional and international fronts.

Lord Lancaster, added the statement, congratulated Sheikh Ahmad on his appointment and wished him success and good luck.

On his part, the Defense Minister thanked Lord Lancaster for his kind sentiments and commended the depth of relations between the two nations. The British official was accompanied by the United Kingdom's Ambassador to the country Belinda Lewis and Air Force Defense official Simon Edwards. (KUNA)



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'Ensure validity of passport is not less than six months before travel'

Grades 12, 11 students begin training in cooperatives

KUWAIT CITY, July 4: The Ministry of Interior has called on citizens to verify the validity of the passport, and ensure that it is not less than 6 months before travel or when applying for a visa, reports Al-Rai daily.

The ministry indicated that the process of renewing the electronic passport for those who are 21 years old and above takes place through the website of the Ministry of Interior <http://moi.gov.kw> and an easy application. As for those who are below 21, they must visit the National Identity Centers with the guardian in the six governorates distributed as follows:

Capital Governorate (Al-Shamiya Center) working two shifts, morning

and evening; Farwaniya Governorate (Ishbiliya Centre); Al-Jahra Governorate (Sa'ad Al-Abdullah Center); Hawalli Governorate (West Mishref Centre); Mubarak Al-Kabeer Governorate (Al-Adan Center) and Al-Ahmedi Governorate (Jaber Al-Ali Center) working two shifts, morning and evening.

The ministry noted the electronic passport are received through self-service devices, which are located in the national identity centers in the six governorates, which receive citizens from 8:00 am until 1:30 pm, and 3:00 until 7:00 pm at Al-Shamiya and Jaber Al-Ali centers.



Students being trained: Kuwaiti students began work in cooperative societies Monday, as part of a project to train students during the summer period, under the supervision of the Ministry of Social Affairs, reports Al-Qabas daily. The cooperative societies sources told the daily that several cooperative outlets met with students who had shown their desire to receive training during July, while those who could not be accommodated will get their opportunity in August.

The sources stated that most of the cooperatives will pay the selected trainee students 150 dinars each, to enable the cooperative societies movement to absorb the biggest number of trainees, which, according to the circular issued by the ministry, several students of the twelfth and eleventh grades will benefit over two months. The circular also stated that each student will work for four hours every day and will have to adhere to the fingerprint attendance.

Indicated

The sources indicated that two work shifts, morning and evening, are allocated to the trainees, where they have the option to attend in any one of them, and must carry the identification document issued by the cooperative.

Haya Al-Maqrour, Vice Chairman of the Board of Directors of the People's Cooperative Society, told Al-Qabas that she met yesterday with the trainee students, and informed them of the basic principles required of them during the training period.

Al-Maqrour stated that the trainees will be divided into 10 sectors, and they will be trained to work as what she called, "receipt officer, cheese department, nuts, vegetables, and furniture, library, family supplies, catering and wholesale, administrative work, and small projects."

She indicated that a certificate of appreciation will be given to those who pass the training, and a financial reward that will be determined by the association.

PAHW requests for temporary roads

MPW 'delays until July 18' bidding for major road maintenance works

KUWAIT CITY, July 4: The Ministry of Public Works postponed until July 18 the bidding for major road maintenance works as per the request of participating companies for more time to further study the tender documents prior to the submission of their offers, reports Al-Rai daily quoting sources.

Sources affirmed that Minister of Public Works Dr Amani Boqmaz is keen on quickly starting the road maintenance works.

Sources disclosed that on May 15, the ministry announced the issuance of nine maintenance tenders -- six for roads and three for highways; in addition to the tender for the management, operation and maintenance of Sheikh Jaber Bridge.

Sources hinted on the possibility that the ministry will sign an agreement with the US Federal Highway Administration to supervise the maintenance contracts that will be signed with international companies. Sources explained this step aims to ensure efficient supervision and oversight of projects by a global expert, indicating this authority worked in the country in 1968 under the name 'Office of Public Roads in the US Department of Transportation'. Sources pointed out that the country's roads and highways were at the highest level of quality at the time.

Meanwhile, the Public Authority for Housing Welfare has requested that the Kuwait Municipality to allocate temporary roads to serve the East Sabah Al-Ahmad Residential City project for the benefit the residents of the area, reports Al-Qabas daily.



Dr Boqmaz

Narjes, wive

Continued from Page 1

that some Gulf countries work differently, and today they are teeming with expatriates.

We have to remember that the majority of the people of Kuwait either came on the back of a camel or on a boat and populated this land, and today they have become among the best of its people. That is why we say, "Have mercy on those on earth, so that the One in Heaven will have mercy on you."

US Independence

Continued from Page 1

and good health and further progress and development for the US and its friendly people.

His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah also sent on Tuesday a cable of congratulations to US President Joseph Biden, on his country's 247th Independence Day.

In the cable, His Highness the Crown Prince commended the historical relations between Kuwait and the US, wishing President Biden good health and wellbeing and further progress and prosperity for his country and people.

His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Al-Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah sent on Tuesday a similar cable of congratulations to US President Joseph Biden, on his country's 247th Independence Day.

MPs raise

Continued from Page 1

Ministry of Higher Education to suspend the scholarship for Kuwaitis enrolled in medical courses in Egypt and Jordan. He asserted the decision indicates contradictory positions; considering the Ministry of Health is hiring doctors and nurses from Egypt and Jordan and it sends patients for treatment there, while the Ministry of Higher Education does not accept Kuwaiti graduates from their universities. He called for providing slots for Kuwait students who want to pursue medical studies in Kuwait University.

MPs Jenan Bu Shehri, Osama Al-Shaheen, Ahmed Lari, Mubarak Al-Tasha and Hamad Al-Elyan submitted a bill on granting civil rights to the children of Kuwaiti women married to foreigners. These rights include permanent residency, renewal of civil identification cards every five years regardless of the validity of passports, salaries equal to their Kuwaiti counterparts if they

are employed in the private sector, and priority in public sector recruitment next to the citizens.

MP Abdullah Al-Mudhaf asked the government to present a program in line with the citizens' demands with a timetable for achieving goals. He clarified that parliamentary cooperation with the government depends on the quality of the latter's program.

The lawmaker said the ministers must know that their performance will be used as basis for questioning them or not.

He added the program of the government must include clear plans on addressing major issues like education, employment, health and housing.

Kuwait hits

Continued from Page 1

had launched the operation because some 50 attacks over the past year had emanated from Jenin.

The Jenin camp and an adjacent town of the same name have been a flashpoint since Israeli-Palestinian violence began escalating in spring 2022. It was also a hotbed of Palestinian military activity in the second Palestinian uprising in the early 2000s.

On Tuesday, hundreds of Israeli troops continued to operate in the camp, seizing weapons and explosives and destroying tunnels and command posts, the army said.

Israeli media reported that the army had arrested at least 120 suspected Palestinian militants since Monday.

The Palestinian self-rule government in the West Bank and three Arab countries with normalized ties with Israel - Jordan, Egypt and the United Arab Emirates - condemned Israel's incursion, as did the 57-nation Organization of Islamic Cooperation.

More than 140 Palestinians have been killed this year in the West Bank, part of more than a yearlong spike in violence that has seen some of the worst bloodshed in the area in nearly two decades. Palestinian attacks targeting Israelis have killed at least 26 people.

Israel says the raids are meant to crack down on Palestinians militants and thwart attacks. The Palestinians say such violence is inevitable in the absence of any political process with Israel and increased West Bank settlement construction and violence by extremist settlers.

Israel says most of those killed have been militants, but stone-throwing youths protesting the incursions and people uninvolved in confrontations have also died.

Israel captured the West Bank, east Jerusalem and the Gaza Strip in the 1967 Middle East war. The Palestinians seek those territories for their hoped-for independent state.



KUNA photo
Director-General of KUNA Dr Fatima Al-Salem receives Azerbaijan's Ambassador Emil Karimov in her office.

KUNA chief, Azerbaijan envoy discuss media co-op

Director-General of Kuwait News Agency (KUNA) Dr. Fatima Al-Salem discussed on Tuesday with Azerbaijan's Ambassador to Kuwait, Emil Karimov, ways of enhancing media cooperation between both countries. Dr. Al-Salem, during the meeting in her office, affirmed KUNA's keenness on boosting the bilateral relations across various media fields, hoping for further development and progress.

On his part, Azerbaijan's ambassador praised

Kuwait's media role in boosting the ties between both countries, and expressing his appreciation to KUNA for strengthening the media ties.

The meeting was attended by Deputy Director-General for the Editorial Sector Essam Al-Ghanim and Deputy Director-General for Administrative, Financial and Communication Affairs Mohammad Al-Mannai, and from Azerbaijan's Consul Mirdaoud Sultanov. (KUNA)

Bid to fill vacant posts to speed up work, complete projects




KUWAIT CITY, July 4: Days after the formation of the government, priorities were set in each ministry, foremost of which was to fill senior vacant positions to speed up work and complete delayed projects, reports Al-Qabas daily.

A government official said the number of vacant leadership positions in the state authorities has risen to 140 for undersecretaries and their assistants and directors of office because many senior officers have opted for retirement. The source explained that the Council of Ministers had approved "before the new government formation" decrees appointing 33 senior officers

in government institutions to fill vacant positions, the list of vacancies rose again due to some senior officials opting to resign due to several reasons.

The source pointed out that many government agencies have been working for some time without senior officers, which impeded work, indicating that the "Civil Service Commission" had nominated some personnel to fill the void after fulfilling the conditions.

According to the source the Council of Ministers will approve the appointment of many of many personnel soon, and the priority will be to fill vacancies in vital ministries and institutions based on merit.

Join Our Team

Kuwait Airways Job Vacancies Announcement
Kuwait Airways announces the vacancies for the jobs listed below in accordance with the following specific requirements and specifications:

Required Job	Qualifications	Required Experience
Chief Financial Officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Masters degree in finance, accounting, or business administration. • Bachelors degree in finance, accounting, or business administration in addition to 5 years of experience in related field. • Certified Accountant (CA). • Certified Public Accountant (CPA). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 15 years' experience in a leadership position in accounting and corporate finance for a major company. • 5 years in financial leadership positions that require continuous and direct communication with both the Chairman and the CEO.

General Terms:

1. Priority in appointment shall be for eligible Kuwaitis.
2. Age must not exceed 55.
3. Must have a great command of English and Arabic (Spoken & Written) and good knowledge with computer use.
4. Applicants shall be subject to the necessary conditions for appointment in accordance with the rules and regulations at Kuwait Airways.
5. University degrees not recognized by the official authorities in Kuwait will not be considered.
6. To be of good conduct and not convicted in any case involving breach of honor and trust.

General Disciplines :

- To apply, submit an employment application on the website www.kuwaitairways.com/career within 15 days from the date of publishing the advertisement and closure date shall be (20/7/2023).
- Non-compliant and incomplete applications will be excluded, and such exclusion shall itself be a formal apology without the need to notify the applicant.
- In case of equal results (after meeting the required conditions and passing the personal interviews) the differentiation shall be decided by the following criteria:
 1. Holding a grade of (90%) or higher for the qualification.
 2. Whomever graduated first.
 3. Age seniority.
 4. Married applicants are preferred over single status applicants.
- Applicants are subject to personal interviews, for whom meet the requirement for the post and will be notified from the company.
- Compliance with Cabinet Resolution No. 914 issued on 29/06/2010, which includes: (Retired persons are only permitted to apply in the narrowest of limits. For the categories of pilots and flight engineers, they shall be requested, as needed, to ensure continued safe operations).

How to apply:

- Applications shall be submitted on the website: careers.kuwaitairways.com
- Documents to be attached to the website:
 - 1.CV.
 - 2.Educational and professional certificates approved by the official authorities in the State of Kuwait.
 - 3.Civil ID.
 - 4.Experience Letter.
- 5. Career Progression Certificate from General Organization of Social Security (PIFSS).
- Non-compliant and incomplete applications will be excluded, and such exclusion shall itself be a formal apology without the need to notify the applicant.
- Receipt of the application does not mean acceptance and the company reserves the right not to accept any applicant for the vacancies mentioned above.

Kuwait Airways Company
5 July 2023

Condolences

Editor-in-Chief Ahmed Al-Jarallah and staff of the Arab Times offer their deepest condolences to the family of

Ahmed Al-Shazli

Translator, Arab Times



who died in Kuwait on Monday, July 3, 2023

May Allah the Almighty bestow His mercy on him

Reissuance of family visas for expatriates constitutes a breakthrough

New decision brings glimmer of hope to real estate sector

KUWAIT CITY, July 4: From time to time, the real estate sector witnesses a change in the attitudes of investors depending on the economic indicators and political conditions, and the resulting decisions that may negatively or positively affect the course of market activity, reports Al-Qabas daily.

There is no doubt that the investment sector in particular was the most affected during the past years due to the repercussions of the COVID-19 pandemic. It continued to suffer with the recent rise in the interest rates, in conjunction with the authorities' tendency to address imbalances in the demographics, and the issuance of strict decisions on the category of expatriates - the main operator of this sector. The news circulating about the resumption of the issuance of visas for the families of expatriate residents during the coming period brought a glimmer of hope among the real estate investors, with expectations that it would revive the sector to return to its status prior to the pandemic.

Real estate circles expect the decision to reopen "family visa" to constitute a breakthrough for the investment real estate market (apartments), which witnessed a decline in occupancy rates from their previous rates. It is expected to record about 85.5 percent in 2023, which is a decline from 89 percent prior to the pandemic.

The number of vacant units in the investment housing sector amounted to approximately 59,000 units, compared to 46,000 empty units in 2019. It is expected that the occupancy rates will gradually improve with the reissuance of family visas for expatriates.

The real estate community unanimously agreed that the authorities' move to resume family visa issuance will reflect positively on the real estate market and the rental prices, which constitute investment revenues for many citizens who faced unusual crises due to the decline in demand and the accumulation

of rents for tenants during the pandemic period.

The community stressed that the activity of the investment sector is closely linked to expatriates; therefore, the less stringent the decisions are for expatriates to bring their families from their home countries, the more the sector will flourish and vice versa. In the event of a decrease in the number of expatriates and their families, it must be matched by serious support from the authorities for the investment sector.

On the other hand, a number of real estate agents believe the suspension of family visa for expatriates is not the only reason that led to a decline in the apartment sector. They explained that there are other factors that directly contributed to the large number of vacant flats such as the increase in the investment construction activities in many areas of Kuwait such as Mahboula, Sabah Al-Salem, Mangaf and others, in addition to the increase in the rental rates in private housing areas, which led to an increase in supply and a decline in demand for investment real estate.

Revenues achieved

They indicated that the spread of the phenomenon of leasing in typical areas is mainly due to the high prices of land and construction, as the revenues achieved from leasing may be the most appropriate solution for the citizens to compensate for the exaggerated cost in prices.

Some real estate agents suggested that allowing expatriates to own apartments in Kuwait will revive the currently declining real estate sector and the investment apartments market, and relieve pressure on private housing rented to expatriates.

This will in turn lead to reviving the construction sector, the building materials market and some national industries related to real estate, as well as

revitalizing the economic movement in general.

Others believe that enabling expatriates to own housing units without liberating lands will crowd out Kuwaitis who are looking for housing for themselves, in light of the housing crisis that the country is suffering from. It will also raise the prices of investment real estate, which may lead to the inability of citizens with limited income to buy an apartment.

A real estate expert ruled out that the stagnation in the investment sector was caused by just a decline in the number of expatriate families.

He explained that the hikes in interest rates to curb inflation and the rise in land values, and the economic situation in general had greater repercussions on the sector. On the other hand, the extent of the impact on buildings remains directly related to the proportions of occupancy and return rates.

The local real estate market plays a prominent role in the national economy, due to which it is necessary to strengthen the hedging policy and protect the sector from the repercussions of inflation and new hikes in interest rates.

The investment real estate market is expected to improve during the next stage in the event that Kuwait witnesses more development projects that would need additional employment.

Furthermore, properties with finishes of medium and low quality witnessed an improvement in occupancy rates. According to real estate reports, these two categories represent 95 percent of the size of the local investment housing market. The occupancy rates in first-class properties showed stability during the past five years, but this category also witnessed a sharper decline in rents compared to the last two categories. This indicates that some families have moved from mid-grade properties to first-class properties due to the lower rents of the latter.



