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Bahrain welcomes UK rights report

London hails achievements

MANAMA, July 16, (KUNA): Bahraini Foreign Minister Dr. Abdullah Al Zayani expressed his country's thanks and appreciations to the UK Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) for removing the Arabian Gulf Kingdom from its list of Human Rights Priority Countries.

This came in a phone call on Saturday with UK Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs James Cleverly, the Bahraini News Agency (BNA) reported.

Al-Zayani noted that the removal of Bahrain from list of Human Rights Priority Countries reflects the kingdom's important human rights achievements, led by King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa, with the support of His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, the Crown Prince and Prime Minister.

He commended the ongoing cooperation between the Bahraini-UK governments in the fields related to the developments of human rights in the Kingdom of Bahrain.

He stressed the ministry's firm commitment to reinforcing joint political cooperation and coordination with the British Foreign Office and supporting common efforts to strengthen longstanding relations towards serving mutual interests.

Cleverly hailed Bahrain's human rights achievements which reflects the wise national efforts in Bahrain, wishing the Kingdom further progress and prosperity, the BNA reported.

Police confirm Mossad tip

Iran-backed hit squad set up in Cyprus

NICOSIA, July 16, (AP): Cyprus police investigations support claims by Israel's Mossad spy service that an Iranian-backed hit squad planned to kill Israelis and other Jews in the east Mediterranean island nation, an official said Friday.

The security official told The Associated Press that Cypriot police had tracked an Iranian national identified as Yusef Shahabzadeh following information from "friendly intelligence services."

Subsequent probes into his activities indicated there was a plot for such killings, with at least one person on a hit list, the official said, speaking on condition of anonymity to discuss the investigations.

According to the official, Abbasalilu initially attempted to set up base and recruit others in the ethnically divided island's breakaway Turkish Cypriot north, where its internationally recognized authorities have no access.

Cyprus was split in 1974 when Turkey invaded following a coup by supporters of union with Greece. No country recognizes a Turkish Cypriot declaration of independence apart from Turkey, which maintains 35,000 troops in the island's northern third.

The fact that the breakaway north isn't a part of the international legal order is a concern for domestic and foreign security services, according to the security official.

Cypriot authorities were on Abbasalilu's trail in the island's southern part when he snuck into the north through a crossing point along the 180 km (120 mile) United Nations-controlled buffer zone. Turkish Cypriot authorities then identified him as a potential security risk and deported him to Iran.

It's the first time that a Cypriot official has backed Mossad's claims of the alleged plot.

The Mossad said last month said that its agents inside Iran seized Abbasalilu who allegedly gave investigators a detailed "confession." Released footage showed Abbasalilu saying on camera that he received his orders from Iran's powerful paramilitary Revolutionary Guard Corps.

Abbasalilu also said that he had scouted the target and took photos of the target's home in Cyprus before fleeing the island. It was not clear if the man spoke under duress.

Israel considers Iran its greatest enemy, citing the Iranian government's calls for Israel's destruction and support for hostile militant groups. It also accuses Iran of trying to develop a nuclear bomb - a claim that Iran denies.

An Azeri man holding a Russian passport is on trial in Cyprus, a close Israeli ally, on suspicion that he planned to carry out the contract killings of Israelis living in Cyprus.

The Azeri man also used a similar plan of action as Abbasalilu, the intelligence official said.



Members of the Sabeen Mandaeans, a pre-Christian sect that follows the teachings of John the Baptist, perform their rituals in the Tigris River in Baghdad, Iraq, Sunday, July 16, 2023. The Sabeen Mandaeans are marking the new year which they celebrate as a five-day holiday. (AP)

Two girls among 3 wounded as Palestinian gunman opens fire

TEL AVIV, July 16, (AP): A Palestinian gunman opened fire on a car in the occupied West Bank on Sunday, wounding three Israelis, including two girls, Israeli authorities said. The suspect fled the scene of the shooting, but he was later captured.

The bloodshed was the latest in a relentless cycle of violence that has gripped the region, driving up the death toll and sparking the worst fighting between Israel and the Palestinians in the West Bank in nearly two decades.

The Israeli military said the gunman opened fire on a car from a passing vehicle. Israel's rescue service MDA said three Israelis were wounded, including a 35-year-old with gunshot wounds who is in serious but stable condition. Two girls, ages 9 and 14, were slightly wounded by flying debris.

The military said that forces apprehended the suspected gunman in the city of Bethlehem and seized his car and an assault rifle found inside. Troops arrested two other suspects, the army said.

Fighting between Israel and the Palestinians in the West Bank intensified early last year when Israel launched near-nightly raids into Palestinian areas in the West Bank in response to a spate of Palestinian attacks against Israelis.

The violence has spiked this year, with more than 150 Palestinians killed by Israeli

fire since the start of 2023 in the West Bank and east Jerusalem, according to a tally by The Associated Press.

Israeli says most of those killed have been militants, but stone-throwing youths protesting the raids and others not involved in the confrontations have also been killed.