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Sl. #	Job Title	Min Req.	Qualification reqd	MTHS	Years of experience	Field of Experience
1	Process Engineer - Crude	1	Graduate in Chemical / Process Engineering with a minimum of 4 years certified technical apprenticeship training or equivalent in a similar role.	KWD 1,200	10	At least 10 years relevant experience in Oil and Gas industry having leadership / supervisory experience and responsibilities preferably with at least 5 years of that acquired in relevant Heavy Oil, Gas and Steam Injection Operations, toxic/sour facilities with hands-on experience on-site.
2	Process Engineer - Steam & Water Handling	1	Graduate in Chemical / Process Engineering with a minimum of 4 years certified technical apprenticeship training or equivalent in a similar role.	KWD 1,200	10	At least 10 years relevant experience in Steam generation/injection and Water treatment Units having leadership / supervisory experience and responsibilities preferably with at least 5 years of that acquired in relevant Steam generation/Injection Operations, toxic/sour facilities with hands-on experience on-site.
3	Operator I -Crude	8	Graduate/HND/Diploma in Chemical, Process, Control & Automation or Mechanical Technology with a minimum of 3 years technical apprenticeship training certified by OPITO or equivalent.	KWD 660	10	Previous role as operator for 10 years, at least 6 years relevant Heavy Oil production and Steam injection operations with hands-on experience on-site preferably acquired in toxic/sour facilities. Heavy Oil experience will be an added advantage.
4	Operator I - Steam & Water Handling	4	Graduate/HND/Diploma in Chemical, Process, Control & Automation or Mechanical Technology with a minimum of 3 years technical apprenticeship training certified by OPITO or equivalent.	KWD 660	10	Previous role as operator for 10 years, at least 6 years relevant water treatment and Steam generation/injection operations with hands-on experience on-site preferably acquired in toxic/sour facilities. Heavy Oil experience will be an added advantage.
5	Operator II -Crude	28	Graduate/HND/Diploma in Chemical, Process, Control & Automation or Mechanical Technology with a minimum of 3 years technical apprenticeship training or equivalent.	KWD 450	8	Previous role as Operator for 8 years, at least 4 years relevant Oil and Gas operations with hands-on experience on-site preferably acquired in toxic/sour facilities. Heavy Oil experience will be an added advantage.
6	Operator II - Steam & Water Handling	20	Graduate/HND/Diploma in Chemical, Process, Control & Automation or Mechanical Technology with a minimum of 3 years technical apprenticeship training or equivalent.	KWD 450	8	Previous role as Operator for 8 years, at least 4 years relevant water treatment and Steam generation/injection operations with hands-on experience on-site preferably acquired in toxic/sour facilities. Heavy Oil experience will be an added advantage.
7	Field Operator - Crude	32	Diploma in Chemical/Process or Petroleum Engineering - or certified apprenticeship in Oil & Gas industry, preferably in an upstream oil/gas company specializing in well operations/ engineering.	KWD 400	5	Should have at least 5 years relevant experience, preferably in Heavy Oil, oil & gas industry with background in well operations / service. Preferably, acquire 12- years of experience in operations of toxic/sour Heavy Oil and Steam Injection facilities.
8	Field Operator - Steam & Water Handling	8	Diploma in Chemical/Process or Petroleum Engineering - or certified apprenticeship in Oil & Gas industry, preferably in an upstream oil/gas company specializing in well operations/ engineering.	KWD 400	5	Should have at least 5 years relevant experience, preferably in Heavy Oil, oil & gas industry with background in well operations / service. Preferably, acquire 12- years of experience in operations of toxic/sour Heavy Oil and Steam Injection facilities.
9	Senior Mechanic	10	Diploma in Mechanical Engineering or Equivalent.	KWD 390	8	Have eight (8) years experience in Oil field, Refinery, Petrochemical process plant etc. Have at least (5) years hand on experience in the installation, repair and maintenance of gas turbines, machinery (such as compressors, pumps, engines and the like) in a similar position.
10	Mechanic	15	Have Secondary School plus Technical Certificate with two (2) years technical apprenticeship training, or equivalent.	KWD 240	4	Have four (4) years experience preferably in oil industry, refinery, process plant etc. on repair, trouble-shooting, overhauling of mechanical equipment including pumps, turbines, compressors, engines etc.
11	Senior Instrument Technician	12	Have Diploma in instrumentation/ Electronics Engineering or equivalent.	KWD 400	8	Have eight (8) years experience in similar facilities to those specified within the Technical Specification with minimum four (4) years in similar position. Have the skill to check, calibrate and repair pneumatic, hydraulic and electronic instruments and controls and protective interlocks.
12	Instrument Technician	19	Diploma in Instrumentation/ electronic or equivalent with five (5) years of experience Or Have Secondary School plus (2) years-technical training or equivalent, with 8 year of experience in oil and Gas industry.	KWD 250	5	Have five (5) years experience in the installation repair and maintenance pneumatic, hydraulic and electronic metering instruments and control systems.
13	Instrument Analyser Technician	3	Have a Diploma in Electronics/ Instrument Eng.	KWD 250	5	Have five (5) year experience in installation and maintenance and repair of different types of analyzer as listed above.
14	Senior Electrical Technician	5	Diploma in Electrical Engineering or equivalent.	KWD 400	8	Have eight (8) years (post apprenticeship) experience as an electrician, at least (5) years hand on experience in the installation, repair and maintenance of electrical equipment like motors, transformers, generators, circuit breakers UPS, VSDs and cabling in similar position.
15	Electrician	9	Diploma in Electrical	KWD 175	5	Maintenance & repair of all electrical equipment; operate HT / LT network; troubleshooting of motors, circuit breakers, starters, transformers, VSDs, UPS; Microprocessor boards
16	Cable Jointer	3	Have Secondary School plus two (2) years technical apprenticeship training or equivalent.	KWD 250	5	Must have minimum five (5) Years' experience of making joints on different types and sizes of cables, both PVC, XLPE and paper-insulated for voltage up to 33 KV.
17	Cable Jointer's Mate	3	Diploma in Electrical	KWD 120		Must have some experience in assisting cable jointer or electrician.
18	Machinist (Lath/ Drilling / Shearing Machine Operator)	2	Have Secondary School plus Technical Certificate with two (2) years technical apprenticeship training, or equivalent.	KWD 140	5	Have five (5) years' experience preferably in oil industry, refinery, process plant etc. on all type of machines in machine shop activities.
19	Mechanical Supervisor	3	Diploma in Mechanical Engineering or equivalent.	KWD 500	10	"Ten (10) years' experience in the maintenance of similar facilities, with the last two (2) years in a similar position. Co-ordinates work functions or personnel in his area of responsibility including all disciplines. Ensures the implementation of the routine/preventive/overhaul programme by concerned personnel to meet the maintenance goals both at site and in the Workshop Facilities. Organizes in liaison with KOC Supervisor earliest completion of any major breakdowns in the field. Ensures his personnel's adherence to safe working. Continually reviews and updates maintenance requirements/ procedures. Prepares data update/ review schedules and monitors to ensure its implementation. Knowledge in disassembling and reassembling equipment according to specifications. Drives Contractor's vehicles as required."
20	Instrument Supervisor	3	Diploma in Instrumentation/ Electronics Engineering or equivalent.	KWD 500	10	Ten (10) years (Post Engineering) experience in the maintenance of similar facilities, with the last two (2) years in a similar position. Co-ordinates work functions or personnel in his area of responsibility including all disciplines. Ensures the implementation of the routine/preventive/overhaul programme by concerned personnel to meet the maintenance goals both at site and in the Workshop Facilities. Organizes in liaison with KOC Supervisor earliest completion of any major breakdowns in the field. Ensures his personnel's adherence to safe working. Continually reviews and updates maintenance requirements/ procedures. Prepares data update/ review schedules and monitors to ensure its implementation. Thorough understanding of Planning and scheduling techniques. Knowledge in disassembling and reassembling equipment according to specifications. Drives Contractor's vehicles as required.
21	Electrical Supervisor	3	Diploma in Electrical Engineering or equivalent.	KWD 500	10	Ten (10) years (Post Engineering) experience in the maintenance of similar facilities, with the last two (2) years in a similar position. Co-ordinates work functions or personnel in his area of responsibility including all disciplines. Ensures the implementation of the routine/preventive/overhaul programme by concerned personnel to meet the maintenance goals both at site and in the Workshop Facilities. Organizes in liaison with KOC Supervisor earliest completion of any major breakdowns in the field. Ensures his personnel's adherence to safe working. Continually reviews and updates maintenance requirements/ procedures. Prepares data update/ review schedules and monitors to ensure its implementation. Thorough understanding of Planning and scheduling techniques. Knowledge in disassembling and reassembling equipment according to specifications. Drives Contractor's vehicles as required.

Suitable Candidates with eligibility for Local Transfer can forward your CV along with your supporting documents (Educational Certificates, Experience Certificates, Passport, Civil ID and Work permit copy) to: Careers@gulfspic.com

Or submit it directly at the Head Office of GULF SPIC GENERAL TRADING & CONTRACTING COMPANY, W.L. L/PLOT # 5, BLOCK # 8, ROAD # 100, SHUAIBA INDUSTRIAL AREA, KUWAIT.



Riad Salameh, Lebanon's Central Bank governor, smiles during a press conference in Beirut, on Nov. 11, 2019. An official close to the investigation said Tuesday, July 4, 2023 that a French court upheld the freezing of the assets of the embattled central bank governor. (AP)

French court upholds freezing of assets of Lebanon's bank chief

A French court Tuesday upheld the freezing of the assets of Lebanon's embattled central bank governor, rejecting his appeal to have them released, an official close to the investigation said. Several European countries are investigating central bank Gov. Riad Salameh and his associates over myriad alleged financial crimes, including illicit enrichment and laundering of \$330 million. A French investigative judge on May 16 issued an international arrest warrant, or Interpol red notice, for the 72-year-old

Salameh after he failed to show up in Paris for questioning. France, Germany and Luxembourg in March 2022 froze more than \$130 million in assets linked to the investigation. The European Union Agency for Criminal Justice Cooperation, or Eurojust, said at the time that the investigation targets five suspects accused of money laundering. Salameh, who has repeatedly denied charges of corruption had requested that his assets be unfrozen.

On Tuesday, a French appeals court rejected his appeal, saying that his assets will remain frozen, according to an official close to the investigation who spoke on condition of anonymity in line with regulations. The central governor has repeatedly said that he made his wealth from his years working as an investment banker at Merrill Lynch, inherited properties and investments. He said he would only resign if convicted of a crime. (AP)

Market Movements

04-07-2023

	Change	Closing pts		Change	Closing pts
UAE - DFM	+1.35	3,930.93	JAPAN - Nikkei	-0.98	33,422.52
PHILIPPINES - PSEI	+0.10	6,514.47	PAKISTAN - KSE 100	-0.91	43,502.89
SAUDI - Tadawul	+0.64	11,618.72	EGYPT - EGX 30	-1.13	17,466.18

Business

Singapore and Jakarta declined

Asian stocks mixed after Wall St hits 15-month high ahead of holiday

BEIJING, July 4, (AP): Asian stock markets were mixed Tuesday after Australia's central bank kept its key lending rate unchanged and Wall Street hit a 15-month high. Tokyo and Seoul retreated. Hong Kong and Sydney advanced. Shanghai was unchanged. Oil prices rose after Saudi Arabia and Russia said they are extending cuts to the amount of oil they pump to the world to try to prop up prices. Wall Street's benchmark S&P 500 index lost 0.1% on Monday ahead of a report this week on U.S. employment, one of the factors watched by the Federal Reserve in deciding on possible additional interest rate hikes. The Shanghai Composite Index held steady at 3,243.86 while the Nikkei 225 in Tokyo shed 0.9% to 33,422.52. The Hang Seng in Hong Kong advanced 0.4% to 19,393.33. Sydney's S&P-ASX 200 gained 0.5% to 7,280.80 after the Reserve Bank of Australia left its benchmark lending rate at 4.1% in the day's biggest market data point. Australia's inflation is past its peak but "still too high and will remain so for some time," said RBA Gov. Philip Lowe in a statement. He warned "further tightening of monetary policy may be required." The Kospi in Seoul lost 0.3% to 2,594.32 while India's Sensex opened up 0.1% at 65,292.46. New Zealand and Bangkok advanced while Singapore and Jakarta declined. On Monday, the S&P 500 rose to

4,455.59, its highest level since April 2022. The benchmark has climbed in six of the past seven weeks for a 16% gain so far this year. The Dow Jones Industrial Average advanced 0.1% to 34,418.47, and the Nasdaq composite added 0.2% to 13,816.77. Traders expect at least a brief recession following U.S. and European rate hikes to cool inflation but have been encouraged by signs U.S. hiring is strong. U.S. manufacturing contracted in June for an eighth month, according to a monthly survey released Monday by the Institute for Supply Management. The government report Friday on hiring and wages is one of the last big data points before the Fed's meeting next month on interest rate policy. Tesla Inc. was the strongest force lifting the S&P 500 upward after the market heavyweight climbed 6.9%. The company said spring deliveries surged by 83% from a year earlier. That was more than analysts expected. Tesla reports earnings on July 19. Rivian Automotive, another electric-vehicle company, jumped 17.4% after spring deliveries topped forecasts. Apple Inc. slipped 0.8% after becoming the first U.S. stock on Friday to finish a trading day with a total value of more than \$3 trillion. The Fed has hinted it may be nearing the end of rate hikes, which would mean less pressure on economic activity. Much of Wall Street expects a rate hike July 26.

ISA preps to resume negotiations to grant deep sea mining permits



Coral on Moore Reef is visible in Gunggandji Sea Country off coast of Queensland in eastern Australia on Nov. 13, 2022. The United Nations body that regulates the world's ocean floor is preparing to resume negotiations in July 2023, that could open the international seabed for mining, including for materials vital for the green energy transition. Conservationists worry that ecosystems will be damaged by mining, especially without any environmental protocols. (AP)

Facebook faces legal setback

Meta looks to 'target' Twitter with rival app called Threads

LONDON, July 4, (AP): Meta is poised to unveil a new app that appears to mimic Twitter - a direct challenge to the social media platform owned by Elon Musk. A listing for the app, called Threads, appeared on Apple's App Store, indicating it would debut as early as Thursday. It is billed as a "text-based conversation app" that is linked to Instagram, with the listing teasing a Twitter-like microblogging experience. "Threads is where communities come together to discuss everything from the topics you care about today to what'll be trending tomorrow," it said. Instagram users will be able to keep their user names and follow the same accounts on the new app, according to screenshots displayed on the App Store listing. Meta declined to comment on the app. Musk replied "yeah" to a tweet from Twitter co-founder Jack Dorsey saying, "All your Threads are belong to us," along with a screenshot from the App Store's privacy section showing what personal information might be collected by the new Meta app. Threads could be the latest headache for Musk, who acquired Twitter last year for \$44 billion and has been making changes that have unnerved advertisers and turned off users, including new daily limits on the number of tweets people can view. Meta has good timing because Twitter users are growing frustrated with Musk's changes and looking for a viable alternative, said Matt Navarra, a social media consultant. Threads presents the "opportunity to jump to a platform that can give them many of the things that they want Twitter to continue to be that it no longer is," he said. Allowing Instagram users to port their profile to Threads could give the new app more traction with potential users by providing a ready-made set of accounts for them to follow, said Navarra, former director of social media at tech news site The Next Web and digital communications adviser for the British government. Twitter has rolled out a series of unpopular changes in recent days, including a requirement for users to be verified to use the online dashboard TweetDeck. The policy announced Monday takes effect in 30 days and appears to be aimed at raising extra revenue because users need to pay to have their accounts verified under Musk's changes. TweetDeck is popular with companies and news organizations, allowing users to manage multiple Twitter accounts. It comes after outcry over Musk's announcement this weekend that Twitter has limited the number of tweets users can view each day - restrictions that the billionaire Tesla CEO described as an attempt to stop unauthorized scraping of potentially valuable data. Still, some users might be put off by Meta's data privacy track record, Navarra said. And would-be Twitter challengers like Mastodon have found it a challenge to sign up users.

"It's hard to tell whether the upset and discontent is strong enough to make a mass exodus or whether it will be somewhat of a slow erosion," Navarra said. Musk's rivalry with Meta Platforms also could end up spilling over into real life. In an online exchange between Musk and Meta CEO Mark Zuckerberg, the two tech billionaires seemingly agreed to a cage match face-off, though it's unclear if they will actually make it to the ring. Also: LONDON: Facebook lost a legal challenge Tuesday at the European Union's top court over a groundbreaking German antitrust decision that limited the way the company uses data for advertising. The European Court of Justice said competition watchdogs can consider whether companies like Facebook comply with the continent's strict privacy rules, which are normally enforced by national data privacy regulators. The court ruled that antitrust authorities can take into account any violations of data privacy rules as they investigate whether tech giants are abusing their dominance in the market by boxing out competitors. "We are evaluating the court's decision and will have more to say in due course," Facebook parent Meta said in a statement. The court sided with a 2019 German antitrust ruling that threatened to upend Meta's business model of selling ads targeted to users based on data gleaned from how they spend time on its services. Meta, which also owns Instagram and WhatsApp, appealed that finding, which led German authorities to seek an opinion from the Court of Justice, the 27-nation bloc's top tribunal. Tuesday's decision could pave the way for stricter scrutiny of tech companies. Europe has taken a pioneering role in reining in the power of big digital platforms with sweeping new standards taking effect next month and rules in the works on artificial intelligence. The German Federal Cartel Office, or Bundeskartellamt, wasn't contesting the company's use of customer data to target ads to users on Facebook. But it said for the company to combine data from all the services it runs to target ads more precisely, Facebook should have to first get permission separately from the other apps and websites to do so. At issue is the way Facebook gains consent from users to process their data. A press release summarizing the court's decision said the company "cannot justify" claiming "legitimate interest" as a reason for using personal data to serve ads to users. Under European Union privacy rules, users need to freely give consent for their data to be used. The EU court's decision will have "far-reaching effects on the business models of the data economy," said Andreas Mundt, president of the German Federal Cartel Office.

JAKARTA, Indonesia, July 4, (AP): The International Seabed Authority (ISA) — the United Nations body that regulates the world's ocean floor - is preparing to resume negotiations that could open the international seabed for mining, including for materials critical for the green energy transition.

Years long negotiations are reaching a critical point where the authority will soon need to begin accepting mining permit applications, adding to worries over the potential impacts on sparsely researched marine ecosystems and habitats of the deep sea. Here's a look at what deep sea mining is, why some companies and countries are applying for permits to carry it out and why environmental activists are raising concerns. What is deep sea mining? Deep sea mining involves removing mineral deposits and metals from the ocean's seabed. There are three types of such mining: taking deposit-rich polymetallic nodules off the ocean floor, mining massive seafloor sulphide deposits and stripping cobalt crusts from rock. These nodules, deposits and crusts contain materi-

als, such as nickel, rare earths, cobalt and more, that are needed for batteries and other materials used in tapping renewable energy and also for everyday technology like cellphones and computers. Engineering and technology used for deep sea mining are still evolving. Some companies are looking to vacuum materials from seafloor using massive pumps. Others are developing artificial intelligence-based technology that would teach deep sea robots how to pluck nodules from the floor. Some are looking to use advanced machines that could mine materials off side of huge underwater mountains and volcanoes. Companies and governments view these as strategically important resources that will be needed as onshore reserves are depleted and demand continues to rise. How is deep sea mining regulated now? Countries manage their own maritime territory and exclusive economic zones, while the high seas and the international ocean floor are governed by the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Seas. It is considered to apply to states regardless of whether or not they have signed or ratified it. Under the treaty, the seabed and its mineral resources are considered the "common heritage of mankind" that must be managed in a way that protects the interests of humanity through the sharing of economic benefits, support for marine scientific research, and protecting marine environments. Mining companies interested in deep sea exploitation are partnering with countries to help them get

exploration licenses. More than 30 exploration licenses have been issued so far, with activity mostly focused in an area called the Clarion-Clipperton Fracture Zone, which spans 1.7 million square miles (4.5 million square kilometers) between Hawaii and Mexico. Why is there pressure on the ISA to establish regulations now? A clause of the U.N. treaty requires the ISA to complete regulations governing deep sea exploitation by July 2023. Countries and private companies can start applying for provisional licenses if the U.N. body fails to approve a set of rules and regulations by July 9. Experts say its unlikely it will since the process will likely take several years. What are the environmental concerns? Only a small part of the deep seabed has been explored and conservationists worry that ecosystems will be damaged by mining, especially without any environmental protocols. Damage from mining can include noise, vibration and light pollution, as well as possible leaks and spills of fuels and other chemicals used in the mining process. Sediment plumes from the some mining processes are a major concern. Once valuable materials are taken extracted, slurry sediment plumes are sometimes pumped back into the sea. That can harm filter feeding species like corals and sponges, and could smother or otherwise interfere with some creatures.

What are they and what might happen?

Users, advertisers might go elsewhere

Elon Musk puts new limits on tweets

TikTok and Instagram users can scroll with abandon. But Twitter owner Elon Musk has put new curbs on his digital town square, the latest drastic change to the social media platform that could further drive away advertisers and undermine its cultural influence as a trendsetter. Keeping up with a sports game, extreme weather conditions or a major news event is getting harder under Musk's new rules, which cap the number of tweets you can view as part of an apparent attempt to relieve the company's overloaded web infrastructure. "The joke on Twitter is that people are going to go outside instead, but the reality is that they're going to go to another app," said Jasmine Enberg, an analyst with Insider Intelligence. "By sending users elsewhere, Musk is killing the main proposition Twitter has had for advertisers - a highly engaged user base, especially around news and events." Musk recently hired longtime NBC Universal executive Linda Yaccarino as Twitter's CEO to try to win back advertisers annoyed by a host of changes since Musk bought the platform for \$44 billion last year. But she's been silent about the new restrictions that lock users out if they view too many tweets in a day, leaving Musk to announce and explain them.

The moves are "remarkably bad for Twitter's users and advertisers," decimating the reach and engagement that advertisers depend on, according to a statement from Forrester analyst Mike Proulx. "The advertiser trust deficit that Linda Yaccarino needs to reverse just got even bigger. And it cannot be reversed based on her industry credibility alone," Proulx said. An Associated Press inquiry on Monday about how long the limits will last triggered a crude automated reply that Twitter sends to most media queries without addressing the question. Musk had tried on Saturday to describe how the limits work, saying accounts that don't pay for a monthly subscription will temporarily be re-

stricted to reading 600 posts per day, while verified accounts will be able to scroll through up to 6,000. After facing backlash, he tweeted that the thresholds would be raised to 800 posts for unverified accounts and 8,000 for verified accounts before later settling on 1,000 and 10,000 tweets, respectively. Many unverified users are "going to hit that limit fast," said Enberg, because most Twitter users are consuming, not creating posts, and "typically scroll through an enormous number of tweets in a short period of time." Enberg said Musk should be doing whatever he can to encourage engagement to show Twitter is still viable as it faces growing competition from upstart rivals, as well as a new Twitter-like service coming from Facebook and Instagram parent Meta. "Instead, he's throttling it," she said. Proulx, of Forrester, said the "real reason behind Musk's temporary rate limits" is still unclear. Musk over the weekend explained the new restrictions as an attempt to prevent unauthorized scraping of potentially valuable data from the social media platform. He said it was a temporary measure that was taken because "we were getting data pillaged so much that it was degrading service for normal users!" (AP)



Twitter, now X Corp, and Tesla CEO Elon Musk poses prior to his talks with French President Emmanuel Macron, May 15, 2023, at the Elysee Palace in Paris. (AP)

KFH announces the winners of Al-Rabeh draw

Kuwait Finance House (KFH) announced the winners of the Al-Rabeh draw with 20 customers winning cash prizes worth KD1,500 each for the 23rd and 24th weeks of 2023.

The winners of KD 1,500 are: Sarah Al-Dosari, Mamun Ansari, Rashed Al-Azmi, Hind Al-Eissa, Tawheed Al-Kandari, Jaza Al-Otaibi, Ibrahim Al-Khashti, Danah Al-Azmi, Mohammad Al-Otaibi, Abdurrahman Al-Failakawi, Fahad Al-Senafi, Al-ireza Ghayed, Amal Al-Mulla, Ahmed Mansour, Majed Neamah, Hamdy Emara, Abdulwahab Al-Ghazali, Mohammad Al-Fhaid, Mohamed Elsharaby, Maram Al-Shammari.

The Al-Rabeh campaign provides prizes and draws that offer customers several chances of winning "weekly, monthly and quarterly". The campaign crowns 536 winners throughout the year. The draw took place under the supervision of a representative from the Ministry of Commerce and Industry.

The campaign is part of KFH's ongoing efforts to offer exceptional products and services that meet customers' aspirations, enhance the Bank's leadership in the local and global markets, as well as reflect its excellence in offering innovative banking solutions as per the highest

quality standards.

The Al-Rabeh account is a salary account available to customers wishing to transfer their salaries and manage their personal accounts. Customers can open Al-Rabeh account in any of KFH branches in Kuwait, or through the Bank's online channels. The account can be opened in the Kuwaiti Dinar and is targeted for customers wishing to transfer their salaries and manage their personal accounts. Salary transfer is a prerequisite for customers to enter the draw provided that the transfer of salary to Al-Rabeh account is constant.



KFH AlRabeh campaign visual

Bid to raise banking awareness

KIB extends its presence at the Avenues for another week

KUWAIT CITY, July 4: Following a high turnout from various societal segments, Kuwait International Bank (KIB) announced extending its presence at the Avenues Mall for the second week in a row. The Bank aims to raise banking awareness through its booth dedicated to the Let's Be Aware "Diraya" campaign, which was launched by the Central Bank of Kuwait (CBK) in cooperation with the Kuwait Banking Association (KBA).

Through its specialized booth at the Avenues, KIB continues to inform mall-goers about how to take advantage of the Bank's various services, innovative digital solutions, and comprehensive banking and financing products, which all target increasing financial returns and meeting customers' diverse needs.

On this occasion, Yacoub Ashkanani, Area Manager at KIB, said: "The Bank decided to extend its presence at the Avenues Mall for a second week after the heavy turnout its booth witnessed throughout the previous week." He pointed out that this step reflects KIB's role in supporting the banking and financial "Diraya" campaign, achieving the best possible benefit for customers, and raising awareness among various segments on several banking topics.

Ashkanani praised the professionalism demonstrated by the KIB employees present at the booth. The team has been keen to provide all educational information about the comprehensive range of banking and financing services provided by the Bank. It has also been shedding light on the specific products that suit every visitor and introducing all the advantages offered by those products and the matching digital solutions.

In addition, the KIB team has been introducing visitors to running offers and promotions while informing them about everything they need to know to make the most of KIB's services. Education around the safe uses of cards, ap-



Yacoub Ashkanani

plications and electronic channels was also a major part of the conversations.

The KIB manager asserted that the Bank takes advantage of all opportunities provided to communicate directly with its customers and all segments

of society. It constantly eyes spreading financial and banking culture, in line with the instructions and directives of the Central Bank of Kuwait and KIB's community program objectives.

Ashkanani noted KIB's keenness to hold its community and awareness events and activities at strategic and distinguished locations, such as the Avenues Mall, where most factions of society are present. This contributes to achieving the Bank's goals under these initiatives that mainly aim to spread financial and banking culture on the widest scale.

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.

Air mobility startup looks for solution

Lygg raises 3.6m euros to reduce time & costs associated with business travel

HELSINKI, July 4, (Business Wire): As the model for regional air travel continues to collapse post-pandemic in both Europe and the United States, door-to-door air mobility startup Lygg announced it raised 3.6 million euros (over USD 3.9 million) to support the expansion of its contracted private aircraft routes to more locations in Europe and beyond. The company's mission to reduce the cost, time, stress, and carbon emissions associated with business travel simultaneously resonates with corporate customers anchoring new Lygg routes from underserved locations to larger economic centers. The funding round, led by Superhero Capital, was joined by private investors, with also the Finnish government providing funding. The company plans to utilize the funds to expand its routes to locations such as Rotterdam, the Netherlands; Stockholm, Sweden; Aberdeen, Scotland; and Frankfurt, Germany, as well as expand its reservation portal that integrates with booking tools used by major travel management companies (TMCs).

"Think of Lygg as the 'Uber of aviation.'" They are democratizing private air travel by leveraging dormant assets and matching routes with demand for a seamless door-to-door experience for busy travelers," said Juha Ruohonen, General Partner of Superhero Capital. "As we watch more and more cities lose their regional air travel services, Lygg is filling the gap with transforming regional air travel that passengers actually look forward to, in a reliable, profitable and scalable model."

Lygg simplifies regional air travel for business travelers by offering an alternative to the conventional hub approach to commercial air travel. The company caters to locations underserved by commercial carriers but where a density of travelers from an anchor corporate client exists to justify a route. Once established, anyone can book a flight on the new Lygg route. Time and cost efficiency is achieved by flying passengers directly to their destinations rather than connecting flights and door-to-door airport transportation using Teslas.

For instance, the Lygg route from Tampere, Finland, to Stockholm, Sweden, saves six hours per roundtrip for both business travelers and anchor corporate customers. Rather than traveling over seven hours across two flights, with a connection in Helsinki, passengers are flying direct to Stockholm in the comfort of a private aircraft in just two hours (door-to-door). This reduces total travel costs by 530 percent (180 kg vs. 102 kg).

"With a traditional regional carrier, you're up before dawn and home well after dinner. It's not uncommon for people to travel ten hours or more door-to-door just for a meeting," said Roope Kekalainen, co-founder and CEO of Lygg. "Post-pandemic, corporations are not in a position to require such arduous travel schedules from their employees. With Lygg, our corporate clients are cutting these travel times in half, saving money, and making these requested business trips more enjoyable and productive."

In today's business climate, corporations and travelers are stuck between reduced connections offered

by regional airlines and increased pressure to reduce the carbon emissions of their travel. With Lygg, travelers can save up to 87 percent of their travel time, while corporations can save on costs while prioritizing employee wellbeing. Additionally, a Lygg flight can reduce the carbon footprint of a traveler, thus further reducing a corporation's travel emissions by up to 75 percent. The technology and associated smartphone app powering Lygg's platform enables accurate passenger and cargo volume measurement over time, which allows Lygg to sustainably organize direct flights and frequencies with as few empty seats as possible.

"Throughout Europe and the United States, there is still a high percentage of executives that must travel to conduct business, yet telling people they have to take a train or simply fly less is not the answer," Jari Viinikkala, co-founder and CFO of Lygg. "Instead, the answer is optimization, and Lygg is answering this call with our direct-route platform that's future-proofed to scale with the zero-emission solutions currently in development."

While Lygg provides regional air travel passengers with seamless door-to-door direct connections via private aircrafts and electric vehicles, the platform also serves as a management solution for operators of small aircraft assets. Lygg offers operators of its digitalized and shared fleet the unprecedented benefit of predictability and guarantee of income that comes from recurring aircraft privatizations and flight subscriptions over selected periods of time.

"Lygg caters to a two-sided market, offering travel solutions that leverage under-used assets, including smaller, peripheral airports and business terminals, and adapted aircraft categories," continued Viinikkala. "Our offering allows aircraft owners and operators the ability to maximize their assets and increase their revenue. With this new round of funding, we look forward to expanding our operator base and offering more routes."

Superhero Capital, a venture capital firm with stakes in Finland and Baltic-based startups, revolutionizes the startup investment landscape with a focus on the technology and innovation sectors. Led by a seasoned team of industry experts, Superhero Capital empowers visionary entrepreneurs, shaping the future of business and technology and providing strategic investments and invaluable support to innovative companies.

Since June 2022, when operations began, Lygg has completed 154 flights flying thousands of happy passengers to 17 destinations in 12 European countries, including Germany, France, Holland, UK, Austria, Finland, Sweden, Norway and Estonia.

Through its first in the world platform, Lygg provides door-to-door, direct connection, private regional air travel at commercial costs to customers as a service. Started in Finland in 2020, Lygg was founded by FlymaasOy to transform the business flying experience. Through its platform and app, customers save time and enjoy ease of travel while fostering a sustainable aviation ecosystem. www.lygg.com

'Warba' gives its valued customers the opportunity to travel around the world

Arrangement in cooperation with Kuwait Airways Oasis Club

KUWAIT CITY, July 4: Warba Bank, in cooperation with the "Oasis Club" of Kuwait Airways, launched a unique campaign that will continue throughout the summer season for a period of 3 months, starting from June 15 to September 15. This campaign aims to provide many benefits to the Bank's clients, especially with the start of the travel season during summer, where the Bank will hold monthly draws for ten winners every month, with a total of 30 winners throughout the summer period.

In this regard, Mr. Abdullah Nasser Al-Shuail, Senior Director of the Branches and Private Services at Warba Bank, said that the Bank always seeks to provide all means of comfort and service to its customers, in addition to providing them with competitive offers.

Al-Shuail added that the campaign is divided into 3 sections, the first section starts from June 15 to July 15, the second from July 15 to August 15, and the third from August 15 to September 15. For each section there are 10 winners, with a total of 30 winners during the campaign, where the first winner will get 150,000 miles, while the second and third winners will get 125,000 miles, and the fourth to sixth winners will get 80,000 miles, and the seventh to tenth winners will get 50,000 miles, at a monthly rate.

Al-Shuail also said that the winners can get those miles that will enable them to get a round-trip flight from Kuwait to one of the regional and international destinations that starts from Dubai with only 15,000 miles on economy class, 30,000 miles on business class, 45,000 miles on first class, and 56,000 miles on the royal class and other countries of the world, according to terms and conditions of the service.

Al-Shuail noted that the Bank seeks the well-being of its clients by presenting summer offers with Warba Bank credit and prepaid cards, as these cards also allow cashback of up to 6%. Al-Shuail added that all Warba Bank credit cards are included in this campaign, including prepaid cards.

Al-Shuail explained that the transactions eligible for entry as chances for participation are the executed purchase transactions only and the online transactions that took place during the promotional campaign launch period. He added, "Reserving amounts" (for example: hotel reservations - car rentals ... etc.) on credit cards are not counted among the chances eligible to enter the draw.

In the same context, the Director of Elite Customer Services Department at Kuwait Airways, Mr. Mishaal Lafa Al-Mutairi, said: "We are happy to cooperate with this campaign with Warba Bank, and it is not the first campaign between the two parties," explaining that "Kuwait



Employees who attended the lecture.



Ms Zahra Boarki

Burgan Bank discusses working parents' health and wellness

Burgan Bank recently hosted an event in its series of Burgan Talks. This latest event was dedicated to the working parents among the Burgan staff, focusing on their mental, physical, emotional, and financial health.

Ms. Fatima Al Shatti, a speech pathologist and consultant, along with Ms. Reem Al Sabbagh, a certified behavior analyst, presented Burgan talk to a group of 40 staff members.

Providing feedback on the most recent effective discussion, Ms. Zahra Boarki, Manager of Skills Development at Burgan Bank, said: "Since our employees are the Bank's top priority, we are adamant about creating a healthy culture and a positive work environment that enables our staff to excel professionally without jeopardizing their wellbeing. To this end, Burgan Bank continues to host different events and initiatives that address the staff's unique challenges and needs."

Understanding how challenging it can be to balance one's responsibilities as an employee at the workplace and a parent at home, the Burgan Talk discussed ways in which staff members can build strategies for self-care and resilience as working parents. Building on this topic, Al-Shatti elaborated on how employees can

thrive simultaneously as parents and employees.

She provided an explanation of common concepts like the guilt experienced by working parents, offering effective strategies to reduce and mitigate its occurrence and impact.

In addition, Al-Shatti commented on her participation in the Burgan Talks series, saying: "I am delighted to have been part of Burgan Bank's wonderful initiative that strives to provide mothers and fathers with a supportive environment where they feel empowered to reach their full potential as employees and parents. Witnessing how the Bank cares for employees and their wellbeing as parents and caregivers is truly uplifting. It reflects the importance of recognizing personal challenges facing employees outside the workplace and investing in their psychological and professional wellness."

It serves to note that, as a certified Great Place to Work®, Burgan Bank continues to spare no effort to invest in its human capital and the staff's holistic growth. Its efforts include the Burgan Talks series and a wide range of events and initiatives that ensure fulfillment for all employees across all departments and job grades.

Airways" is keen to cooperate and support joint relations with the banking sectors in order to provide the best services and offers to customers and motivate them continuously to travel to the company's destinations.

Al-Mutairi added: "We care about the smallest details to gain the satisfaction of our customers by providing them with the best travel packages and the most requested destinations." He added: "We are also pleased to meet all their requests for services through the call center seven days a week around the clock. Through calling they can inquire and book miles, and facilitate all services through contacting the center as well as booking packages for hotels. We are distinguished by continuous offers that suit all categories, especially the family, and we care about the smallest details in customer service."

Al-Mutairi stressed that recently,



Abdullah Al-Shuail

the "WhatsApp" service was added on the plane free of charge for all passengers on board our fleet, which allows customers to communicate with whomever they want in multiple destinations. He also confirmed the systematic diversity of Kuwait Airways in its menus to suit all tastes. He added: "Our constant desire is to entertain while traveling through modern movies and local series, which provides a wonderful experience for the customer, and encourages him to earn more miles and increase his credit."

He concluded by saying: "Customer loyalty is a source of pride for us, as it makes us maintain our being always at the forefront among competitors, and we won the award for the most advanced airline in the world for this year, according to the latest survey conducted by Skytrax, which specializes in classifying international companies, and we thank our customers for this trust, which always makes us aspire to everything new to satisfy them."

It is worth noting that Warba Bank card holders provide access to more than 1,200 lounges in international airports around the world, in addition to free travel insurance for the card holder and his family members, in addition to discounts on hotel reservations, car rentals, trip plans and food in various countries of the world. Warba Bank also works during the summer season to follow up all customer details and needs in all countries, and to provide more pro-

tection for cards and in response to the Central Bank of Kuwait's campaign "Let's be aware".

The Bank hopes that all customers will specify their travel destinations through the Warba Bank application, in order to facilitate the use of their cards and bank accounts throughout the summer travel season.

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



Mishaal Lafa Al-Mutairi

Part of its continuous efforts to attract distinguished young talents

Gulf Bank sponsors Kuwait University Career Fair

KUWAIT CITY, July 4: Salma Al-Hajjaj: We are keen to prepare future leaders for the private sector by employing and training young talents

As part of its continuous efforts to empower youth, Gulf Bank has sponsored Kuwait University's career fair, which took place over a period of three days.

Throughout the career fair, Gulf Bank representatives from the Human Resources Department, shed light on the nature of the workplace at the bank –providing detailed explanations on the work structure, as well as the job opportunities available for recent graduates. The bank's representatives also took time to conduct personal interviews for applicants.

On this occasion, the General Manager of Human Resources Department at Gulf Bank, Salma Al-Hajjaj said: "The career fair constituted an excellent opportunity to attract distinguished young graduates from Kuwait University, as this is part of our continuous efforts to support and empower youth, and to develop their potential; as we align with the bank's 2025 strategy and Kuwait Vision 2023."

Al-Hajjaj mentioned that Gulf Bank is keen to attract young talents from various fields, as part of its efforts to consolidate its position as the bank of the future, stating that the younger generation is capable of keeping pace with the language of the times, including the latest innovations and rapid technological developments in the banking sector, both locally and globally.

She also noted that there has been a remarkable and evident increase in the percentage of national employment in Gulf Bank throughout the recent years, as well as an increase in the number of young employees, in comparison to the total number of employees in the bank.

She continued: "We are proud that Gulf Bank is one of the leading banks that invests generously in human capital to enhance the competencies of its employees, as they are the main focus to achieve our strategic objectives. We will continue to provide them with the latest expertise and skills required to keep pace with the major banking developments that the banking industry is going through."

Al-Hajjaj also emphasized Gulf Bank's keenness to establish the standards of economic sustainability in society, by recruiting, training and



Officials of Gulf Bank



Salma Al-Hajjaj GM of Human Resources at Gulf Bank.

developing young talents to become future leaders in the private sector.

Gulf Bank's vision is to be the leading Kuwaiti Bank of the Future.

The Bank is constantly engaging and empowering its employees as part of an inclusive and diversified workplace in recognition of every employee's role in delivering customer excellence and serving the community at large. With its extensive network of branches and innovative digital services, Gulf Bank is able to give its customers the choice of how and where to conduct their banking transactions, all while ensuring a simple and seamless banking experience.

Gulf Bank is committed to maintaining robust developments in sustainability at environmental, social and governance levels through diverse sustainability initiatives, strategically selected to benefit the Bank both internally and externally. Gulf Bank supports Kuwait Vision 2035 "New Kuwait".

We firmly believe in the power of giving back to the community: AlJasem

stc 'celebrates' Eid with members of community at its headquarters



Children display their holiday gifts.

KUWAIT CITY, June 4: Kuwait Telecommunications Company – stc, a world-class digital leader providing innovative services and platforms to customers, enabling the digital transformation in Kuwait, celebrated the joyous occasion of Eid Al-Adha by extending its support to needy families in Kuwait at its head office in Olympia Tower. The event, organized under stc's dynamic corporate social responsibility (CSR) program with the participation of stc voluntary team, aimed to bring happiness and joy to those in need during this special time of the year.

During the Eid celebration at its head office, stc welcomed the families into a variety of fun filled activities. The Company organized different entertainment segments for the children, ensuring a memorable experience for all those involved. One of the highlights of the event was organizing haircuts for the boys in collaboration with shuffle salon, symbolizing the traditional significance of grooming oneself in preparation for Eid. stc recognized the importance of preserving cultural customs and sought to make the celebration an authentic and meaningful experience. Additionally, stc presented the families with special gifts, symbolizing the Company's commitment to spreading joy and fostering a sense of togetherness within the community.

Commenting on the initiative, Danah AlJasem, General Manager of Corporate Communications at stc, said, "At stc, we firmly believe in the power of giving back to the community, which comes in different forms and manners. Our active CSR program focuses on initiatives that directly impact the lives of those in need, as well as other members of our community. Celebrating Eid al-Adha with these deserving families aligns with our commitment to creating positive change and promoting social cohesion."

AlJasem added, "As a pioneer in Kuwait's telecom sector, we have organized and collaborated with various entities from the govt. and private sectors as well as SMEs under the 'Weyak' initiative – season 2, which comes part of the Company's CSR program and the corporate sustainability strategy. As stc is a staunch advocate of Kuwaiti SMEs and start-ups as well as other Kuwait-based innovative



The public relations team and the volunteer team at stc with children and parents during the celebration of Eid al-Adha.

concepts, that reinforces our efforts to support the youth, entrepreneurs, and innovators to pursue their creative visions."

AlJasem concluded, "These initiatives align under the core values of our diversified CSR program, with a primary focus on health, environment, youth empowerment & entrepreneurship, sports, and education. Looking ahead, stc is determined to further expand its active involvement within the community across a multitude of levels and initiatives, ensuring we continue to drive positive change and inspire growth."

To find out more about stc's events, promotions, and sponsorships, follow stc's official social media platforms, visit one of stc's branches, download mystc mobile application, visit www.stc.com.kw or contact the customer service center by dialing 102 for around the clock assistance.