At least 26 people have been killed in Palestinian attacks against Israelis during that time.

Israel says the raids are essential to dismantle militant networks and thwart future attacks. The Palestinians see the violence as a natural response to 56 years of occupation, including stepped-up settlement construction by Israel's government and increased violence by Jewish settlers.

In other news, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu was discharged on Sunday after an overnight hospital stay for check-ups and monitoring following a dizzy spell.

Netanyahu, 73, was rushed to Sheba Medical Center on Saturday after feeling mild dizziness. His office said he had left the hospital around midday after stating earlier that his test results were normal and that he was feeling "very good."

The medical center said Netanyahu was in "excellent" condition after a series of tests, including cardiovascular ones.

NewsWatch

KHARTOUM: At least four people were killed and four others were injured on Saturday in a drone attack by the Sudanese paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF) on a hospital in the city of Omdurman, west of the capital Khartoum.

The strike targeted the emergency section at the hospital, killing four civilians on spot and wounding four others seriously, the Ministry of Health said in a press statement.

In the meantime, the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) announced that its forces are chasing RSF in the southwestern parts of city of Omdurman. (KUNA)

ALGIERS: Algerian authorities said Saturday that they had allowed a Saudi aircraft to land at Algiers International Airport in order to get medical help to a very sick Moroccan passenger.

The Algerian Health Ministry said, in a press release, that the country's leadership had permitted a Saudi Airlines plane to land at Algiers Airport as a Moroccan woman pilgrim, 76, had suffered some acute health troubles while it was flying over Algeria.

The Moroccan passenger was immediately taken to a hospital in eastern Algiers, where she was given necessary medical care, it said, adding that "her condition is stable". (KUNA)

BEIRUT: The current situation in south Lebanon is now calm, said Kandice Ardiel, media office deputy director of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL), on Saturday.

In a news statement, Ardiel said dozens of individuals crossed this morning to south of the Blue Line in Bastra area and Israeli army fired tear gas. (KUNA)

ABU DHABI: UAE President Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan on Saturday stressed the significance of comprehensive strategic and economic partnerships between the UAE and India.

The UAE president made the remark while meeting visiting Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, pointing out mutual willingness to promote and develop bilateral relations to serve the interest of both countries' peoples, reported the country's official news agency. (KUNA)

CAIRO: The Somali army destroyed Al-Shabaab militants' arms caches in a planned military operation in Budbud area in Galgadud region on Saturday, according to the country's official news agency.

"The National Army's Danab Commandos conducted special operations in Budbud area in the district of Ceeldheer in Galgadud region," General of the 16th Brigade of the Army Abdullahi Nur was quoted by the Somali National News Agency (SONNA) as saying. (KUNA)

Sides eye fight on extremists

Iraqi PM in landmark visit to Syria

DAMASCUS, July 16, (AP): Iraq's prime minister held talks Sunday with Syrian President Bashar Assad in Damascus during the first trip of its kind to the war-torn country since the 12-year conflict began.

The two leaders told reporters that they discussed fighting drugs, the return of Syrian refugees and the imperative of lifting Western sanctions imposed in Syria. They also talked about Israel's strikes on the war-torn country and water shortages in the Euphrates River that cuts through both countries because of projects in Turkey.

Iraq and Syria have had close relations for years even after many Arab countries withdrew their ambassadors from Damascus and Syria's membership in the 22-member Arab

League was suspended because of the crackdown on protesters in 2011.

Assad received Mohammed bin Zayed al-Sudani, who was heading a high-ranking delegation, at the presidential palace in Damascus. They discussed mutual relations and cooperation between the two neighboring countries among other issues, according to the office of Syria's president.

Al-Sudani's office said in a statement that talks revolved around ways of expanding cooperation in the fields of trade, economy, transportation, tourism, how to combat climate change and collaboration to fight terrorism.

Continued on Page 5



Iraqis swim in the Tigris river to beat the heat in Baghdad. (AP)

Opinion

State lost its bearing, so rats destroyed the 'Ma'rib Dam'

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

BEING ungrateful for blessings attracts curse, and excess luxury leads to ruin. There is no better testimony to the aforementioned than the collapse of the Ma'rib Dam caused by rats, which are one of the weakest creations of Allah.

Also, wrong decisions can lead to the failure of the state. In this regard, there is the story of house sparrows that caused the death of 15 million people in China.

In ancient times, Yemen was a prosperous region with green gardens. Its crops sufficed and overflowed for export. This pushed people at that time to be ungrateful, as they glorified the rich and disdained the poor. Dissension and disagreements prevailed among them, let alone the spread of religious heresies, such as worshipping the sun instead of worshipping the Lord of the sun.

One of the stories in Quran narrates, "There was for [the tribe of] Saba in their dwelling place a sign: two [fields of] gardens on the right and on the left. [They were told], 'Eat from the provisions of your Lord and be grateful to Him. A good land [have you], and a forgiving Lord. But they turned away [refusing], so We sent upon them the flood of the dam, and We replaced their two [fields of] gardens with gardens of bitter fruit, tamarisks and something of sparse lote trees.'" With that, the rats began to dig through the dam wall until it collapsed.

Despite the knowledge of the statesmen at that time about this matter, they did not do anything to stop the collapse, because they were preoccupied with themselves.

Ibn Khaldun's words were validated by them - "Luxury reaches its peak in time when they have acquired of bliss and richness of life, so they become dependent on the state. The able manage issues of their departure, whereas the rich manage the issues of their wealth. Everyone then becomes alert and waits for the situation to turn into migration projects, especially when the homeland turns into a travel station."

That is why when the dam collapsed with the great torrent, the people of Yemen dispersed, and their story remained as an example of how people disperse after the blessings turn into curse.

All this happened because the right person was not placed in the right place, and because of the failure in applying the mind in logical approaches to problems, as it happened in Europe during the Middle Ages when churchmen used to excommunicate those who disagreed with them, burned them alive or executed them by guillotine. This is because the deep state controlled the government and the people at that time, as these arbitrary decisions led to civil wars in the entire continent and many revolutions.

There is another example of bad decisions that caused a state to collapse. It happened in China in 1958 when the Chinese leader Mao Zedong noticed that house sparrows ate agricultural crops and eliminated most of them.

He therefore ordered his people to kill all kinds of sparrows, and decided to pay a reward to anyone who kills the largest number of them. The people then competed for that to get the reward, but after a while, locusts, which were being eaten by sparrows, began to spread tragically, destroying the crops. That was one of the main reasons for the Great Famine in China in 1961, which caused the death of 15 million people.

When countries lack a bearing, they get ruined by the weakest of Allah's creations. That is why there are many of them that have fallen into the evil of luxury and arrogance, seeking to portray people as classes, as well as dishonesty in preserving their wealth. We have no doubt that some Arab countries including Yemen, Iraq, Lebanon and Libya, serve as good examples for people to heed.

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Pan-Arab military training units gather amid 'imminent' threats

CAIRO, July 16, (KUNA): The training units of Arab militaries, including Kuwait, assembled for talks as part of efforts to look into the "imminent" threats posed by asymmetric warfare, the Cairo-based Arab League said on Sunday.

"Terrorist and armed" groups have stood to gain from rapid technological advancements as they seek to "foment instability and unrest," the regional bloc's Arab affairs and national security chief Khalil Al-Thawadi told the gathering.

It has become imperative to employ effective training techniques and skills in order to counter these threats, the official underlined, saying the talks in the Egyptian capital are a testament to the collective desire for more pan-Arab military cooperation.

The chief objective for the talks, which span over 10 days, is to explore the most cutting-edge methods in a bid to boost the military preparedness of the wider Arab region as a whole, he added.



In this photo released by the Syrian official news agency SANA, Syrian President Bashar Assad, center left, and Iraq's Prime Minister Mohammed Shia al-Sudani review a military honour guard during a welcome ceremony in Damascus, Syria, Sunday, July 16, 2023. (AP)



OPINION

OTHER VOICES



Syrians walk along in a refugee camp for displaced people run by the Turkish Red Crescent in Sarmada district, north of Idlib city, Syria, on Nov. 26, 2021. The U.N. General Assembly approved a resolution Thursday, June 29, 2023, that will establish an independent body to determine what happened to more than 130,000 people missing as a result of the conflict in Syria. Inset: Hamrin Alouji, the mother of 13-year-old Peyal Aqil, goes

through her daughter's photographs at their family home in Qamishli, Syria, on Monday, June 5, 2023. Alouji said her daughter was coming home with her friends on May 21 after a school exam when a recruiter for the Revolutionary Youth approached her - the youth branch of the Democratic Union Party (PYD), and entered a center belonging to the group with him. Her friends waited for her outside, but she never came out. (AP)

UN to clarify fate of 130,000 missing Syrians

Families draw hope from UN push

In her small apartment in opposition-held Idlib in northwest Syria, Umm Mohammed is depressed and lethargic. But when her phone rings or someone knocks on the door she becomes suddenly alert. Maybe, finally, her husband has come back.

In 2013, Syrian soldiers broke into the couple's home in Damascus as they were having breakfast, she said. She and her husband had previously taken part in anti-government protests.

"They beat him up in front of my young daughter" and then took him away, said Umm Mohammed, or "mother of Mohammed," the name of her oldest son. She did not want to give her own full name for fear the authorities would harm her husband if he is still alive.

The only news she has received about him since that day came in 2015, when someone claimed to have seen him in the Syrian military intelligence's 248 Branch prison - which former detainees and human rights groups have called a torture center.

"When someone is martyred, they're buried and you know they're dead," she said, sitting on floor cushions. "In this case, you don't know and you'll always be wondering."

Her husband is among more than 130,000 people believed to have gone missing in Syria since the 2011 uprising against President Bashar Assad that quickly turned into a civil war. Their families, trapped in painful uncertainty for years, might now have reason for hope.