Kuwait Telecommunications Company (stc) is a Kuwaiti shareholding company incorporated pursuant to Amiri Decree No. 187 on 22 July, 2008, to operate and manage the third GSM mobile network in Kuwait as per Law No. 2 of 2007. Accordingly, stc launched its operations in December 2008 and was listed on Boursa Kuwait in December 2014. It is a world-class digital leader providing innovative services and platforms to customers and enabling the digital transformation in Kuwait, and is a subsidiary of stc

Group. stc has rapidly reached a leadership stance in the market through its customer and employee centric strategy.

stc offers an innovative range of world-class products, services and solutions with high quality, that cater to the customers' needs and demands, both for individuals and enterprises (solutions by stc). In 2019, stc acquired 100% of the share capital of the Internet Service Provider, Qualitynet General Trading and Contracting Company (solutions by stc) in Kuwait. Further enhancing its digital capabilities, in 2022 stc acquired the entire share capital of e-portal Holding Company and its subsidiaries, one of the most prominent ICT providers in Kuwait.

In 2021, stc obtained the approval from the Communication and Information Technology Regulatory Authority's (CITRA) to launch the first-of-its-kind mobile virtual network operator (MVNO) license to launch Virgin Mobile Kuwait in partnership with Virgin Mobile Middle East & Africa. stc offers high internet speeds due to the implementation of the most advanced 5G network and deployment of the largest network nationwide. In 2021, stc was the first operator in Kuwait to launch the latest 5G Stand-alone technology dubbed 'FULL 5G' that brings the 5G experience to a new level with better speeds, lower latency, and improved coverage.

Zain signs strategic partnership with e-learning platform Baims

Bid to digitalize education sector

KUWAIT CITY, July 4: Zain announces the signing of a strategic partnership with Baims, a leading Kuwait-based e-learning platform. The cooperation aims at empowering the digitalization of the local education sector, expand the youth's digital upskilling and literacy, and provide students with the academic content and competencies essential to today's market.

The partnership was sealed at the Zain Innovation Campus (ZINC) in the company's headquarters in Shuwaikh, attended by Chief Corporate Affairs and Relations Officer, Waleed Al Khashti, Baims co-founder and CEO Yousef Al Hussaini, and Zain's Marketing and Innovation & Entrepreneurship teams.

Baims is a leading Kuwait-based digital e-learning platform that offers virtual courses to high school and university students in 5 MENA countries. The company is one of the top success stories of the Zain Great Idea tech startup accelerator program, and today's announcement reflects Zain's belief in the ability of local startups to compete in the market and contribute to the national economy.

The partnership aims at empowering the digital transformation of the local education sector, where Zain's vast expertise as a digital enabler and tech leader, combined with Baims' virtual courses and wide set of education services are set to contribute to elevating the digital academic tools available to students across Kuwait.

This collaboration is also set to feature exclusive offers and special discounts to Zain customers on virtual courses and other services offered by Baims via specially tailored packages for the youth. Zain will also offer exclusive academic content on Baims covering topics related to innovation and entrepreneurship.

Baims operates in Kuwait, Saudi

Arabia, Bahrain, Jordan, and Turkey, and aims to digitize the offline tutoring experience by allowing students to learn at their own pace with video lectures, notes, live sessions, and quizzes that can be accessed on the web and mobile devices.

Last year, the platform recorded 30 million views, with 150,000+ active monthly users and 150,000+ recorded video courses on its huge library of academic content. Baims boasts 500 exclusive content creators and tutors and is considered one of the top 50 e-learning companies in the MENA region.

Baims is one of the 10 Kuwait-based tech startups that participated in LEAP, the world's biggest tech conference held earlier this year in Riyadh, attended by over 170,000 innovators, tech enthusiasts, investors, and visitors. LEAP was the second destination of the regional phase of the 7th Zain Great Idea (ZGI) tech startup accelerator program.

The conference presented an invaluable opportunity for Baims and other ZGI participants to learn new ideas, build partnerships, and connect with innovators and investors from the region and the world. Zain saw the need and ambition of Kuwait-based startups to expand into the MENA region and has selected this global event for its program's second destination due to the Saudi market being one of the biggest and most vital of the region's markets.

Saudi Arabia also presents a unique quality, sharing a close geographical proximity, culture, demographics, and target audience with Kuwait. This presented a great opportunity for ZGI participants to learn from the vast number of workshops, conferences, and shared experiences in LEAP, paving the way for them to prepare their regional expansion plans.



The signing of Zain-Baims strategic partnership.



Zain and Baims officials pose for a group photo.

Habitual late payments can damage your credit score

Do credit card late fees actually protect consumers?

By Jaime Hanson
NerdWallet

In a time when inflation is driving up the cost of nearly everything you buy, something else has increased, too: credit card late fees. Thanks to a clause in the 2009 Credit Card Act, credit card issuers can raise late fees, and over time those fees have risen to current maximums of up to \$41.

The Consumer Financial Protection Bureau recently proposed a rule that would slash credit card late fee maximums by 75%, to \$8 per late payment. While lower fees may seem like a good thing for the consumer, some argue that paying less could do more harm than good. According to the American Bankers Association, such a reduction "will result in more late payments, higher debt and lower credit scores."

Habitual late payments can indeed damage your credit score, which impacts access to credit and how much you'll pay in interest. And as payment due dates pile up, late payments can lead to an escalation of debt. That escalation is especially concerning when, according to a first-quarter 2023 study by TransUnion, credit card debt is at near-record levels, rising nearly 20% year over year.

Deterrent or profit source

The CFPB argues that credit card companies are using late fees to pad their bottom lines, not to help people manage their financial health. A 2022 Federal Reserve report shows that credit card fees - including late fees in particular - account for about 15% of total credit card profitability. And according to the CFPB's 2021 Consumer Credit Card Market Report, that cost is borne most by the customers who can least afford it. The report shows that of the over \$14 billion in late fees paid by consumers in 2019, subprime and deep subprime consumers paid 42% of that total while representing just 12% of total accounts.

While lobbying organizations like the ABA may have a valid point

Making a will is not just for the old and wealthy

By Dalia Ramirez
NerdWallet

Making a will isn't a task just for the old and wealthy. It's also for the well-prepared.

Recent years serve as a heavy reminder that you might not know when your last days are. Life expectancy in the US dropped in both 2020 and 2021, driven by COVID-19 deaths and an increase in accidental deaths, according to the most recent data available from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Over 1 million people in the US have died of COVID-19, according to the CDC. And in 2021, accidents or unintentional injuries were the fourth leading cause of death in the US, the organization found.

It's unlikely that you'll die young. But if the unexpected happens, having a will in place - even if it feels like you don't need one - can be a simple way to avoid leaving important decisions about your assets and guardianship wishes to your state's laws and courts. It doesn't have to cost thousands of dollars, either.

What can happen if you don't have a will?

If you don't have a will - called "dying intestate" - your assets are dis-

tributed by a probate court according to your state's laws of intestacy. Going through probate without a will can be a longer, more complicated process, as inheritors must file a petition to make a claim to the assets.

Intestacy laws vary among states, but they generally prioritize close family members, such as spouses, children, parents and siblings, as beneficiaries. If you don't have a will, "funds can wind up in the hands of unintended recipients," says Regina Kiperman, managing attorney at estate planning law firm RK Law PC in New York.

Dying intestate can be damaging even if you don't have a spouse or kids. In this case, your next of kin will likely be a parent. Significant assets can disqualify an older adult from Medicaid eligibility, Kiperman says.

If you do have kids, a will is just as crucial. Whether or not you have assets to pass down, a will is the only way to name a legal guardian of your choosing in the event of your death. Otherwise, state laws determine who cares for your child and what they inherit.

When should you make a will?

"The right time to make a will is based on life events, not age," Kiperman says. Generally, these events fall into three categories: acquiring assets (such as buying a house); legal

attachment to someone else (getting married or having a child); and risk of death (health diagnosis or even remote travel).

In some cases, it's helpful to make a will as soon as you're of legal age - 18 in most states.

"I wanted to protect myself as early as possible," says Mariel Picknelly, 21, a singer and content creator based in New York. Her mother encouraged her to make a will as soon as she reached adulthood to protect assets titled to her at birth. Having her own will has given her and her family security about the future.

"I keep my purse close because I don't want anyone to take the things that are meant for me and my family and my future," she says. "A will works the same way."

How to get started

Making a will doesn't have to be time-consuming or costly. Some websites offer will templates you use for free; make sure it complies with your state's will requirements. Online will-making software allows you to make a custom will for around \$100.

Those with more complex assets or family situations may want to consult an estate planning attorney to help craft a will. Costs can range from around \$200 to \$350 per hour, or \$1,000 to

\$2,000 for a flat-rate estate package, depending on your location and the experience level of your lawyer.

While a will is a good starting point, more is needed in some cases. If you have complex assets or family situations, setting up trusts could make the transfer of assets faster and more seamless, potentially helping you bypass the time-consuming probate process, which is the legal process for distributing assets of a person who has died.

For example, "If you have volatile assets, such as investments in different securities, you might want a trust instead of a will so someone can take immediate control of the assets," Kiperman says. Trusts also offer more protection if you have minor children or a lifelong dependent whom you'd like to inherit assets in a more controlled manner.

However, just because there may be more optimal estate planning tools doesn't mean a will isn't valuable. An imperfect plan is better than none at all.

"People say that having a will is just for rich people," Picknelly says. "It's not - it's for careful people. You don't need to have a huge amount of assets; you just need protection for when you're not around to speak for yourself." (AP)

assistant director of the CFPB's Office of Consumer Credit, Payments, and Deposits Markets, "These days the vast majority of credit card borrowers are enrolled in online banking, and nearly two-thirds use a mobile app for their card."

Consumers also have ready access to their credit scores, so they witness the impact of late payments in nearly

real time. "That's a powerful incentive to get their payment in before the next due date," Zhang says, "separate and distinct from any late fee they've been charged."

Long term consequences

While increased notifications and credit score monitoring may be useful, experts question whether these alone would be sufficient to dissuade



Andy Fang, DoorDash's co-founder and chief technology officer, picks up and delivers food orders to customers in downtown San Francisco on June 15, 2023. (AP)

Job-shadowing encouraged

Your DoorDash driver? He is company's co-founder

SAN FRANCISCO, July 4: (AP) - On a recent afternoon in San Francisco, a DoorDash driver was circling the neighborhood - first in his car, then on foot - trying to find the restaurant where he needed to pick up two orders. Finally, he Googled the location and realized DoorDash's app sent him to the wrong address.

It's an error he vowed to fix, and he probably will. Because that worker is Andy Fang, DoorDash's chief technology officer and one of the company's three co-founders. "If it happens with one restaurant, it might actually be happening with a lot of other restaurants as well," Fang said after he retrieved the orders and settled back into his car. "If we can see why that happened, maybe we can fix other issues too."

Fang is one of a growing number of executives who occasionally do the hourly work that makes their companies hum. Starbucks' new CEO, Laxman Narasimhan, is a trained barista and puts in a half-day of work at a store each month. Uber CEO Dara Khosrowshahi and Lyft CEO David Risher occasionally shuttle passengers. Air New Zealand CEO Greg Foran has been spotted serving drinks and snacks on flights.

Amazon recently re-launched a program called the Associate Experience Week, which encourages employees to shadow operations workers for a week to gain a better understanding of their job. The program is mandatory for some managers. At Garage Door Service, which operates in 16 states, also encourages job-shadowing and requires all employees to learn skills outside their immediate responsibilities. At CEO Tommy Mello says the policy promotes empathy and collaboration.

Program

But few companies have a program as robust as WeDash, which requires thousands of salaried DoorDash employees in the US, Canada and Australia to complete at least four deliveries per year. Employees are strongly encouraged to make deliveries monthly. They can use work time to complete those shifts, and they keep any money they make.

"We just want to make sure that people who are working here, who are supporting our audiences, are understanding what people are going through," Fang told The Associated Press.

When they started DoorDash a decade ago, while they were still students at Stanford, Fang and the company's other two co-founders - CEO Tony Xu and Chief Product Officer Stanley Tang - made all the deliveries

themselves.

"We had to. There was nobody else to do them," Fang said. "But what we quickly found out was that by doing these deliveries ourselves, we learned a ton of insights into what it actually took to get these deliveries fulfilled."

The company started WeDash in 2015 to make sure every employee was getting those insights. Fang said there are some exceptions; if an employee can't drive, for example, they might visit merchants or work in the call center.

Exponentially

DoorDash has grown exponentially since then. In 2022, more than 6 million DoorDash drivers - all independent contractors - fulfilled 1.7 billion orders worldwide. DoorDash has expanded beyond restaurant delivery into convenience stores, groceries, pet stores and pharmacies.

Fang, who makes deliveries for at least an hour each month - sometimes with Xu and Tang in tow - says he has made real changes to DoorDash's app based on his experiences. When he was on the East Coast recently, he set a time to make deliveries when he returned to California. But when he got home, he realized the time he had set was off by three hours because the app assumed he was still on the East Coast. He got that bug fixed.

Another new feature, introduced this week, arose from employee feedback in WeDash. The feature, Dash Along the Way, lets drivers specify where they want to start making deliveries and then assigns them orders that they can complete en route.

Fang also experiences drivers' other frustrations. The wrong address in the DoorDash app cost him time delivering orders from Bonchon, a Korean fried chicken chain. On the afternoon he drove with an AP video journalist, Fang only made \$15.50 for 51 minutes of work. DoorDash says that's lower than the \$34 per hour that California drivers make on average, including tips.

It's also vastly lower than what Fang pulls in as CTO. His annual compensation in 2022 totaled \$2.79 million and Forbes pegged his net worth that same year at \$1.1 billion, illustrating the gap between those at the top of a company and those at the bottom.

DoorDash and others recently pushed back against a new rule introduced in New York City implementing a minimum pay rate for app-based food delivery workers that could nearly triple their average earnings in the coming years. DoorDash said it may pursue legal action.

own profits."

Alternative guardrails

Steep late fees aren't the only way to help lessen the damage of late payments. The CFPB argues that new digital notification deterrents can motivate late-paying customers in lieu of high fees, making the current policy obsolete.

According to Wei Zhang, deputy as-

The Conversation

'Wholesale surveillance of people'

US agencies buy vast quantities of personal info on open market

By Anne Toomey McKenna
University of Richmond

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

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Numerous government agencies, including the FBI, Department of Defense, National Security Agency, Treasury Department, Defense Intelligence Agency, Navy and Coast Guard, have purchased vast amounts of US citizens' personal information from commercial data brokers. The revelation was published in a partially declassified, internal Office of the Director of National Intelligence report released on June 9, 2023.

The report shows the breathtaking scale and invasive nature of the consumer data market and how that market directly enables wholesale surveillance of people. The data includes not only where you've been and who you're connected to, but the nature of your beliefs and predictions about what you might do in the future. The report underscores the grave risks the purchase of this data poses, and urges the intelligence community to adopt internal guidelines to address these problems.

As a privacy, electronic surveillance and technology law attorney, researcher and law professor, I have spent years researching, writing and advising about the legal issues the report highlights.

Available

These issues are increasingly urgent. Today's commercially available information, coupled with the now-ubiquitous decision-making artificial intelligence and generative AI like ChatGPT, significantly increases the threat to privacy and civil liberties by giving the government access to sensitive personal information beyond even what it could collect through court-authorized surveillance.

The drafters of the report take the position that commercially available information is a subset of publicly available information. The distinction between the two is significant from a legal perspective. Publicly available information is information that is already in the public domain. You could find it by doing a little online searching.

Commercially available information is different. It is personal information collected from a dizzying array of sources by commercial data brokers that aggregate and analyze it, then make it available for purchase by others, including governments. Some of that information is private, confidential or otherwise legally protected.

The sources and types of data for commercially available information are mind-bogglingly vast. They include public records and other publicly available information. But far more information comes from the nearly ubiquitous internet-connected devices in people's lives, like cellphones,

'Highly repetitive and often simple'

Visual misinformation widespread on FB and often undercounted by experts

By Yunkang Yang, Texas A&M University, Matthew Hindman, George Washington University, and Trevor Davis, Columbia University

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

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How much misinformation is on Facebook? Several studies have found that the amount of misinformation on Facebook is low or that the problem has declined over time.

This previous work, though, missed most of the story.

We are a communications researcher, a media and public affairs researcher and a founder of a digital intelligence company. We conducted a study that shows that massive amounts of misinformation have been overlooked by other studies. The biggest source of misinformation on Facebook is not links to fake news sites but something more basic: images. And a large portion of posted pictures are misleading.

For instance, on the eve of the 2020 election, nearly one out of every four political image posts on Facebook contained misinformation. Widely shared falsehoods included QAnon conspiracy theories, misleading statements about the Black Lives Matter movement and unfounded claims about Joe Biden's son Hunter Biden.

Our study is the first large-scale

smart home systems, cars and fitness trackers. These all harness data from sophisticated, embedded sensors, cameras and microphones. Sources also include data from apps, online activity, texts and emails, and even health care provider websites.

Types of data include location, gender and sexual orientation, religious and political views and affiliations, weight and blood pressure, speech patterns, emotional states, behavioral information about myriad activities, shopping patterns and family and friends.

This data provides companies and governments a window into the "Internet of Behaviors," a combination of data collection and analysis aimed at understanding and predicting people's behavior. It pulls together a wide range of data, including location and activities, and uses scientific and technological approaches, including psychology and machine learning, to analyze that data. The Internet of Behaviors provides a map of what each person has done, is doing and is expected to do,

effort, on any social media platform, to measure the prevalence of image-based misinformation about US politics. Image posts are important to study, in part because they are the most common type of post on Facebook at roughly 40% of all posts.

Research

Previous research suggests that images may be especially potent. Adding images to news stories can shift attitudes, and posts with images are more likely to be reshared. Images have also been a longtime component of state-sponsored disinformation campaigns, like those of Russia's Internet Research Agency.

We went big, collecting more than 13 million Facebook image posts from August through October 2020, from 25,000 pages and public groups. Audiences on Facebook are so concentrated that these pages and groups account for at least 94% of all engagement - likes, shares, reactions - for political image posts. We used facial recognition to identify public figures, and we tracked reposted images. We then classified large, random draws of images in our sample, as well as the most frequently reposted images.

Overall, our findings are grim: 23% of image posts in our data contained misinformation. Consistent with previous work, we found that misinformation was unequally distributed along partisan lines. While only 5% of left-leaning posts contained misinformation, 39% of right-leaning posts did.

and provides a means to influence a person's behavior.

The rich depths of commercially available information, analyzed with powerful AI, provide unprecedented power, intelligence and investigative insights. The information is a cost-effective way to surveil virtually everyone, plus it provides far more sophisticated data than traditional electronic surveillance tools or methods like wiretapping and location tracking.

Tools

Government use of electronic surveillance tools is extensively regulated by federal and state laws. The US Supreme Court has ruled that the Constitution's Fourth Amendment, which prohibits unreasonable searches and seizures, requires a warrant for a wide range of digital searches. These include wiretapping or intercepting a person's calls, texts or emails; using GPS or cellular location information to track a person; or searching a person's cellphone.

Complying with these laws takes

late-paying consumers. A 2022 ABA-commissioned survey showed that 46% of respondents said avoiding a late fee was the most important reason to pay on time. In that same survey, 83% of respondents said that a \$10 late fee would be insufficient to deter them from paying a credit card bill late.

Data from NerdWallet's latest Consumer Credit Card Report seems to support this argument. In a March 2023 survey conducted online by The Harris Poll on behalf of NerdWallet, Americans who would miss a credit card payment said that a late fee of \$30, on average, would prevent them from ever missing a payment.

Gilpatric notes that while the effects of paying late such as a reduction in credit score are ultimately more impactful for the consumer than a \$30 late fee, that long-term consequence isn't necessarily effective at driving short-term consumer behavior.

If issuers truly wanted to deter late payments, Gilpatric argues, there are stronger mechanisms available. "If the moment you are late on a payment your credit card becomes deactivated," he argues, "that would be a big wake-up call."

How to avoid late fees

Regardless of where the ruling lands on the future of late fees, you can take proactive measures to avoid these penalties, such as:

Due date notifications: Whether through the credit card issuer if they offer this feature or using your personal calendar, setting reminders of your upcoming due date will help you avoid late payments.

Use autopay: Enabling automatic payment will guarantee that you never again face a late fee. If you're not sure that you can pay in full each time, set your autopay to cover the minimum payment due, then pay the balance of your bill separately as your budget allows.