The U.N. General Assembly voted Thursday to form an independent international institution to search for the missing in Syria in both government and opposition-held areas.

The resolution was adopted by the 193-member world body on a vote of 83-11 with 62 abstentions. The countries voting for the resolution included the United States and other Western nations. Syria and key allies Russia, Iran, and China opposed the move. Arab countries that in recent months rekindled ties with Damascus abstained, except for Assad skeptics Qatar and Kuwait, which endorsed the move.

Some of the missing are believed to be languishing in government prisons. Others were taken by non-state armed groups. Others are buried in mass graves, which have been found on both sides of the front line.

The newly created institution would collect information from families, Syrian civil society organizations, whistle blowers, U.N. agencies and through inquiries to the Syrian government and authorities in opposition-held areas.

The resolution gives three months for U.N. officials to set up the institution's structure and start recruiting staff.

There have been long-standing demands to investigate the fate of the missing, from the families and from human rights activists.

Hanny Megally, a member of a commission set up by the U.N. in 2011 to investigate human rights violations in Syria, said he hopes a single team focusing on the missing could encourage more whistle blowers to come forward, and could collect scattered data from rights groups.

In recent years, whistle blowers and defectors have come forth with some information, including the so-called Caesar photos, a trove of 53,000 images taken in Syrian prisons and military hospitals. The photos showed the bodies of detainees with signs of torture.

A video shot in the Damascus suburb of Tadamon in 2013 revealed the fate of dozens of Syrians who went missing. The video showed Syrian security agents leading blindfolded men into a pit, shooting them and setting the bodies on fire.

The Caesar photos allowed some families to identify missing loved ones. The leak also enabled European courts to try and convict former Syrian military officers who were seeking asylum in European countries for their involvement in forced disappearances and torture.

Setting up an international body would be a significant move in a re-

Red Cross, Red Crescent to run aid

Syria greenlights opening of key crossing

The Syrian government gave a green light Thursday for the United Nations to use a key crossing from Turkey to the country's rebel-held northwest that was closed earlier this week, but it wants to take away U.N. control over aid deliveries to the region.

Syria's U.N. ambassador, Bassam Sabbagh, said the government is granting the U.N. and its agencies "permission" to use the Bab al-Hawa crossing for six months starting Thursday, but he said it must be done "in full cooperation and coordination with the government."

He told reporters the U.N. also should not communicate with "terrorist organizations" and their affiliates illegally controlling the Idlib region and must allow the International Committee of the Red Cross and the Syrian Arab Red Crescent to run aid operations in "terrorist" controlled areas.

Sabbagh made the announcement after delivering letters to Secretary-General Antonio Guterres and the Security Council president with the government's decision. It followed Tuesday's failure of the Security Council to renew authorization of aid deliveries through Bab al-Hawa, a U.N. operation that had been

vital to helping a region of 4.1 million people.

U.N. spokesman Stephane Dujarric said: "We've received the letter and are studying it for now."

But Britain's U.N. ambassador, Barbara Woodward, was clearly not impressed, saying Bab al-Hawa has "gold standard aid monitoring" yet now Syrian President Bashar Assad has said he will open it without U.N. monitoring.

"Control of this critical lifeline has been handed to the man responsible for the Syrian people's suffering," Woodward said. "The priority needs to be getting aid flowing again, fast, to the people who need it - and then getting certainty over its future. We will not hesitate to bring this back to the Security Council."

The main insurgent group in northwest Idlib is Hayat Tahrir al Sham, whose origins were in al-Qaida. The group and other militants are a mix of home-grown fighters and foreign jihadists who began coming to Syria in 2011 after an initially peaceful uprising against Assad turned into an armed insurgency.

Many people in Idlib have been forced from their homes during the 12-year civil war, which has killed nearly a half million people and dis-

placed half the country's pre-war population of 23 million. Hundreds of thousands live in tent settlements and have relied on aid that comes through the Bab al-Hawa border crossing.

The Security Council initially authorized aid deliveries in 2014 from Turkey, Iraq and Jordan through four crossing points into opposition-held areas in Syria. But over the years, Syria's closest ally Russia, backed by China, has reduced the authorized crossings to just Bab al-Hawa from Turkey - and the mandates from a year to six months.

After the devastating magnitude 7.8 earthquake that ravaged northwestern Syria and southern Turkey on Feb. 8., Assad opened two additional crossing points from Turkey, at Bab al-Salameh and al-Rai, to increase the flow of assistance to victim, and he extended their opening until Aug. 13.

The United Nations has also been using those crossings to deliver aid. But U.N. spokesman Stephane Dujarric reiterated after Tuesday's vote that the secretary-general was trying to reopen Bab al-Hawa, which is closest to Idlib and where 85% of U.N. cross-border aid passed through. (AP)

gion scarred by war, where tens of thousands of families in neighboring countries are waiting for information about their loved ones.