Request a late fee waiver: If you've been hit with a late fee from an issuer for the first time, it's worth asking to have the late fee waived. Some issuers will grant this upon request. (AP)

The misinformation we found on Facebook was highly repetitive and often simple. While there were plenty of images doctored in a misleading way, these were outnumbered by memes with misleading text, screenshots of fake posts from other platforms, or posts that took unaltered images and misrepresented them.

For example, a picture was repeatedly posted as "proof" that now-former Fox News anchor Chris Wallace was a close associate of sexual predator Jeffrey Epstein. In reality, the gray-haired man in the image is not Epstein but actor George Clooney.

There was one piece of good news. Some previous research had found that misinformation posts generated more engagement than true posts. We did not find that. Controlling for page subscribers and group size, we found no relationship between engagement and the presence of misinformation. Misinformation didn't guarantee virality - but it also didn't diminish the chances that a post would go viral.

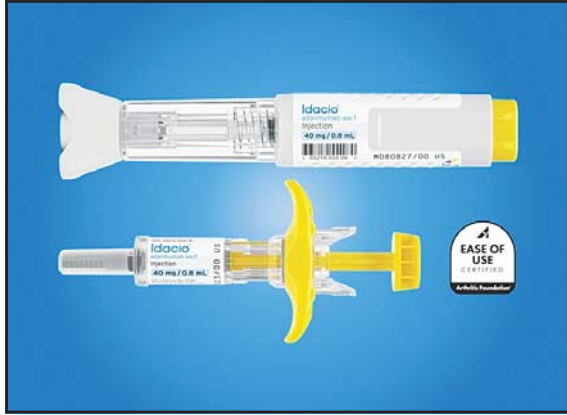
But image posts on Facebook were toxic in ways that went beyond simple misinformation. We found countless images that were abusive, misogynistic or simply racist. Nancy Pelosi, Hillary Clinton, Maxine Waters, Kamala Harris and Michelle Obama were the most frequent targets of abuse. For example, one frequently reposted image labeled Kamala Harris as a "high-end" call girl.

In another, a photo of Michelle Obama was altered. (AP)

Technology and the burgeoning volume of commercially available information allow various forms of the information to be combined and analyzed in new ways to understand all aspects of your life, including preferences and desires.

The Office of the Director of National Intelligence report warns that the increasing volume and widespread availability of commercially available information poses "significant threats to privacy and civil liberties." It increases the power of the government to surveil its citizens outside the bounds of law, and it opens the door to the government using that data in potentially unlawful ways. (AP)

Idacio (adalimumab-aacf) from Fresenius Kabi is the company's first immunology biosimilar in the US and is available in a self-administered pre-filled syringe and a self-administered pre-filled pen (auto injector). Idacio is a biosimilar to the reference product Humira.



Idacio (adalimumab-aacf) now available in US

Fresenius Kabi has announced the immediate availability in the US of its citrate-free adalimumab biosimilar Idacio® (adalimumab-aacf) for use in the treatment of chronic autoimmune diseases for all eligible indications of the reference product, Humira® (adalimumab). Idacio® is available in a self-administered pre-filled syringe and a self-administered pre-filled pen (autoinjector). "We are thrilled to launch Idacio, our first immunology biosimilar in the US," said Ali Ahmed, senior vice president, Biosimilars at Fresenius Kabi USA. "Our adalimumab

biosimilar forms part of a dedicated pipeline of affordable and high-quality immunology biosimilars from Fresenius Kabi, aimed to improve the quality of life of patients with chronic diseases." An Idacio® branded biosimilar is available in more than 35 countries.* Idacio® (adalimumab-aacf) is indicated for reducing signs and symptoms of rheumatoid arthritis, juvenile idiopathic arthritis, psoriatic arthritis, ankylosing spondylitis, Crohn's disease, ulcerative colitis in adults and plaque psoriasis. The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid

Services (CMS) issued a permanent product-specific Q-code for Idacio® (adalimumab-aacf). Under the Healthcare Common Procedure Coding System (HCPCS), the Q-code assigned to Idacio® is effective for patients administered Idacio on and after July 1, 2023. The new code for Idacio® is Q 5131. Idacio® (adalimumab-aacf) is a tumor necrosis factor (TNF) blocker and a biosimilar to Humira® (adalimumab). Adalimumab is a monoclonal antibody that binds TNF and blocks its general cytokine effects.

The Conversation

Whole foods offer perfectly balanced ratios of carbs to fiber

Fiber is your body's natural guide to weight management

By Christopher Damman
University of Washington

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

Fiber might just be the key to healthy weight management - and nature packages it in perfectly balanced ratios with carbs when you eat them as whole foods. Think unprocessed fruits, vegetables, whole grains, beans, nuts and seeds. Research suggests that carbohydrates are meant to come packaged in nature-balanced ratios of total carbohydrates to fiber. In fact, certain types of fiber affect how completely your body absorbs carbohydrates and tells your cells how to process them once they are absorbed.

Fiber slows the absorption of sugar in your gut. It also orchestrates the fundamental biology that recent blockbuster weight loss drugs like Wegovy and Ozempic tap into, but in a natural way. Your microbiome transforms fiber into signals that stimulate the gut hormones that are the natural forms of these drugs. These in turn regulate how rapidly your stomach empties, how tightly your blood sugar levels are controlled and even how hungry you feel.

It's as if unprocessed carbohydrates naturally come wrapped and packaged with their own instruction manual for your body on how to digest them.

I am a physician scientist and gastroenterologist who has spent over 20 years studying how food affects the gut microbiome and metabolism. The research is clear - fiber is important not just for happy bowel movements, but also for your blood sugar, weight and overall health.

Processed

Unfortunately, most Americans get the majority of their carbohydrates stripped of their natural fibers. Modern processed grains like white rice and white flour as well as many ultra-processed foods like some sugary breakfast cereals, packaged snacks and juices have removed these fibers. They essentially come unwrapped and without instructions for the body on how much it should absorb and how it should process them. In fact, only 5% of Americans eat the recommended amount of carbohydrates with enough of their natural packaging intact. Guidelines recommend at least 25 to 30 grams of fiber a day from food.

It may not be surprising that lack of fiber contributes to diabetes and obesity. What is surprising is that the fiber gap also likely contributes to heart disease, certain types of cancer and maybe even Alzheimer's disease.

One popular approach to mitigating some of the ill health effects of low fiber and high refined carbohydrates has been to limit carbohydrate intake. Such approaches include the low-carb, keto, paleo and Atkins diets. Each

diet is a variation on a similar theme of limiting carbohydrates to varying amounts in different ways.

There is scientific backing to the benefits of some of these diets. Research shows that limiting carbohydrates induces ketosis, a biological process that frees energy from fat reserves during starvation and prolonged exercise. Low-carbohydrate diets can also help people lose weight and lead to improvements in blood pressure and inflammation.

That said, some keto diets may have negative effects on gut health. It is also unknown how they may affect heart health, some forms of cancer and other conditions in the long term.

Even more confusing, research shows that people with diets high in plant-sourced carbohydrates, like the Mediterranean diet, tend to lead the longest and healthiest lives. How can this be reconciled with studies that suggest that low-carbohydrate diets can benefit metabolic health?

Focusing

The answer may have to do with the types of carbohydrates that studies are evaluating. Limiting simple sugars and refined carbohydrates may improve certain aspects of metabolic health, as these are some of the most easily digested and absorbed calories. But a more sustainable and comprehensive way of improving health may be increasing the percentage of unprocessed, more complex and slowly absorbed carbohydrates that come with their natural packages and instructions intact - those that have fiber.

These natural carbohydrates can be found in whole grains, beans, nuts, seeds, fruits and vegetables. They come in ratios of total carbohydrate to fiber that rarely exceed 10-to-1 and are often 5-to-1 or lower. Eating mostly whole foods is a simple way to ensure you're consuming quality carbohydrates with the right ratios.

But who doesn't like to have a big bowl of pasta or cake with ice cream on occasion? Focusing on packaged processed foods that maintain carb-to-fiber ratios of at least as low as 10-to-1 or ideally 5-to-1 can help you make the best choices when picking more processed foods at the store. Take a look at the nutrition facts label and simply divide total carbohydrates by dietary fiber.

On occasions when you're eating out or celebrating someone's birthday, consider taking a fiber supplement with your meal. One pilot study found that a supplement containing a blend of fibers decreased the blood sugar spike - an increase in glucose levels in the blood that if too high can damage the body over time - after a meal in healthy individuals by roughly 30%.

While almost all fiber is generally good for health in most people, not all fiber affects the body in the same way. Consuming a range of different types of fiber generally helps ensure a diverse microbiome, which is linked to gut and overall health. (AP)

Blackhawk, Blue Genes to provide groups with prescription savings

Spesolimab prevents generalized 'pustular psoriasis flares' in trial

'Potential to change the way metastatic cancer treated'

Scintix new radiotherapy technology for future prostate cancer treatment

INGELHEIM, Germany, July 4: At the 25th World Congress of Dermatology (WCD), Boehringer Ingelheim presented new late-breaking data from the Effisayil™ 2 trial showing that spesolimab significantly reduced the risk of GPP flares by 84% over 48 weeks compared to placebo. Furthermore, the trial with 123 patients demonstrated no flares after Week 4 of spesolimab treatment in the high dose group.

Effisayil™ 2 is the first and largest multinational randomized clinical trial to evaluate a treatment for the prevention of GPP flares," said Bruce Strober, MD, PhD, Clinical Professor, Dermatology, Yale University and Central Connecticut Dermatology. "These results provide further compelling clinical evidence for the role IL-36 signaling plays in the pathogenesis of GPP. Moving forward, our hope is that dermatologists not only have a specific treatment for GPP flares, but that we can effectively prevent them in the future."

GPP flares, characterized by painful pustules all over the body, often require emergency care and can lead to serious, life-threatening complications such as sepsis, shock and multisystem organ failure. In addition to the acute distress of a GPP flare, living with the uncertainty of the impact of the next flare can have a significant emotional burden on patients.4

Comprehensive

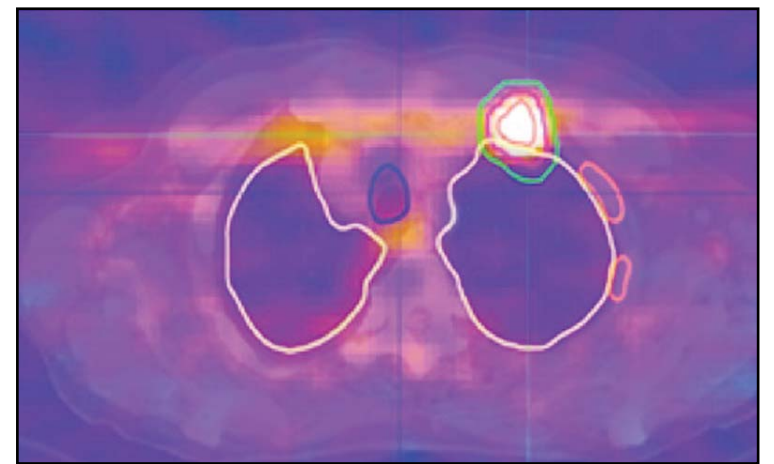
"At IFPA we meet people living with GPP, who share their story of physical pain due to the symptoms of the disease, and the mental burden that comes with the flares," said Frida Dunger Johansson, Executive Director, IFPA. "Any progress made to ease the burden of the disease improves the quality of life of people living with GPP."

"Through our comprehensive Effisayil™ clinical program we have already delivered spesolimab as a major advancement for flaring GPP patients," said Carinne Brouillon, Head of Human Pharma, Boehringer Ingelheim. "The Effisayil™ 2 trial results build on this success bringing us closer to achieving our ultimate goal of a flare-free future for everyone living with GPP."

Spesolimab (marketed as Spevigo®) has recently received Breakthrough Therapy Designation (BTD) from the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and the Center for Drug Evaluation (CDE) of China's National Medical Products Administration (NMPA)

HAYWARD, Calif., July 4: RefleXion Medical, Inc, a therapeutic oncology company, has announced that results of a prospective investigator-initiated clinical imaging study conducted on its X1 platform by City of Hope using positron emission tomography (PET) were presented on June 24 during an oral session at the Society of Nuclear Medicine and Medical Imaging (SNMMI) annual meeting in Chicago. The study results serve as the foundation for evaluating the use of RefleXion's Scintix™ biology-guided radiotherapy with a prostate-specific PET radiotracer for controlling external-beam radiotherapy delivery to prostate cancer tumor targets. City of Hope, one of the largest cancer research and treatment organizations in the US, is among the first in the nation to adopt this new radiotherapy technology that has the potential to change the way metastatic cancer patients are treated.

Recently cleared by the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA), Scintix technology is the first and only cancer therapy that uses each cancer's unique biology to autonomously determine where to deliver radiotherapy, second-by-second, during the actual cancer treatment



The prostate-specific PET radiotracer, 18F-DCFPyL, signals avid bone metastasis in a patient with prostate cancer.

to indicated solid tumors of any stage. Scintix therapy uses signals produced by a PET radiotracer interacting with cancer cells to control delivery of external-beam radiotherapy to tumor targets.

The prostate-specific PET radiotracer used in the presented study - 18F-DCFPyL (PyL) - binds to prostate-specific membrane antigen (PSMA),

a protein that is expressed in significantly elevated amounts by prostate cancer cells. Also recently approved by the FDA for diagnosing and staging prostate cancer, PyL can accurately and precisely pinpoint tumors in both the prostate and in other body areas where the cancer may have spread or metastasized.

as an investigational treatment for the prevention of GPP flares.

In the Effisayil™ 2 trial, spesolimab was shown to have a favorable safety profile, with a similar incidence of patients with adverse events across spesolimab and placebo treatment arms.

Spesolimab is a novel, humanized, selective antibody that specifically blocks the activation of the interleukin-36 receptor (IL-36R), a signaling pathway within the immune system shown to be involved in the pathogenesis of several autoimmune diseases, including GPP.

It is the first approved treatment for GPP flares in adults that has been evaluated in a statistically-powered, randomized, placebo-controlled trial. To date, Spevigo® (spesolimab) has been approved by regulatory authorities in al-

most 40 countries including the US, Japan, Mainland China, and the European Union to treat GPP flares in adults.

Spesolimab is also under investigation for the treatment of other IL-36 mediated skin diseases.

Also:

IRVING, Texas: Blackhawk Claims Service, an innovative, market leading third-party administrator (TPA), has announced it has partnered with Blue Genes, an app-based tool that allows patients and providers to personalize medication plans based on drug-to-drug interactions and genetic compatibility. Providing members with an accurate and in-depth understanding of how their genetics interact with their prescriptions results in less risk of adverse drug reactions and reduced costs

for patients and providers. "This partnership will provide Blackhawk groups the opportunity to drastically reduce hospitalizations and prescription costs. Members will be taking the most effective medications, based on their genetics. Members will be empowered with additional information about their prescriptions, so they can make informed decisions and improve their overall health," Blackhawk Claims Service CEO, **Mark Keck**, explained.

Blue Genes works by sending high-risk and high-utilization members an at-home test kit to collect their DNA to analyze how their genetics interact with their prescriptions. After the results have been summarized, the information is uploaded to the app for a member to review.

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Hellyer, prolific writer who chronicled UAE's rise, dies at 75

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates, July 4, (AP) — Peter Hellyer, a UK-born writer who spent nearly five decades chronicling the history, natural beauty and modern transformation of the United Arab Emirates, has died peacefully at the age of 75, local media reported Monday.

Hellyer, who was granted UAE citizenship and awarded the country's highest civilian honor, helped found the state-run WAM news agency and established its English service. He also helped establish an archaeological group that uncovered several historical sites.

Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, the president of the UAE, said on Twitter that Hellyer's dedicated service to UAE over the course of decades had left "notable" marks in the fields of antiquities, the environment and the media.

"With his passing, we lost a model of commitment and giving," Sheikh Mohammed wrote.

Hellyer came to the UAE in 1975 to make a documentary film about Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan, Sheikh Mohammed's father and the founder and first president of the federation of seven sheikhdoms.

He stayed on to chronicle its dramatic rise from a sparsely populated desert nation to an ultra-modern hub of tourism and commerce, home to the futuristic cities of Dubai and Abu Dhabi, and the world's tallest skyscraper.

Hellyer wrote several articles and books on the country's rise, including the official history of its vital oil industry, as well as a broader, maritime history of the Gulf nation. He co-founded WAM with the late Palestinian journalist Ibrahim al-Abed and later served as director of external information and research at the National Media Council, a government regulatory body.

He co-founded and led the Abu Dhabi Islands Archaeology Survey

from 1991 to 2006 and was involved in several discoveries shedding light on the history of the Arabian Gulf, including a 1,400-year-old Christian monastery unearthed on Sir Bani Yas Island near the border with Saudi Arabia.



Hellyer

He wrote widely on the UAE's desert ecology. He chaired the Emirates Natural History Group in the early 1990s and launched its journal, *Tribulus*, at which he was a longtime editor. He also founded a local birdwatching society.

He was awarded the Abu Dhabi Medal in 2013 - the country's highest civilian honor. Organizers hailed him as "a self-taught jack-of-all-trades" whose "devotion to this land and its people is expressed through his commitment to protecting the country's fragile ecosystems and history in a time of rapid development."

He continued writing about the UAE in regular columns for *The National*, an English-language newspaper founded in 2008 that he had advised in its early years.

Comment

The *National* was among several local media outlets that reported his death. A family member did not immediately respond to a request for comment. "Peter's enormous role in documenting the UAE's past and present cannot be exaggerated," said Mina Al-Oraibi, the editor-in-chief of *The National*.

"Peter and his long-time friend, the late Ibrahim Al-Abed, were instrumental in laying the foundations for the UAE's media scene and

never hesitated to advise and support any journalist who reached out to them. We will miss his writings in *The National* and thank him for his years of contribution."

In his final column for *The National*, published last December, he marveled at what he said had been a "golden year" for UAE archaeology. He expressed particular fascination at the recent discovery of artifacts dating back more than 400,000 years, before the emergence of *Homo sapiens*.

"Most exciting of all?" he wrote. "There's still much more to learn about the history of this land."

Also:

KYIV, Ukraine: Award-winning Ukrainian writer **Victoria Amelina** was among those killed by a deadly Russian missile attack on a popular restaurant frequented by journalists and aid workers in eastern Ukraine, *PEN America* said.

Amelina, 37, who had turned her attention from literature to document Russian war crimes after the invasion, died from her injuries after the June 27 strike in the city of **Kramatorsk**, the literature and human rights organization said Sunday in a statement.

Ukraine's Culture Minister **Oleksandr Tkachenko** expressed condolences to Amelina's family, adding that **Russia** bears the responsibility. "For every crime on our soil, for every interrupted life and unspoken word, the terrorist must bear the harshest punishment," he said.

Friends, colleagues and admirers of Amelina mourned her, with many saying hers was a life full of potential that was tragically cut short. "So many books unwritten, stories untold, days un-lived," tweeted journalist **Olga Tokariuk**, a friend of Amelina's.

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WEDNESDAY, JULY 5, 2023



This image released by Apple TV+ shows Idris Elba in a scene from the action series 'Hijack.' (AP)

Television

How to end an epic love story like 'Outlander'?

Elba uses his brains not brawn in 'Hijack'

By Alicia Rancilio

Standing 6-foot-2-inches, Idris Elba's size helps to sell his characters. As a detective in "Luther," he often averted protocol and went rogue. On "The Wire," he played a shrewd, intimidating crime boss in the drug world. In the 2022 movie "Beast," he protected his daughters from a ferocious lion while on holiday in South Africa. But, in his new Apple TV+ series "Hijack," it's his mental strength that helps him navigate a crisis, not his build.

Elba plays Sam, a passenger on a flight from Dubai to London that turns into a hostage situation. The first two episodes of "Hijack" debuted on Apple TV+, with one new episode released weekly.

"I'm used to being cast as a big man," said Elba. "In this situation Sam is vulnerable. He isn't there to fight."