In Lebanon, family members of some 17,000 people kidnapped by sectarian militias during its 1975-1990 civil war are dying of old age, never knowing the fate of their loved ones. In Yemen, despite recent prisoner swaps between Saudi Arabia and Iran-backed Houthi rebels, human rights groups say hundreds are still missing.

In Iraq, over 43,000 people remain missing since a U.S.-led invasion in 2003 toppled dictator Saddam Hussein, followed by a ferocious civil war and the rise of the Islamic State extremist group. The UN set up an investigation in 2017 into human rights abuses by the militant group, including enforced disappearances, which led to the discovery of over a dozen mass graves.

Setting up an investigative body for Syria's missing "might set a precedent for addressing the suffering of different people in different parts of the world," said Wafa Mustafa, whose father Ali disappeared in July 2013 in Damascus. Mustafa had joined her father, an outspoken Assad critic, in protests.

Mustafa, who welcomed the vote, is one of many Syrian civil society activists who have spent years campaigning for international action on the missing.

Investigating their fate should also pave the way for addressing other human rights issues in Syria, including the dire conditions for political

prisoners. "A lot should be happening, a lot should be done in parallel to this institution," Mustafa said.

In the Kurdish-held city of Qamishli in northeast Syria, Hamed Hemo believes that an investigation could uncover the fate of his missing son.

Hemo has turned his living room into a shrine for his son, Ferhad, a journalist who went missing after IS militants kidnapped him and a colleague, Masoud Aqil, in 2014. Aqil, released in a prisoner swap, relocated to Germany. Ferhad never came home.

"To this day our lives have completely changed," Hemo said, taking a drag from his cigarette. "His mother once weighed 70 kilos (154 pounds), and she's dropped to 40 (88 pounds)."

Islamic State's so-called "caliphate" once stretched across large areas of Syria and Iraq, but the extremists lost their last hold on the land in 2019.

Thousands of captured IS fighters are held in prisons run by Kurdish-led forces who Hemo believes could provide information about the missing.

Umm Mohammad is less hopeful of getting information about her husband from Syrian authorities.

Assad has denied holding political prisoners, labeling the opposition as terrorists. Direct cooperation with Syria by investigators could also be difficult as it does not extradite its citizens.

"What's he going say?" she wondered. "All those people I detained were killed under my custody?" (AP)

editor's choice



Prayer Timings

Fajr 03:26 Asr 15:29
 Sunrise .. 04:59 Maghrib .. 18:49
 Zohr 11:54 Isha 20:19

Local

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

Weather

Expected weather for next 24 hrs:
By Day: Very hot with light variable wind to light to moderate northwesterly wind with speeds of 06-26 km/h.
By Night: Hot to rather hot with

light to moderate northwesterly wind to light variable wind with speeds of 06-26 km/h.
Station **Max Exp** **Min Rec**
 Kuwait City 47 35
 Kuwait Airport 49 28

Abdaly	51	29
Jahra	51	32
Salmiyah	43	37
Ahmadi	41	35
Nuwaisib	45	29
Wafra	48	28

People at risk of heart diseases, diabetes, high BP: Dr Al-Bahouh

Kuwait tops Arab world in obesity, 77pc population overweight

KUWAIT CITY, July 16, (KUNA): Head of health enhancement administration at the Ministry of Health Dr Abeer Al-Bahouh affirmed that the rise in obesity rate in Kuwait, especially between the age of 18 to 29, calls for early intervention to fight obesity.

In an interview with KUNA on Saturday, Dr Al-Bahouh noted that statistics have shown a prominent rise in obesity, making Kuwait become the number one country in the Arab World, with 77 percent of the total population being overweight, while obesity rate is over 40 percent.

Being overweight is a global problem, with expectations that four billion people will suffer from the issue by 2035, compared with 2.6 billion people in 2020. This is reflected by the rise in population numbers from 38 percent in 2020 to an expected above 50 percent by 2035, she added.

She noted that obesity rate is expected to be the highest among children and



Dr. Al-Bahouh

teenagers, rising from ten percent to 20 percent among boys from 2020 to 2035, while the percentage among girls will go from eight to 18 percent around the world.

Meanwhile, Dr Al-Bahouh warned against the risks obesity pose for people's health, including heart and cardiovascular diseases, diabetes and high pressure. She added that obesity is the fifth main cause of death.

Obesity has many negative impact on children's health as well, such as trouble breathing, fatigue, sweating, snoring, joint pain and late puberty for girls and boys, she said.

Children's obesity is caused by bad eating habits, sedentary lifestyle, genetic factors, intestine flora and Cushing's syndrome.

According to local statistics and the World Health Organization (WHO), one out of five adults suffer from extreme obesity in the Gulf, she said, adding that obesity rate among adults in Kuwait is expected to reach 52 percent by 2035.

Treating obese children begins with teaching them healthy eating habits, encourage them to engage in physical activity, therapy sessions with a psychiatrist

and treating patients with health issues leading to obesity, the doctor noted.

As for surgery targeting the stomach and intestines for weigh loss, Dr Al-Bahouh affirmed that it's a suitable step for teenagers and not children. She stressed that these surgeries do not replace a proper diet and exercise, but they are an initial step to help people to start their weight loss journey.

It is the parents responsibility to watch what their children eat and teach them to replace fast foods and soft drinks with fruits, vegetables, wholewheat products, water, natural juices and low fat milk, she added.

She underlined the importance of physical exercise, having a steady sleeping time, spending time with family doing fun activities and avoiding spending too much time playing video-games or watching TV.

Dr Abeer also affirmed the need for the Ministry of Health to launch programs and strategies to fight obesity, and make physical education be a compulsory subject in schools.

The administration is continuously launching campaigns in cooperation with other bodies outside the ministry, aiming to limit obesity in the coming five years, the doctor said.



Editor-in-Chief of the Arab Times and Al-Seyassah newspapers Mr Ahmed Al-Jarallah holds talks with the Indian ambassador to Kuwait.



Editor-in-Chief of the Arab Times and Al-Seyassah newspapers Mr Ahmed Al-Jarallah meets the Indian ambassador and his accompanying team.

Arab Times editor-in-chief receives Indian envoy

The Ambassador of India to Kuwait HE Dr Adarsh Swaik, Sunday, called on the Editor-in-Chief of the Arab Times and Al-Seyassah newspapers Mr Ahmed Al-Jarallah.

During the meeting both sides discussed issues of mutual interest.

The Indian envoy was accompanied by Dr Vinod Gaiikwad, First Secretary (Press, Information, Culture, Consular, Education) & Head of Chancery and Nikhil Kumar Second Secretary (Political, Information, Culture and Community Affairs & Associations).

Other Voices

Biometric imprint of the pure people

By Ahmad alsarra

The biometric fingerprint is one of the means of maintaining security in all countries of the world, as the system is used to authenticate or match the person's biometric template, and to determine his identity with accuracy without any error.

The use of technology and statistical analysis of people's unique physical and behavioral characteristics is critical to finding answers to hundreds of questions that otherwise would not be possible. The biometric fingerprint has also gained importance with the advancement methods of personal manipulation used by hardened criminals, mafia gangs, drug smugglers, and identity forgers.

From this point of view, the security services in Kuwait sought to implement the DNA fingerprint, by storing the fingerprints of every citizen and resident, whether from fingers or sight, and storing them in a database, which will be of great importance in the future in determining the identity of any suspected person within seconds.

Goebbels says: Whenever I hear the word intellectual, I put my hand to my gun!

And I say: Whenever a statement is issued by Representative Al-Muwaizri, I put my hand on my pen! He did not like the recent decision to apply the biometric fingerprint, so he attacked the idea, mostly out of fear of its applications.



alsarra

We appreciate the representative's courage in standing up to the laws of his country, and showing his parliamentary muscles to those who cannot respond to him, but he knows very well that traveling to any European or American country requires the traveler to submit to the conditions required by the regulations of those countries, including the biometric fingerprint! How did the requests become acceptable, while those of the state are unacceptable, with Masonic forces standing behind them?

The answer is simple: because submitting to the requests of a European embassy, for example, will not result in revealing the manipulation of the "national identities"!

It is clear from Al-Muwaizri's statement that he knows things that no country in the world that applies the biometric fingerprint knows, and therefore we hope that he will provide a service to all humanity, reveal "some" Masonic individuals, who stand behind this evil system, and expose their plans! I do not know the fact that Freemasonry, whether local, regional or global, or even metaphysical forces, needs his fingerprints?

In the same context, the former minister, Jassem Al-Oun, commented on an article by colleague Hassan Al-Sayegh, saying, with an attitude, that those who destroyed the homogeneous Kuwaiti fabric with its groups and sects are the ones who are trying today to obliterate their true belonging to other than the land of Kuwait, and they are the ones trying to save their cousins, who destroyed the national identity.

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MoC to fill vacant supervisory positions soon

KUWAIT CITY, July 16: The Ministry of Communications has announced it will accept applications from qualified personnel to fill the supervisory positions in all sectors and departments of the ministry, reports Al-Qabas daily.

The daily quoting reliable sources pointed out that the regulatory authorities had previously demanded the need to fill vacancies, some of which have been vacant for years as a result of which the ministry was unable to fully perform all its duties, and now plan to fill 75 positions, including 27 in the postal sector.

The Acting Undersecretary, Dr.

Ahmed Al-Mujren indicated a committee has been formed headed by the Assistant Undersecretary for the Administrative and Financial Affairs Sector, to sift through the applications in accordance with the approved organizational structure of the ministry.

Al-Mujren indicated that this step comes from the Ministry's desire to establish the principle of equal opportunities in line with the provisions of Civil Service Council Resolution No. 25 of 2006 and its amendments, as well as implementation of Ministerial Resolution No. 83 regarding the issuance of a list of conditions and controls

for occupying supervisory positions.