Sam's strength here is that he works as a corporate negotiator, and his ability to assess high-stakes situations like mergers and acquisitions, serves him well. "It's all a bit of a psych game," he said. "Pitting one against the other and figuring out what your weak spot is. And then, of course, being able to make people feel comfortable, not threatened."

Space - or lack thereof - was an integral part of filming. The set was an actual plane which Elba said "really helped" the look and feel of the scenes.

"We thought about builds and then we thought, 'What if we just bring a plane in and shoot within what we've got?'" said Elba, who was also an executive producer on the show. "You've just got the space that you've got... It felt a little bit like a play and the camera could only go so many places."

The seven-episode series also unfolds in roughly the same amount of time it takes to fly from Dubai to London.

"It's difficult to make that happen because you shoot things out of sequence, but each minute of every episode is important," said Elba. The show cuts between what's happening in the air and on the ground as officials try to piece together what they're dealing with and how to react.

"It just made sense to get these real time decisions as a way to propel the narrative forward rather than sort of jump out of time sequence," said Elba, adding that the two perspectives are "really reflective of each other the whole time."

"It was very intense," added Archie Panjabi, who plays a counter-terrorism official. "As the series progresses, the tension multiplies and so did the number of people in the room." In the end, Panjabi says there was a feeling of resolution that was freeing. "I should tell people I spent six hours on screen saving your butt," she tells Elba to laughter.

Elba felt his own kind of relief at the end of six months of filming, in part because his adrenaline was often running high even between scenes.

"You stay keyed up. You go to your trailer or whatever, chill out, but you can't undo your mindset. Your body does not know it's acting."

How to end an epic love story like 'Outlander'? Take the time to do it right, says its stars

"Outlander" stars **Caitriona Balfe** and **Sam Heughan** are grateful for the gift of time. The show returned for its seventh season recently with an eighth season on the horizon that will be its last.

Balfe says there was a time when the powers that be considered wrapping up the epic in a truncated seventh season.

"There was a conversation where it might have wrapped up in two episodes in season seven, and that just didn't feel like the right way to do things," she said. Instead, there are 16 episodes in season seven and season eight will have 10.

"We're just happy that we also get the opportunity to actually come back and have one more stab at it," added Heughan.

Balfe and Heughan star as Claire and Jamie Fraser, who meet in season one after Claire, a British nurse, encounters a set of magic stones while visiting Scotland that transport her from the post-World War II era to the 1800s when Scotland and England are at war. Claire begrudgingly marries Jamie, a Highland warrior and the two fall in love, embarking on an epic romance with Claire choosing to live in the past to be with the man she loves.

In these new episodes, Claire and Jamie are navigating life during the American Revolution. Their adult daughter Breanna and her husband Roger MacKenzie, (played by **Sophie Skelton** and **Richard Rankin**) are expecting their second baby.

Skelton says these two sets of couples are complete opposites, giving the audience "two different types of relationships" to watch.

"Jamie and Claire have this beautiful love story that's almost like this fairy tale romance, which is wonderful to get lost in. But then Roger and Brianna give this completely opposite dynamic, which is against all odds, they kind of survive as a couple. I think that they mess up a lot. They don't always communicate. They're realistic. They're both flawed and their relationship is flawed but... they've come so far."

The story is based on the book series by **Diana Gabaldon**, who has published nine out of 10 planned novels. Balfe says in season seven they "incorporate parts of book seven and eight" and that overall the series has only "diverged slightly" from the books.

How season eight will reflect Gabaldon's story framework with more books than seasons is unclear. Balfe says that's up to the writers who are tied up with the writers strike. (AP)

NEW YORK: **Leandro De Niro Rodriguez**, a grandson of **Robert De Niro**, has died at 19.

His mother, **Drena De Niro**, announced the news Monday in an Instagram post.

"I don't know how to live without you but I'll try to go on and spread the love and light that you so made me feel in getting to be your mama," she wrote. "You were so deeply loved and appreciated and I wish that love alone could have saved you."

Drena De Niro shared Leandro with artist **Carlos Mare**, who posted black squares sans caption on his Instagram accounts.

"I'm deeply distressed by the passing of my beloved grandson Leo. We're greatly appreciative of the condolences from everyone. We ask that we please be given privacy to grieve our loss of Leo," Robert De Niro said in a statement.

Further details were not immediately available. Messages to a representative for Drena De Niro was not immediately returned.

In response to a request to confirm a TMZ report that Leandro was found in a New York apartment, New York City police wrote that "an 18-year-old male was found unconscious, unresponsive and was pronounced deceased by EMS on scene" at a Wall Street address that houses the Cipriani Club Residences. Leandro only recently turned 19, news outlets report.

The medical examiner's office will determine the cause of death.

Drena De Niro, 51, is the oldest of Robert De Niro's now seven children (the 79-year-old welcomed a baby earlier this year). The actor adopted her when he married her mother, **Diahnne Abbott**, his first wife. Drena De Niro is also an actor, with roles in "Joy," "The Intern" and "Mozart in the Jungle," among a long list of credits.

Leandro also had acting credits to his name, with roles in three projects also featuring his mother: 2005's "The Collection," and 2018's "Cabaret Maxime" and "A Star Is Born." In **Bradley Cooper's** remake, the mother and son played mother and son - wife and child to **Dave Chappelle's** character. (AP)

LONDON: One of actor **Kevin Spacey's** accusers described the

Oscar-winner in court Monday as a "slippery, snaky" predator who good-looking, young men were warned to avoid.

The man, who worked with the American actor when he came to the Old Vic Theatre in London in the early 2000s, said Spacey told him he could introduce him to Hollywood stars. But the man said



Robert



Leandro

that word around the playhouse was that he should be careful around Spacey.

"It was well known he was up to no good," the man said in a video of his police interview played for jurors in Spacey's assault trial.

The man, who cannot be identified under British law, likened

Spacey to the villain he plays in the 1995 thriller "Se7en" about a serial killer motivated by the seven deadly sins.

"He's a bit like that, a bit creepy," the man said in his police interview last year.

Spacey, 63, has pleaded not guilty to a dozen charges involving four men for events that date

from 2001 to 2013. The charges include sexual assault, indecent assault and causing a person to engage in penetrative sexual activity without consent.

He could go to prison if convicted, though Spacey told a German magazine that he expects he'll be offered work "the moment I am cleared of these charges." (AP)

People & Places



Chanel



Chanel



Chanel



Christian Dior



Chanel

Fashion

PARIS: In the lush surroundings of Paris' Musee Rodin, the landscapes of artist **Marta Roberti** formed the backdrop on Monday for the latest Dior couture collection by designer **Maria Grazia Chiuri**.

The designs, inspired by power, feminism and the divine, shone against Roberti's fantastical creations of exotic birds and ethereal trees. Actors **Natalie Portman** and **Rosamund Pike** were among VIP attendees captivated by the fusion of these imaginative realms of threads and thoughts.

Here's a look at some highlights from Monday's fall-winter 2023 collections:

Dior

The collection by Chiuri drew its strength from the past, a salute to timelessness. A crepe cape with long, draping sleeves set the classical tone, with the gathered plaits of the models' hair a throwback to times past. Subtle and understated, the adornments of pearl or gold earrings added a quiet elegance, while tunic shapes and classical banding played up the nostalgic silhouettes, all marked by loose proportions and understated charm.

Yet, this was no mere repeat of history. The shimmer and sparkle lent the collection a vibrant, modern heartbeat. The restrained sophistication was occasionally punctuated with Renaissance sleeves - a Chiuri signature from her time at Valentino - bridging past and present. And amidst the classical musings, a white apron-shirt, pristine and fresh, broke the ethereal continuity, presenting a fashion-forward mix.

Roberti's goddess-inspired works of art lining the walls breathed life into the runway, transforming it into a modern pantheon where models, resembling exquisite deities, seemed to float by. The sculpted jackets and coats, folded beneath the chest, along with the serene palette of white, beige, silver, and pale gold, all mirrored classical statues and columns.

Pearls, iridescently entwined with silver threads, accentuated numerous ensembles, symbolizing purity.

In Chiuri's hands, the essence of femininity - with its strength and fragility - took center stage.

In an interview at Paris' Rodin Museum before the Dior couture show, acclaimed director **Baz Luhrmann** touched on the complex issue of attending a glamorous fashion event amidst the backdrop of recent civil unrest in France.

Celine

French house Celine, owned by LVMH Moët Hennessy Louis Vuitton, decided to cancel its Paris Fashion Week show Sunday over the nationwide riots. The Celine menswear show, like last season, was scheduled outside the official men's calendar.

The house's designer **Hedi Slimane** called it "inconsiderate" to hold a runway show when the French capital was



Christian Dior



Chanel



Chanel



Schiaparelli



Christian Dior



Chanel

Above and below: Models present creations for Chanel, Christian Dior and Schiaparelli Haute Couture F/W 2023-2024 fashion collection presented in Paris, July 4. (AP)

Style

"bereaved and bruised." Other LVMH houses such as Dior, which went ahead to stage runways like most other brands, held a different view.

Schiaparelli

After breaking the internet with his last show in January, featuring eye-catching animal heads, the question

on everyone's lips was how designer **Daniel Roseberry** could match the energy - and controversy - with his latest couture outing for Schiaparelli.

The answer? A delightful showcase of archetypal couture that was not short of whimsical moments, including a model strutting down the runway in a gigantic

sheep fleece, paired playfully with sheep trotter heels.

This season, Roseberry continued to delve into the world of exaggerated proportions, staying true to the ironic touches that were defining elements of the house's founder, **Elsa Schiaparelli**. The first look, in contrasting black and white, evoked a chic, saucy nun, her habit swooshing fluidly with every step.

Large geometric lapels adorned with glittering gold floral jewelry became focal points, while Surrealist touches, like gold clasps in the shape of human ears, provided an unexpected twist.

Iris Van Herpen

The couture landscape literally took a deep dive into the future at Iris Van Herpen's latest showcase in Paris. The Dutch visionary, known for her fearless fusion of technology and fashion, presented an ethereal fall collection for 2023 that transported the audience to a futuristic underwater universe, accentuated by '80s geometric aesthetics.

The designs, awash with contrasting whites and blacks punctuated by metallic accents and soft oceanic tones, were reminiscent of architectural landscapes.

Van Herpen said she was challenging the status quo by being inspired by a possible future of waterborne urbanism that coexists with marine ecosystems. It's a powerful statement in an era of rising sea levels and increasing vulnerability of our urban landscapes.

Van Herpen's aquatic and futuristic themes emerged resplendent Monday, combining her dual passions for the organic world and the metaverse.

This season's pieces merged the kinesis of aquatic life with the stasis of geometric shapes. Corsetry with ribbed detailing mirrored the exoskeletons of deep-sea creatures, while delicate layers of fabric floated like translucent jellyfish, their undulating movements echoing in the sweep and flow of her designs.

Giambattista Valli

Giambattista Valli, the Italian couturier celebrated for his joyful excess and extravagant volumes, unveiled his latest couture collection. Daring and decadent, the opening looks were a study in Valli's signature play with proportions, juxtaposing monochromatic shades and epochs in a series of ensembles. The first dress, with its rivulets of tulle in the underskirt, cleverly resembled the crystal formations of an underground cave - all against the charm of a 1950s bustier top. It was a great mix. (AP)

Climate

Fires to worsen

Wildfires and smoke the 'new abnormal'

NEW YORK, July 4, (AP): It was a smell that invoked a memory. Both for Emily Kuchlbauer in North Carolina and Ryan Bomba in Chicago. It was smoke from wildfires, the odor of an increasingly hot and occasionally on-fire world.

Kuchlbauer had flashbacks to the surprise of soot coating her car three years ago when she was a recent college graduate in San Diego. Bomba had déjà vu from San Francisco, where the air was so thick with smoke people had to mask up. They figured they left wildfire worries behind in California, but a Canada that's burning from sea to warming sea brought one of the more visceral effects of climate change home to places that once seemed immune.

"It's been very apocalyptic feeling, because in California the dialogue is like, 'Oh, it's normal. This is just what happens on the West Coast,' but it's very much not normal here," Kuchlbauer said.



Mann

As Earth's climate continues to change from heat-trapping gases spewed into the air, ever fewer people are out of reach from the billowing and deadly fingers of wildfire smoke, scientists say. Already wildfires are consuming three times more of the United States and Canada each year than in the 1980s and studies predict fire and smoke to worsen.

While many people exposed to bad air may be asking themselves if this is a "new normal," several scientists told

The Associated Press they specifically reject any such idea because the phrase makes it sound like the world has changed to a new and steady pattern of extreme events.

"Is this a new normal? No, it's a new abnormal," University of Pennsylvania climate scientist Michael Mann said. "It continues to get worse. If we continue to warm the planet, we don't settle into some new state. It's an ever-moving baseline of worse and worse."

It's so bad that perhaps the term "wildfire" also needs to be rethought, suggested Woodwell Climate Research Center senior scientist Jennifer Francis.

Emissions

"We can't really call them wildfires anymore," Francis said. "To some extent they're just not, they're not wild. They're not natural anymore. We are just making them more likely. We're making them more intense."

Several scientists told the AP that the problem of smoke and wildfires will progressively worsen until the world significantly reduces greenhouse gas emissions, which has not happened despite years of international negotiations and lofty goals.

Fires in North America are generally getting worse, burning more land. Even before July, traditionally the busiest fire month for the country, Canada has set a record for most area burned with 31,432 square miles (81,409 square kilometers), which is nearly 15% higher than the old record.

"A year like this could happen with or without climate change, but warming temperatures just made it a lot more probable," said A. Park Williams, a UCLA bioclimatologist who studies fire and water. "We're seeing, especially across the West, big increases in smoke exposure and reduction in air quality that are attributable to increase in fire activity."

Numerous studies have linked climate change to increases in North American fires because global warming is increasing extreme weather, especially drought and mostly in the West.

As the atmosphere dries, it sucks moisture out of plants, creating more fuel that burns easier, faster and with greater intensity. Then you add more lightning strikes from more storms, some of which are dry lightning strikes, said Canadian fire scientist Mike Flannigan at Thompson Rivers University in British Columbia. Fire seasons are getting longer, starting earlier and lasting later because of warmer weather, he said.

"We have to learn to live with fire and smoke, that's the new reality," Flannigan said.

Ronak Bhatia, who moved from California to Illinois for college in 2018 and now lives in Chicago, said at first it seemed like a joke: wildfire smoke following him and his friends from the West Coast. But if it continues, it will no longer be as funny.

"It makes you think about climate change and also how it essentially could affect, you know, anywhere," Bhatia said. "It's not just the California problem or Australia problem. It's kind of an everywhere problem."

Wildfires in the US on average now burn about 12,000 square miles (31,000 square kilometers) yearly, about the size of Maryland. From 1983 to 1987, when the National Interagency Fire Center started keeping statistics, only about 3,300 square miles (8,546 square kilometers) burned annually.

During the past five years, including a record low 2020, Canada has averaged 12,279 square miles (31,803 square kilometers) burned, which is three and a half times larger than the 1983 to 1987 average.

The type of fires seen this year in western Canada are in amounts scientists and computer models predicted for the 2030s and 2040s. And eastern Canada, where it rains more often, wasn't supposed to see occasional fire years like this until the mid 21st century, Flannigan said.

If the Canadian east is burning, that means eventually, and probably sooner than researchers thought, eastern US states will also, Flannigan said. He and Williams pointed to devastating fires in Gatlinburg, Tennessee, that killed 14 people in 2016 during a brief drought in the East.

America burned much more in the past, but that's because people didn't try to stop fires and they were less of a threat.

Control

The West used to have larger and regular fires until the mid-19th century, with more land settlement and then the US government trying to douse every fire after the great 1910 Yellowstone fire, Williams said.

Since about the 1950s, America pretty much got wildfires down to a minimum, but that hasn't been the case since about 2000.

"We thought we had it under control, but we don't," Williams said. "The climate changed so much that we lost control of it."

The warmer the Arctic gets and the more snow and ice melt there - the Arctic is warming three times faster than the rest of Earth - the differences in the summer between Arctic and mid-latitudes get smaller. That allows the jet stream of air high above the ground to meander and get stuck, prolonging bouts of bad weather, Mann and Francis said. Other scientists say they are waiting for more evidence on the impact of bouts of stuck weather.

A new study published on June 23 links a stuck weather pattern to reduced North American snow cover in the spring.

For people exposed to nasty air from wildfire smoke, increasing threats to health are part of the new reality.

Wildfires expose about 44 million people per year worldwide to unhealthy air, causing about 677,000 deaths annually with almost 39% of them children, according to a 2021 study out of the United Kingdom.

One study that looked at a dozen years of wildfire smoke exposure in Washington state showed a 1% all-ages increase in the odds of non-traumatic death the same day as the smoke hit the area and 2% for the day after. Risk of respiratory deaths jumped 14% and even more, 35%, for adults ages 45 to 64.

Based on peer-reviewed studies, the Health Effects Institute estimated that smoke's chief pollutant caused 4 million deaths worldwide and nearly 48,000 deaths in the US in 2019.

The tiny particles making up a main pollutant of wildfire smoke, called PM2.5, are just the right size to embed deep in the lungs and absorb into the blood. But while their size has garnered attention, their composition also matters, said Kris Ebi, a University of Washington climate and health scientist.

"There is emerging evidence that the toxicity of wildfire smoke PM2.5 is more toxic than what comes out of tailpipes," Ebi said.



Ansonia Lyons carries her son, Adrien Lyons, as she takes him for a diaper change in Birmingham, Ala., on Saturday, Feb. 5, 2022. After two miscarriages, Ansonia became pregnant in 2020, and it was difficult. Doctors initially told her she was suffering from regular morning sickness, though she was vomiting blood. Ultimately, she was diagnosed with an excessive vomiting disorder. A

study published Monday, July 3, 2023, in the Journal of the American Medical Association shows maternal mortality rates in the US doubled between 1999 and 2019, that Native American and Alaskan Native populations had the largest rate increase and that, overall, Black maternal mortality rates were the highest. (AP)

Health

Black mothers died at highest rates

US maternal deaths doubled in last 20 yrs

NEW YORK, July 4, (AP): Maternal deaths across the US more than doubled over the course of two decades, and the tragedy unfolded unequally.

Black mothers died at the nation's highest rates, while the largest increases in deaths were found in American Indian and Native Alaskan mothers. And some states - and racial or ethnic groups within them - fared worse than others.

The findings were laid out in a new study published Monday in the Journal of the American Medical Association. Researchers looked at maternal deaths between 1999 and 2019 - but not the pandemic spike - for every state and five racial and ethnic groups.

"It's a call to action to all of us to understand the root causes - to understand that some of it is about health care and access to health care, but a lot of it is about structural racism and the policies and procedures and things that we have in place that may keep people from being healthy," said Dr. Allison Bryant, one of the study's authors and a senior medical director for health equity at Mass General Brigham.

Among wealthy nations, the US has the highest rate of maternal mortality, which is defined as a death during pregnancy or up to a year afterward. Common causes include excessive bleeding, infection, heart disease, suicide and drug overdose.

Bryant and her colleagues at Mass General Brigham and the Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation at the University of Washington started with national vital statistics data on deaths and live births. They then used a modeling process to estimate maternal mortality out of every 100,000 live births.

Disparities

Overall, they found rampant, widening disparities. The study showed high rates of maternal mortality aren't confined to the South but also extend to regions like the Midwest and states such as Wyoming and Montana, which had high rates for multiple racial and ethnic groups in 2019.

Researchers also found dramatic jumps when they compared maternal mortality in the first decade of the study to the second, and identified the five states with the largest increases between those decades. Those increases exceeded:

- 162% for American Indian and Alaska Native mothers in Florida, Illinois, Kansas, Rhode Island and Wisconsin;
- 135% for white mothers in Georgia, Indiana, Louisiana, Missouri and Tennessee;
- 105% for Hispanic mothers in Georgia, Illinois, Indiana, Minnesota and Tennessee;
- 93% for Black mothers in Arkansas, Georgia, Louisiana, New Jersey and Texas;
- 83% for Asian and Pacific Islander mothers in Georgia, Illinois, Kansas, Michigan and Missouri.

"I hate to say it, but I was not surprised by the findings. We've certainly seen enough anecdotal evidence in a single state or a group of states to suggest that maternal mortality is rising," said Dr. Karen Joynt Maddox, a health services and policy researcher at Washington University School of

SEATTLE, July 4, (AP): Need Plan B? Tap your credit card and enter B6.

Since last November, a library at the University of Washington has featured a different kind of vending machine, one that's become more popular on campuses around the country since the US Supreme Court ended constitutional protections for abortion last year. It's stocked with ibuprofen, pregnancy tests and the morning-after pill.

With some states enacting abortion bans and others enshrining protections and expanding access to birth control, the machines are part of a push on college campuses to ensure emergency contraceptives are cheap, discreet and widely available.

There are now 39 universities in 17 states with emergency contraceptive vending machines, and at least 20 more considering them, according to the American Society for Emergency Contraception. Some, such as the University of Tulsa in Oklahoma, are in states where abortion is largely banned.

Over-the-counter purchase of Plan B and generic forms is legal in all 50 states. The 2022 ruling overturning Roe v. Wade "is putting people's lives at stake, so it makes pregnancy prevention all the more urgent," said Kelly Cleland, the ASEC's executive director. "If you live in a state where you cannot get an abortion and you can't get an abortion any-

where near you, the stakes are so much higher than they've ever been before."

Washington this year became first US state to set aside money - \$200,000 to fund \$10,000 grants that colleges can obtain next year through an application process - to expand access to emergency contraceptives at public universities and technical colleges through the automatic dispensers.

The University of Washington's machine was installed after a student-led campaign. It offers boxes of generic Plan B for \$12.60, about a quarter of what the name-brand versions sell for in stores, and more than 640 have been sold.

The drug is even cheaper in some machines than it is in UAW's, as low as \$7 per box. That's because it is sold at just above wholesale cost, compared with pharmacy retail prices that might go up to \$50.

In Illinois and New York, lawmakers are developing legislation that would require at least one vending machine selling emergency contraceptives on state college campuses.

In Connecticut, Yale had to drop plans to install an emergency contraceptive vending machine in 2019 after learning it would violate state law.

But this year the state approved a measure allowing Plan B and other over-the-counter medications to be sold from vending machines on campuses and other locations.

Medicine in St. Louis who wasn't involved in the study. "It's certainly alarming, and just more evidence we have got to figure out what's going on and try to find ways to do something about this."

Maddox pointed to how, compared with other wealthy nations, the US underinvests in things like social services, primary care and mental health. She also said Missouri hasn't funded public health adequately and, during the years of the study, hadn't expanded Medicaid. They've since expanded Medicaid - and lawmakers passed a bill giving new mothers a full year of Medicaid health coverage. Last week, Missouri Gov. Mike Parson signed budget bills that included \$4.4 million for a maternal mortality prevention plan.

Disparity

In neighboring Arkansas, Black women are twice as likely to have pregnancy-associated deaths as white women, according to a 2021 state report.

Dr. William Greenfield, the medical director for family health at the Arkansas Department of Health, said the disparity is significant and has "persisted over time," and that it's hard to pinpoint exactly why there was an increase in the state's maternal mortality rate for Black mothers.

Rates among Black women have long been the worst in the nation, and the problem affects people of all socio-



Flames from the Donnie Creek wildfire burn along a ridge top north of Fort St. John, British Columbia, Canada, Sunday, July 2. As Earth's climate continues to change from heat-trapping gases spewed into the air, ever fewer people are out of reach from the billowing and deadly fingers of wildfire smoke, scientists say. (AP)

Discovery

'UK had the hottest June': The UK sweltered through its hottest June since records began in 1884, the country's weather agency said Monday, adding that human-induced climate change means such unusual heat will become more frequent in the next few decades.

The average temperature for June in the U.K. hit 15.8 degrees Celsius (60.4 Fahrenheit) - 0.9C hotter than the joint previous record of 14.9 C in 1940 and 1976, according to the Met Office's provisional figures.

Meteorologists say that thanks to climate change, the chance of beating the previous joint record has at least doubled since the 1940s.

"Alongside natural variability, the background warming of the Earth's atmosphere due to human-induced climate change has driven up the possibility of reaching record high temperatures," said Paul Davies at the Met Office. "By the 2050s, the chance of surpassing the previous record of 14.9 C could be as high as around 50%, or every other year." Large areas of the country, from the Orkney Islands in northern Scotland to Cornwall in southwest England, set regional high temperature records last month, with many experiencing mean temperatures that were 2.5 C more than average.

The highest temperature recorded last month was 32.2 C - much higher than typical maximum temperatures, which hover around the low 20s for this time of year, the weather agency said.

Fisheries experts say that the hot weather has contributed to the deaths of thousands of fish in canals and rivers. Thunderstorms, pollution and other factors also contributed to the deaths, the Environment Agency said.

"Environment Agency fisheries teams have been responding round the clock to numerous reports of dead or distressed fish across the country," said the agency's fisheries manager, Graeme Storey. (AP)

Farmers mark rice planting day: Thousands of farmers and their families across Nepal celebrated an annual paddy festival by planting rice, splashing in the muddy fields and enjoying a special feast.

The farmers were joined by other villagers, visitors from the cities and tourists visiting the Himalayan nation.

Rice is a staple food for millions of Nepalese and the crop is generally planted once a year in July and harvested about four months later.

Farmers and their families sang traditional songs to welcome the rain that is needed for the rice to grow and thanked the gods for sending the precipitation on time.

After planting lines of rice, they splashed in the muddy fields, smeared each other with mud and sand, and danced more before culminating the celebration with a feast.

The day is also known as "dahi chiuira" for the yogurt and beaten rice that comprises one of the main dishes eaten during the feast.

Elsewhere in the country, people ate yogurt and puffed rice with mangos and bananas to mark the day at home.

The government has declared National Paddy Day a holiday and tried to encourage people to continue or return to farming rice, as many increasingly look to take up other professions. (AP)

latch onto people, pets and other animals, new research shows.

Humans and animals naturally pick up static charges as they go about their days. And those charges are enough to give ticks a boost to their next blood meal, according to a study published Friday in the journal Current Biology.

While the distance is tiny, "it's the equivalent of us jumping three or four flights of stairs in one go," said study author Sam



Rich



England

England, an ecologist now at Berlin's Natural History Museum.

Ticks are "ambush predators," explained Stephen Rich, a public health entomologist at the University of Massachusetts Amherst.

They can't jump or fly onto their hosts, he said. Instead, they hang out on a branch or a blade of grass with their legs outstretched - a behavior known as "questing" - and wait for people or animals to pass by so they can grab on and bite. (AP)

Spain look for glory

Alexia Putellas back in time for the Women's World Cup



In this July 5, 2022 file photo, Canada's Christine Sinclair (12) and Trinidad and Tobago's Victoria Swift compete for the ball during a CONCACAF women's championship soccer match in Monterrey, Mexico. (AP)

BARCELONA, Spain, July 4, (AP) — Alexia Putellas heads to the Women's World Cup after winning back-to-back Ballon d'Or awards and helping Barcelona win two of the last three Champions League titles.

Even so, her role on Spain's national team is in doubt. The 29-year-old midfielder with a knack for scoring has barely played for her club since recently returning from a leg injury that sidelined her for nearly 10 months.

Alexia was included on Spain's squad for the tournament beginning later this month in Australia and New Zealand. But it is not clear what part she will play on a team that has made huge strides in recent years. Alexia, who leads Spain with 100 appearances, has had a role in that boom by becoming only the second Spaniard, woman or man, to win the Ballon d'Or.

SOCCER

She was set to take the 2022 European Championship by storm, only for the anterior cruciate ligament in her left knee to rupture days before the tournament. She played her first game since that injury in late April when Barcelona clinched the Spanish league title.

In total, she has made six appearances since her injury, all as a substitute, including in the Champions League final. She lifted the trophy as Barcelona's captain after her teammates pulled off a 3-2 comeback victory over Wolfsburg.

Spain coach Jorge Vilda praised Alexia when he announced his preliminary squad. But it was unclear if he felt he would get more from her playing as a starter or as a backup who could handle the pressure of the final minutes.

Alexia guided Barcelona to its first European Cup in 2021. The next season she led the Champions League in scoring with 11 goals but Barcelona lost in the final. This season, she was an observer until the final minutes of her club's triumphant Champions League campaign. If fully recovered, Alexia would be a formidable weapon for Spain thanks to her ability to join the attack, find spaces to shoot, and her superb strike from distance.

"We know that she is going to help us a lot, not just on the field, but also with her leadership and the respect she commands from the other players, her experience, her ability to know what is needed, and that talent she has to rise to the challenge," Vilda said. "That is what we were missing in the

last European Championship."

But Alexia is also returning to a team that has undergone an unwanted overhaul.

Relations deteriorated between several players and Vilda after Spain exited last year's European Championship in the quarterfinals. Fifteen players, including several Barcelona teammates of Alexia, said they would not continue to play for Vilda unless he improved his coaching methodology.

The federation interpreted the players' decision as an attempt to force the ousting of Vilda. The federation backed the coach firmly and left the rebels off the team.

Now, three of the 15, including Barcelona playmaker Aitana Bonmatí, have been included after a behind-the-scenes reconciliation with Vilda.

The 12 still left off the squad include Patricia Guijarro, who scored twice in Barcelona's win over Wolfsburg.

Alexia was injured at the time of the split between the players and coach and was not among the 15 who refused to continue playing. She did show support for them in a message posted on social media. That, however, did not impede her return for Spain once she had healed.

Spain opens the World Cup against Costa Rica in Wellington on July 21. Japan and Zambia are also in Group C.

Alexia may also have to deal with off-field distractions - this time from her club.



In this Sunday, March 8, 2020 file photo, Spain midfielder Alexia Putellas eyes the ball during the first half of a SheBelieves Cup soccer match against the United States in Harrison, N.J. (AP)

Court finds consultant guilty of taking bribes in Oly trial

TOKYO, July 4, (AP) — One of several Japanese officials charged in a widespread bribery scandal involving Tokyo Olympic organizers was found guilty Tuesday but avoided jail time.

OLYMPICS

The verdict in Tokyo District Court for Joji Matsui, the former head of Amuse consulting company, was the first for someone on

the receiving end of the bribes from companies seeking sponsorships and licensing for the 2020 Games.

Matsui was sentenced to two years in prison, suspended for four years. Presiding Judge Kenji Yasunaga said the facts showed Matsui had allowed his company bank account to be used to disguise the transfer of funds to Haryuki Takahashi, who, as an executive on the Japanese Olympic and Paralympic organizing committee, wielded considerable influence in selecting sponsors.

Yasunaga said the bribes involved, totaling about 27 million yen (\$186,000), were significant and "the damage to public trust has been great."

Matsui, who acknowledged guilt during the trial, remained silent and nodded.

His defense had argued Matsui was just following orders from Takahashi. That and his expression of remorse were factors in the decision on a suspended sentence, which kept him out of prison.

Takahashi has been charged with

receiving bribes from five companies, estimated at nearly 200 million yen (\$1.4 million). The date for his trial has not yet been set. He has denied the charges.

Previous verdicts in the sprawling Olympic bribery scandal, in which 15 people have been charged, have included suspended sentences.

They included officials at Sun Arrow, which made the Olympic mascots, and clothing manufacturer Aoki Holdings, tapped to dress the Japanese Olympic team.



July
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 61.000/-net	BHD 136.198/-net
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 69.000/-net	BHD 153.222/-net

Promo period from 4th – 31st July 2023

Terms & conditions apply*

Philipsen makes it back-to-back wins

Yates keeps Tour overall lead

NOGARO, France, July 4, (AP) — Belgian rider Jasper Philipsen won a mass sprint to earn a second straight stage victory at the Tour de France on Tuesday, while Adam Yates kept the race leader's yellow jersey heading into the Pyrenees mountains.

Philipsen followed up his win on Monday's third stage and was once again expertly helped into position to attack by his Alpecin-Deceuninck teammate and countryman Mathieu van der Poel.

Philipsen showcased his pure speed by holding off Australian rider Caleb Ewan at the line to underline his credentials to win the sprinter's green jersey with another impressive performance. Philipsen's countryman Wout van Aert won it last year.

German rider Phil Bauhaus was third to make it the same top three finishers as Monday, with Ewan beating Bauhaus this time. Several riders behind them crashed as they jostled for position on the final straight.

The 181.8-kilometer (112.7-mile) route from Dax to Nogaro in southwestern France was almost totally flat and again favored sprinters.

On the eve of the Tour's first mountain stage - a difficult Pyrenean trek - riders were keen to save some energy.

The peloton started at a leisurely pace with no team prepared to place a rider in a breakaway. So there was time to glance over and take in some of the countryside scenery, such as the 12th-century Saint-Saturnin church.

The gentle procession was interrupted when the first attack came about 100 kilometers (62 miles) out, when Frenchmen Benoît Cosnefroy and Anthony Delaplace formed a breakaway. They were still together when they got over the day's only ascent - the modest Côte de Dému is small compared to Wednesday's climbs - but were caught with 25 kilometers (15.5 miles) remaining.

The closing stages were around a circuit with a smooth tarmac, but that didn't make

it easier for Danish sprinter Fabio Jakobsen, who fell off his bike, and several other riders fell as they clipped barriers in a nervy finish.

But Van der Poel showed both his class and his race craft by timing an attack on the left and putting Philipsen in an ideal position from which he made no mistake. It effectively gave him a hat trick of sprint-stage wins after winning the last stage of last year's Tour.

Meanwhile, Yates maintained his six-second lead over two-time Tour winner Tadej Pogacar of Slovenia and his twin brother Simon Yates in third.

CYCLING

Defending champion Jonas Vingegaard of Denmark stayed in sixth spot but could make up some ground on Wednesday.

That's when Vingegaard and other expert climbers test their legs with two big ascents on Stage 5.

The 162.7-kilometer (100.9-mile) trek from Pau to Laruns includes a daunting 15.2-kilometer (9.4-mile) grind up Col de Soudet that has the toughest category rating.



Belgium's Jasper Philipsen crosses the finish line to win the fourth stage of the Tour de France cycling race over 182 kilometers (113 miles) with start in Dax and finish in Nogaro, France. (AP)

Brazil's Neymar fined \$3.3 million

SAO PAULO, July 4, (AP) — Brazilian soccer star Neymar was fined more than \$3.3 million for violating local environmental rules during renovations at his mansion in the city of Mangaratiba outside Rio de Janeiro.

The Mangaratiba city hall said in a statement Monday night it had issued four fines totalling about 16 million Brazilian reals after Neymar was accused of illegally building an artificial lake at his mansion.

"Among the dozens of infractions that were noticed at the player's property are the start of an unauthorized construction which requires environmental control; capture of a river course and detouring it without authorization; moving rock and sand; suppressing vegetation without authorization and non-compliance of an embargo," the statement said.

A city hall document obtained by The Associated Press says that the latter charge is

related to Neymar's decision to swim in the artificial lake despite the fact that local authorities had shown up to forbid him from that area due to environmental consequences. "Because of that, the athlete was fined again," it said.

"The footballer was at the mansion on Friday and entered the lake, ignoring the restriction order made by the (environment) secretariat and local police, which showed up there the day before," the document said. Brazilian media reported on Friday that Neymar threw a party that day to celebrate the completion of the artificial lake.

A spokesperson for the 31-year-old Neymar declined to comment on the issue after a request from the AP. The Paris Saint-Germain striker can appeal the decision, which will be handed to police for possible prosecution.

SPORTS

Braves edge Guardians for ninth straight win

Marlins rally past Cardinals

CLEVELAND, July 4, (AP): At the moment, there's no team in the same league as these Atlanta Braves.

They're in a class by themselves - from top to bottom.

"Dangerous team," said Guardians manager Terry Francona.

Michael Harris II, Atlanta's No. 9 hitter, homered twice and Bryce Elder, one of the club's eight All-Stars, pitched into the seventh inning as the Braves moved 30 games over .500 with their season-high ninth straight win, 4-2 over the Cleveland Guardians on Monday night.

Harris connected for solo shots in the third and fifth innings off Guardians rookie Gavin Williams (0-1), who in his third career start had to face a lineup featuring six All-Stars and no detectable weaknesses.

Harris may be last in Atlanta's order, but he's batting .416 (37 of 89) with seven homers and 16 RBIs in his last 24 games. The Braves don't have any holes in their relentless lineup.

Marcell Ozuna also homered for the Braves, who have won 17 of 18 and 24 of 27. Atlanta, which has had three winning streaks of at least eight games, improved MLB's best record to 57-27.

Manager Brian Snitker has no explanation for how his team finds ways to win.

Elder (7-1) didn't give up a run until the seventh, when Amed Rosario touched him for a two-run single. A.J. Minter came on and got out of a two-on jam by popping up All-Star José Ramírez, and Nick Anderson retired Myles Straw with two on in the eighth.

Raisel Iglesias worked a 1-2-3 ninth for his 15th save.

During two rain long delays over the weekend in Chicago, Francona did some advance prep work to be ready for the Braves. Their statistics are striking.

He didn't feel much better after seeing Atlanta in person.

Harris gave the Braves a 1-0 lead in the third with his eighth homer, which triggered an inadvertent launching of fireworks above Progressive Field - a celebration normally reserved for home runs by the Guardians.

But as Harris rounded the bases, a loud boom reverberated through the ballpark and sparklers lit up the sky, prompting loud boos from the sellout crowd.

Reds 3, Nationals 2

In Washington, Joey Votto hit a two-run home run to end an 0-for-21 slump, Ian Gibaut pitched out of a jam in the sixth inning and Cincinnati beat Washington for its fifth win in six games.

Votto homered in the fourth off Jake Irvin, depositing the ball just inside the visiting bullpen in left-center field and driving in Elly De La Cruz. It's his fourth home run in 12 games this season since returning in June.

Luke Weaver (2-2) picked up the win by allowing two earned runs on six hits in five-plus innings. He was spared a 10th consecutive no-decision - or worse - when Gibaut got through the sixth, allowing just one hit, striking out Corey Dickerson and inducing a flyout from Derek Hill.

Catcher Tyler Stephenson drove in the Reds' other run with an RBI single in the second. Fresh off being named an All-Star for the first time, closer Alexis Díaz picked up his 24th save.

Jeimer Candelario hit his 12th home run of the season, a solo shot in the fourth inning for Washington. Irvin (1-4) struck out three and allowed six hits.

Marlins 5, Cardinals 4

In Miami, Nick Fortes hit a go-ahead RBI single in the seventh inning and Miami rallied to beat St. Louis.

Marlins pinch hitter Yuli Gurriel tied it in the seventh with a two-run double against reliever Andre Pallante (2-1) after two straight walks. The Marlins then inserted the speedy Jon Berti to pinch run for Gurriel, and Berti scored on Fortes' ground-ball single.

Marlins reliever Tanner Scott worked a scoreless eighth to preserve the lead, and A.J. Puk got the final three outs for his 14 save of the season.



New York Yankees' Harrison Bader hits a three-run home run during the eighth inning of a baseball game against the Baltimore Orioles in New York. (AP)

Paul DeJong had broken a 2-2 tie in the sixth with an RBI double for the Cardinals. Willson Contreras was 3 for 4, finishing a triple shy of the cycle.

Huascar Brazoban (3-1) got the last two outs of the seventh for the win.

Yankees 6, Orioles 3

In New York, Harrison Bader hit a tiebreaking three-run homer in the eighth inning and New York rallied to beat Baltimore.

Anthony Volpe scored the tying run in the seventh on a wild pitch by All-Star reliever Yennier Cano (1-1) before the Yankees completed the comeback ahead of a postgame fireworks show.

Giancarlo Stanton opened the eighth with a hard single off Cano before Anthony Rizzo followed with a single against Danny Coulombe. After showing bunt on the first pitch, Bader drove a 1-1 sweeper into the left-field seats for his seventh homer.