Al-Mujren the ministry will start receiving applications as of Sunday over two months, and personal interviews will be conducted for applicants who fulfill the terms and conditions, in accordance with the decisions and circulars of the Civil Service Council.

He stressed the Minister of State for Municipal Affairs and Minister of State for Communications Affairs, Fahd Al-Shula is determined to ensure all applicants get equal opportunities without favoritism or abuse of power in light of the applicable legal rules in this regard.

Vital to reduce economy's links with politicians: KES

'Kuwait lags behind in diversification'

KUWAIT CITY, July 16: The Kuwait Economic Society (KES) called for a review of the degree of politicians' interference in the economy, strengthening the economic formation of politicians, and solving the problem of bureaucratic decision-making, reports Al-Rai daily.

In a press statement, it stressed that the global oil market is likely to undergo huge shifts in the near future that may limit oil revenues.

The society explained that it has become important to reduce the economy's link with politicians, and to link its fate more with specialists. This is not without the importance of having a supportive political will.

Due to years of politicization of the economy, Kuwait has become the last in the Gulf to diversify the economy and the country's non-oil revenues. Within the Gulf, it is considered most reliant on crude oil exports, most affected by fluctuations in the oil industry, and the most vulnerable in terms of exposure to energy price fluctuations. It is also considered most likely to face potential deficits, the least open in terms of trading partners in the world, and the most dependent on the Asian markets.

Kuwait has clearly lagged behind the Gulf countries in diversifying its economic activities and exports due to various factors, the most important of which is political interference in the economy, and the poor continuity of reform and development programs due to the rapid pace of government change and limited administrative stability, all of which are recent economic classifications that reflected successive governments' failure to diversify exports of Kuwait or its revenues, which are frighteningly dependent on oil.

Success

The success of governments in most countries is measured by their ability to create job opportunities as per concrete and sustainable economic plans. However, this important criterion does not represent any concern of successive governments who are indifferent to the increasing unemployment rates.

The society referred to the report issued by the Central Statistical Bureau in September 2022 concerning unemployed Kuwaitis.

They explained that, according to the data of the Civil Service Commission (CSC) as of 2021, the number of unemployed Kuwaitis reached 7,668.

The number of unemployed, as highlighted by the Public Authority for Civil Information in its report on population and labor force issued in September 2021, was 32, 851. This means that the unemployment rate amounted to about 7.2 percent, or more than four times the

number of the unemployed, according to the figures of the Central Statistical Bureau. Questions are being raised about these actual figures in this regard.

The society stated that the establishment of a fund to manage state assets is a smart strategic idea for Kuwait at the time, especially since many countries established such a fund, or under the name of a body that is specialized in managing state assets to optimally benefit from them, with high efficiency on which the fund will be built.

Although Kuwait is the first in the world to implement the idea of sovereign funds, the passing of more than 60 years has not succeeded in saving public financial sustainability that still depends on oil as a basic resource.

There is no doubt that Kuwait, over the past 50 years, has used a large part of the state treasury. Revenues are well invested in infrastructure and education, but a large part goes to operating expenses, and to a lot of extravagance and waste through what is called the distribution of wealth to citizens. The goal may be noble, but it turns it into an investment that adds value, to drain!

On the other hand, the society made it clear that the principle of transparency and governance is one of the most important investment pillars absent from sovereign funds. These public funds, estimated at hundreds of billions, have no clear control over them.

They are presented to the National Assembly once a year, and the State Audit Bureau's notes remain pending without a response. The investment commission does not manage private funds for a person or a company, and therefore it has the right to do whatever it likes with these funds. This is vague, and it does not provide adequate reports about the deals it concludes, or even the ones it concluded decades ago, and the gains and losses that were achieved from them.

The society stressed that it is not accusing anyone, but in the current period and with what is being circulated about the embezzlement of sovereign funds, it is necessary to talk about the issue of disclosures and transparency, which has been absent in the Public Authority for Investment for decades under the pretext that the law does not allow the disclosure of information.

It said, "The disclosure of fully managed assets carries with it geo-political risks, as the government claims, in a volatile and flammable region. On the other hand, there is an inherent right of the people to know how their money is managed, where it went, and what gains or losses it achieved.

The state deals with old concepts that no longer exist, and is not commensurating with achieving transparency in investments that the world is making every effort to achieve, as dozens of international reports are issued annually to clarify the size and quality of these investments, and the size of the losses or gains that have been achieved in them.

In the era we are currently living in, there is no longer information that can be

kept secret. Despite all that, we find the deep-rooted government mentality dealing with the principle of "as usual", forgetting the economic foundations based on transparency and objectivity, as if we did not come up with a lesson as happened to the world in the global financial crisis. Some of them are due to the lack of correct data and lack of transparency in many economic investments, which caused the financial collapse that the world witnessed in 2008.

Inflation

In light of inflation and the middle class, the society confirmed that the rise in food prices pushed overall inflation in Kuwait to its highest level in three years. This was the result of a combination of high international food prices, partly linked to the decline in the US dollar, prolonging supply chain problems and rising prices by dealers, whereas for local retail it triggered higher purchase prices.