Tommy Kahnle (1-0) stranded former Yankees outfielder Aaron Hicks in the eighth to keep it tied. Clayton

BASEBALL

mes struck out two in a 1-2-3 ninth for his 10th save.

The second-place Orioles lost for the fifth time in six games and are three games ahead of third-place New York in the division standings.

Brewers 8, Cubs 6

In Milwaukee, newly-signed Jahmai Jones hit a pinch-hit, three-run double in his first big league appearance since 2021, helping Milwaukee rally past Chicago.

With the bases loaded and two outs in the seventh inning, Jones hit a line drive on the first pitch from reliever Anthony Kay that one-hopped off the center field wall and scored Raimel Tapia, Christian Yelich and Owen Miller, tying the game at 6.

The Brewers completed their comeback from a six-run deficit in the eighth inning with an RBI single by Willy Adames and a sacrifice fly by Miller - both off Mark Leiter Jr. (1-2) - to take an 8-6 lead.

Brewers All-Star reliever Devin Williams allowed a double by Nico Hoerner and a walk to Ian Happ in the ninth, and then struck out All-Star Dansby Swanson to earn his 18th save.

Joel Payamps (3-1) pitched a perfect eighth inning for Milwaukee.

The Brewers won their third straight game and remained tied for first place in the NL Central with Cincinnati. The Cubs have lost three straight and seven of their last eight.

Astros 12, Rangers 11

In Arlington, José Abreu and Chas McCormick had back-to-back RBI doubles in the ninth inning and second-place Houston Astros recovered after giving up an eight-run lead.

Abreu and McCormick also homered earlier for Houston, which took three of four against its in-state rival to move within three games of the division lead. It is the closest the Astros have been in a month after trailing by as many as 6 1/2 games.

Kyle Tucker, who hit Houston's majors-best eighth grand slam in the second for a 6-0 lead, led off the ninth with a single against Rangers closer Will Smith (1-3), who had only his second blown save in 16 chances. Abreu and McCormick then followed Alex Bregman's deep flyout with their doubles.

The Rangers had their only lead on Corey Seager's sacrifice fly that made it 11-10 in the eighth.

Bryan Abreu (3-2), the fifth Houston pitcher, allowed that run in the eighth before Ryan Pressly worked the ninth for his 18th save in 21 tries.

Twins 8, Royals 4

In Minneapolis, Edouard Julien hit a pinch-hit, solo homer to start a five-run eighth inning and Minnesota went on to beat Kansas City for the seventh time in eight games this season.

Carlos Correa had four hits from the leadoff spot and Byron Buxton drove in two runs with sacrifice flies for the Twins.

The Royals had tied the score in the top of the inning on a solo homer by Nick Pratto off Brent Headrick (2-0), the first batter he faced.

Kansas City reliever Taylor Clarke (1-3) surrendered five runs and five hits and retired just one of the seven batters he faced.

The Royals have lost 11 of their last 12 games in Minnesota.

Mariners 6, Giants 5

In San Francisco, Julio Rodríguez hit a two-run double in a four-run ninth inning against All-Star closer Camilo Doval, and Seattle held on to beat San Francisco.

J.P. Crawford broke a 2-all tie with a sacrifice fly against Doval. Rodríguez's double made it 5-2, and Teoscar Hernández added an RBI single with two outs as the Mariners handed Doval his worst outing in the majors.

Andrés Muñoz (2-1) pitched eighth to get the win. Doval (2-3) had his third blown save in 27 chances this season.

Rookie catcher Blake Sabol homered twice and drove in all five runs for the Giants. He launched a three-run shot with two outs in the ninth to bring San Francisco within one. Pinch-hitter Wilmer Flores singled before Paul Sewald struck out Brandon Crawford to end it.

Padres 10, Angels 3

In San Diego, Blake Snell helped keep All-Star sluggers Shohei Ohtani



San Diego Padres' Fernando Tatis Jr. (23) dives into third base with a triple during the eighth inning of a baseball game against the Los Angeles Angels in San Diego. (AP)

MLB Results/Standings

WASHINGTON, July 4, (AP): Results and standings from the MLB games on Monday.

Team	W	L	Pct	GB
Houston	12	1	.923	-
Atlanta	4	1	.800	-
NY Yankees	6	3	.667	-
Minnesota	8	3	.727	-
Seattle	6	3	.667	-
Milwaukee	8	3	.727	-
Cincinnati	3	3	.500	-
Miami	5	3	.625	-
LA Dodgers	5	3	.625	-
San Diego	10	3	.769	-

American League		W	L	Pct	GB
East Division		W	L	Pct	GB
Tampa Bay	57	30	.655	-	
Baltimore	49	34	.590	6	
New York	47	38	.553	9	
Toronto	45	40	.529	11	
Boston	43	42	.506	13	

Central Division		W	L	Pct	GB
Minnesota	43	43	.500	-	
Cleveland	41	43	.488	1	
Detroit	37	46	.446	4-1/2	
Chicago	37	49	.430	6	
Kansas City	25	60	.294	17-1/2	

West Division		W	L	Pct	GB
Texas	50	35	.588	-	
Houston	47	38	.553	3	
Los Angeles	45	42	.517	6	
Seattle	41	42	.494	9	
Oakland	23	63	.267	27-1/2	

National League		W	L	Pct	GB
East Division		W	L	Pct	GB
Atlanta	57	27	.679	-	
Miami	49	37	.570	9	
Philadelphia	44	39	.530	12-1/2	
New York	38	46	.452	19	
Washington	34	50	.405	23	

Central Division		W	L	Pct	GB
Cincinnati	46	39	.541	-	
Milwaukee	46	39	.541	-	
Pittsburgh	39	45	.464	6-1/2	
Chicago	38	45	.458	7	
St. Louis	35	49	.417	10-1/2	

West Division		W	L	Pct	GB
Arizona	50	35	.588	-	
Los Angeles	47	37	.560	2-1/2	
San Francisco	46	39	.541	4	
San Diego	39	46	.459	11	
Colorado	33	53	.384	17-1/2	

and Mike Trout in the ballpark, and Xander Bogaerts hit a three-run homer that sent disappointing San Diego to a big win.

Trout left with an apparent left hand or wrist injury after fouling off a pitch while leading off the eighth inning. He immediately shook his arm. Angels manager Phil Nevin and a trainer came out to check on the superstar and he left the field.

Ohtani wasn't able to add to his major league league-leading 31 home runs. He walked twice. Trout, who has 18 homers, walked, had two singles and drove in a run.

In perhaps the biggest at-bat of the night, rookie reliever Tom Cosgrove struck out Ohtani on three straight pitches with two runners on in the sixth, one batter after Trout hit an RBI single to pull the Angels to 4-2.

Snell (5-7) held the Angels to seven hits while striking out seven and walking four in five innings.

Jaime Barria (2-4) allowed four runs and five hits in five innings, struck out five and walked none.

Dodgers 5, Pirates 2

In Los Angeles, Max Muncy hit his 18th homer of the season, and Los Angeles got Dave Roberts his 700th win as the Dodgers' manager.

Jason Heyward and Miguel Rojas had RBI doubles to help the Dodgers bounce back after dropping the last two games in a weekend series at Kansas City.

Caleb Ferguson (5-3), the second of six Los Angeles pitchers, got the win. Evan Phillips worked the ninth for his 12th save.

Mitch Keller (9-4) gave up five runs (four earned) in five innings and struck out seven. The Pirates have dropped three straight as they left nine on base and were 2 for 9 with runners in scoring position.

Brentford sign Collins for club record fee

After Boehly's miserable first year at Chelsea, Pochettino is promising to turn things around

MANCHESTER, England, July 4, (AP): It's fair to say things have not gone to plan for Todd Boehly at Chelsea.

Mauricio Pochettino is promising to change all that.

The Premier League club's new manager officially got down to work on Monday and in his first day in the office gave a glimpse of the ambition that likely convinced Boehly he was the man to turn Chelsea's fortunes around.

"In the last 10, 12, 15 years, Chelsea is the greatest team in England. I know very well the Premier League and what the culture of Chelsea means," Pochettino said. "We need to be sure that we bring what the club needs to be at the top because the history of the club is to be at the top."

Pochettino is already Boehly's third managerial appointment in what has been chaotic first year of the American businessman's co-ownership with private investment firm Clearlake Capital.

Champions League-winning manager Thomas Tuchel was fired within weeks of the start of last season and replaced with Graham Potter, who was then shown the door seven months into a five-year contract.

Interim boss Frank Lampard saw out the end of a miserable campaign, which was Chelsea's worst ever in the Premier League and saw the club fail to qualify for Europe.

All that, despite Boehly and Clearlake overseeing a spectacular transfer spend of around \$630 million on new players.

Notably, Pochettino said there would be more arrivals this off-season, following the signings of forwards Christopher Nkunku and Nicolas Jackson for a reportedly combined fee of 87 million pounds (\$110.4 million).

"It is not closed, the squad, and the club is doing a fantastic job to finish the squad so we have the players here to work with us as soon as possible," he said. "Together, we are going to be in a perfect situation to work and develop the way we want to apply ourselves on the pitch."

While Potter had to try to balance a bloated squad on the back of Chelsea's recruitment drive, Pochet-

tino takes over after a slew of players have already departed.

N'Golo Kante, Kalidou Koulibaly, Mateo Kovacic, Kai Havertz, Edouard Mendy and Ruben Loftus-Cheek have all gone. They are expected to be followed by Cesar Azpilicueta, Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang, Romelu Lukaku and Hakim Ziyech.

Pochettino is in his first job since leaving Paris Saint-Germain in 2022.

Having been under consideration for the Manchester United job before Erik ten Hag's appointment, he has had to wait for the right position to become available.

"From the beginning, the owners and sporting directors were very clear about the project and we were very excited to join them in this project," he said. "The objective is to win because football is about winning. We will have good times, create good relationships, have a nice environment and relationship with people,

SOCCER

but the most important thing in the end is to win."



Nathan Collins became Brentford's record signing on Tuesday after completing a transfer from Premier League rival Wolverhampton.

While Brentford did not reveal the size of the fee for the center back, it is reportedly worth 23 million pounds (\$29 million).

Collins, an Ireland international, has signed a six-year contract with the option of a further two years.

"He's a very talented center-back and still young," said Brentford manager **Thomas Frank**. "He has a lot of very good abilities that we value a lot. He's a composed and calm defender. His heading in both boxes is a big thing, both in open play and from set-pieces, which is massive in the Premier League."

"I also like his ability on the ball. He can carry the ball out of defense and also has the composure to find the right pass during build-up play."

Collins, 22, spent one season at Wolverhampton and made 31 appearances. Previous clubs include Burnley and Stoke.

"I talked with the manager and a few of the backroom staff about the project here. It's a club on the rise and I can see where they want to go," he said.



In this Monday, Feb. 15, 2021 file photo, Chelsea goalkeeper Edouard Mendy warming up before the English Premier League soccer match between Chelsea and Newcastle United at Stamford Bridge Stadium in London, England. Goalkeeper Edouard Mendy joined Saudi Arabian team Al-Ahli. (AP)



Norway's Torstein Traeen (left), crashes as the pack sprints to the finish during the fourth stage of the Tour de France cycling race over 182 kilometers (113 miles) with start in Dax and finish in Nogaro, France. (AP)

Sports

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Alcaraz opens with win at rainy Wimbledon

Murray and Rybakina also advance

WIMBLEDON, England, July 4, (AP): In only his third Wimbledon tournament, Carlos Alcaraz is already one of the main men to beat.

The top-seeded Spaniard hasn't been past the fourth round at the All England Club, but he has become the primary threat in Novak Djokovic's quest for a record-equaling eighth men's title at the grass-court Grand Slam.

On Tuesday, Alcaraz beat Jeremy Chardy 6-0, 6-2, 7-5 on No. 1 Court - a fitting location for the No. 1 player in the world.

The match was played under the roof because rain affected play on the outside courts for the second straight day.

"Obviously without the roof, with sun, is much better for me. I think for everyone as well," Alcaraz said on court. "With the roof or not, I have to show my best level."

His best led Alcaraz to his first major title at the U.S. Open last year. He reached the semifinals at this year's French Open, but Djokovic ended up winning that match en route to his 23rd Grand Slam title.

TENNIS

At Wimbledon, Alcaraz reached the second round in 2021, playing as a wild card. He made the fourth round last year and entered this year's tournament after winning the grass-court title at Queen's Club.

The 36-year-old Chardy, who was playing at Wimbledon for the 14th time and at his 56th major overall, planned to retire from the sport after this year's tournament.

Kate, the Princess of Wales, was at a rainy Wimbledon on Tuesday and sat in the Royal Box at Centre Court next to Roger Federer, an eight-time champion who has retired from the sport. Federer was feted before play began.

Matches began on most courts shortly after 11 a.m. at the All England Club, but the tarps came out as the rain came down about an hour later. Play never resumed, and all matches on the outside courts were finally suspended for the day at about 6 p.m.

Only Centre Court and No. 1 Court have retractable roofs at Wimbledon.

Elena Rybakina opened play on Centre Court play against American opponent Shelby Rogers - the traditional spot for the defending women's champion. The defending men's champion, Djokovic, had the honor of starting play in the main stadium on Day 1.

Rybakina, who withdrew from the Eastbourne International last week citing a virus illness, improved her serve after the first set and beat Rogers 4-6, 6-1, 6-2.

"I'm feeling much better," Rybakina said on court. "It was a bit unlucky for me. It was not easy to get again to the fitness and physical condition, but now I'm much better. Hopefully this win gives me more



Spain's Carlos Alcaraz returns to Jeremy Chardy of France in a first round men's singles match on day two of the Wimbledon tennis championships in London. (AP)

confidence for the next round."

Rybakina had also pulled out of the French Open because of an illness and said she was "pretty nervous" at the start of Tuesday's match.

Two-time champion Andy Murray was second on Centre Court, beating Ryan Peniston 6-3, 6-0, 6-1.

"It was amazing to have some royalty here but also some tennis royalty, as well," Murray said on court, referring to the princess and to Federer. "It's amazing to have Roger here supporting the event."

Sixth-seeded Ons Jabeur, who lost to Rybakina in last year's final, advanced with a 6-3, 6-3 win over Magdalena Frech on No. 1 Court.

Djokovic's match was delayed by rain Monday, and he even helped dry the court before play resumed. The seven-time champion ended up beating Pedro Cachin 6-3, 6-3, 7-6 (4).

Wednesday is normally the day the second round starts at Wimbledon, but there are still outstanding first-round matches from Monday to add to the nearly full slate of uncompleted matches from Tuesday.

Indonesia pulls out of hosting beach games, 3 months after losing U20 WC

LAUSANNE, Switzerland, July 4, (AP): Indonesia pulled out of hosting another global sports event at short notice Tuesday, three months after refusing to welcome Israel's team for soccer's Under-20 World Cup.

The World Beach Games had been set to be staged in Bali from Aug. 5-15 but were canceled after the Indonesian government pulled the budget, the global group of national Olympic bodies known as ANOC said Tuesday.

ANOC said it had no option but to cancel the 14-sport championships - including beach versions of soccer, tennis and volleyball, plus surfing and open water swimming - because it was unable to find a replacement host with so little time.

BEACH GAMES

About 1,500 athletes from 100 nations, including Israel, were expected to compete in Bali across 41 medal events.

Indonesia is the world's most populous Muslim-majority country and does not have formal diplomatic relations with Israel, while publicly supporting the Palestinian cause.

"The KOI (Indonesian Olympic Committee) stated the decision was

taken after the budget was not released by the government of the country and there is now not time to deliver the games," Lausanne-based ANOC said in a statement, noting its "great surprise and extreme disappointment."

"ANOC and the KOI met for weekly coordination meetings, as recently as last week, and at no point did the KOI indicate there were any issues that would lead to such an outcome," the umbrella group said.

No political issue was cited in the ANOC statement but the problem loomed after Indonesia's refusal to comply with FIFA's hosting requirements to let Israel play in the U20 soccer tournament it had qualified for several months earlier.

FIFA first postponed the tournament draw that was scheduled in Bali then stripped Indonesia of the actual championship days later.

After Argentina stepped in to host the U20 World Cup, Israel achieved one of its best results in international soccer last month. Israel lost in the semifinals to eventual champion Uruguay and placed third.

Indonesia's political stance on hosting events prompted the International Olympic Committee to caution sports bodies about picking the country for events.

'Glad to be able to come back with Norway and get a new story started'

Hegerberg seeks to emulate Messi and win World Cup

OSLO, July 4, (AP): She has often been described as the Lionel Messi of women's soccer because of her scoring feats.

Now Ada Hegerberg is looking to accomplish what the Argentinian great finally achieved a few months ago and win a World Cup to sate a largely unfulfilled international career.

A total of three goals across three major international tournaments for Norway doesn't do justice to one of the greatest scorers in the history of the women's game. Hegerberg, after all, has netted more goals in the Champions League - the highest stage in women's soccer at club level - than any player, with 59. She became the record holder at the age of 24.

With Lyon, she's a six-time Champions League winner, an eight-time French league winner and a six-time French Cup winner. She has a scoring average of more than a goal per game for Lyon, European soccer's most decorated team.

Oh, and of course, she was the first female winner of the Ballon d'Or in



Brazil forward Marta (10) controls the ball during the second half of a SheBelieves Cup women's soccer match against Japan, Thursday, Feb. 16, 2023, in Orlando, Fla. (AP)

2018 at an award ceremony in Paris marred by a French DJ asking Hegerberg to twerk.

Yet when it comes to hardware through feats for her national team, Hegerberg's cupboard is bare.

The closest she came to a trophy for Norway was at her first ever senior international tournament - the

European Championship in 2013 - when her team lost in the final to Germany.

Since then, it's been a fairly sorry tale for a player who for many has transcended her national team. She has never competed at the Olympics, her only World Cup was in 2015 when Norway exited in the round of 16, and there was a group-stage elimination at the European Championship last year.

Hegerberg would have played in more major tournaments had she not decided to rule herself out of selec-

SOCCER

tion for her national team for five years because of what she perceived to be a general disregard for women's soccer in Norway at the time. The crux of her frustration was the uneven pace of progress and strategy in the women's game. She was absent until 2022, when she opted to return ahead of that year's European Championship - coinciding with the arrival of Lise Klaveness, her former

teammate, as president of the Norwegian soccer federation.

"I was able to have very honest discussions with the federation, firstly through Lise," she said. "I am very glad to be able to come back with the team and get a new story started."

A year later, Hegerberg is still attempting to make up for lost time in a Norway uniform - and after a frustrating domestic season, too.

Hegerberg, who spent 21 months out in 2020-21 because of an anterior cruciate ligament injury, was missing for another seven months this season because of an unspecified injury that was not widely reported.

Naturally, she scored a minute after coming off the bench in her comeback game, for Lyon at Montpellier, and ended the season with six goals in nine games in all competitions.

Scoring is never a problem for this most natural of finishers - even at international level, she has 43 goals in 76 games since making her senior debut for Norway in 2011 at the age of 16.

And neither is making a stand for what she believes in. Only a few months ago, Hegerberg appeared in a video by human rights organization Amnesty, demanding compensation for the families of migrant workers who died while working at the men's World Cup in Qatar.

"An extremely large responsibility is placed on footballers and it is tough, but that is the reality," she said in the video. "I know I have a position to show my opinion on it."

For Hegerberg, it's the trophies that are missing with Norway, which has won four major titles but none since the 2000 Sydney Olympics.

For that to change, it can't all just be down to Hegerberg. Her teammates are going to have to step up, too.

Like Caroline Graham Hansen, the Barcelona midfielder who has 44 goals in 98 games for Norway and briefly took a break from her national team after last year's European Championship.

Norway is in a group with Switzerland, the Philippines and New Zealand. While expected to reach the knockout stage, the Norwegians aren't among the favorites to win the tournament that begins later this month.



Tunisia's Ons Jabeur returns to Poland's Magdalena Frech in a first round women's singles match on day two of the Wimbledon tennis championships in London. (AP)