On the other hand, we do not see any significant role on the part of the executive authority or the legislative authority, and we believe that the future outlook for food prices is still unknown to decision-makers."

It is remarkable to note that among the GCC countries, Kuwait and Saudi Arabia have witnessed inflation in food prices since the beginning of 2020 against the backdrop of rising global food prices. In contrast, the remaining GCC countries have mostly witnessed constant prices for food items.

What is surprising from this data is that the annual inflation rates in Kuwait for that period are the highest compared to the Gulf countries, despite government support for some of the basic food items. At the same time, those countries, with the exception of Kuwait, are trying to reduce their dependence on food by investing in agricultural lands and technology in their countries and foreign countries.

Many studies indicated that the Saudi Agricultural and Livestock Investment Company (SALIC) imported more than 350,000 tons of wheat from Ukraine, Canada and Australia in 2021, which represents approximately 10 percent of the country's needs.

Hassad, the agricultural arm of the Qatari sovereign wealth fund, has also purchased land in Sudan and Australia, and has plans to invest hundreds of millions of dollars in agricultural projects in Kenya, Brazil, Argentina, Turkey and Ukraine.

The society said, "As for Kuwait, we always hear that the Kuwait Investment Authority has been planning to invest in agricultural lands abroad for years.

What makes us suspicious about the fact that the local government measures will not work is the exposure of the Kuwaiti economy, which touches the limits of 75 percent, so that Kuwait will be one of the countries most dependent on imports to meet most of its needs for commodities.

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Kuwaitis' travel spending increases in Q1 of 2023 compared to last year

Expats' remittance increased by 4.48 percent

KUWAIT CITY, July 16: The travel expenditure of Kuwaitis in the first quarter of this year was about KD 1.131 billion, recording an increase of about 4.48 percent compared to the spending in the last quarter of last year, which was KD 913.1

million. It witnessed a slight decrease by about 0.44 percent compared to the level in the first quarter of 2022 amounting to about KD 1.136 billion, reports Al-Rai daily.

According to the balance of payments data for the State of Kuwait issued by the Central Bank of Kuwait, the total remittances of expatriate workers were about KD 1.22 billion in the first quarter of 2023, which was an increase of 4.48 percent compared to the fourth quarter of 2022, which amounted to KD 1.167 billion. It recorded a decline of about 17.34 percent compared to its value in the first quarter of last year, which was KD 1.476 billion.

Current account

The current account of the State of Kuwait recorded a surplus of KD 4.183 billion in the first three months of this year, which was down by 10.47 percent compared to the surplus it achieved in the last quarter of last year, which reached KD 4.672 billion. The surplus witnessed an increase of about 7.73 percent compared to the first quarter of 2022, amounting to KD 3.883 billion.

As for the current and capital account balance (net lending + net borrowing), it amounted to KD 4.173 billion at the end of the first quarter of this year, down by 10.55 percent compared to the end of the last quarter of last year, which amounted to KD 4.665 billion. It witnessed an increase of about 2.66 percent compared to the first quarter of 2022, which amounted to KD 4.065 billion.

The total balance of payments achieved a surplus of about KD 603.2 million in the first quarter of 2023, which was an increase of 15.57 percent compared to the surplus level of KD 714.4 million in the fourth quarter of 2022. The increase amounted to about 147.21 percent compared to the surplus of the balance of payments in the first quarter of the year, which amounted to about KD 244 million.



KUNA photo

Vice President of the Kuwait Chamber of Commerce and Industry Fahad Al-Jouan with Tunisian Minister Nabil Ammar.

KCCI seeks to strengthen economic relations with Tunisian businessmen

KUWAIT CITY, July 16, (KUNA): Kuwait Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KCCI) said on Sunday it is seeking to boost economic relations with Tunisian businessmen.

Highlighting the need for more communication between the private sectors in both countries, The Chamber's Vice Chair Fahad Al-Jouan, affirmed in a statement that strength of Kuwaiti-Tunisian relations, pointing to the Chamber's aspiration to further them in terms of investment opportunities.

Al-Jouan's remarks came while receiving Tunisian Minister of

Foreign Affairs and Migration Nabil Ammar, Tunisian Ambassador to Kuwait Al-Hashimi Ajeeli, and Kuwait's Ambassador to Tunisia Mansour Al-Omar.

Al-Jouan also voiced the Chamber's readiness to arrange such meetings with any visiting Tunisian economic delegation.

On his part, Minister Ammar underlined importance of Kuwait's investments as "they have been present for decades and had a pioneering role in the Tunisian economy," stressing the need to explore new economic ventures and expertise.

New strategy

KNPC to deal with new contracts

KUWAIT CITY, July 16: According to an informed source from the oil sector, the Kuwait National Petroleum Company (KNPC) is currently working on implementing a new strategy for reviewing the terms and conditions of new contracts, reports Aljarida daily.

The source explained that the company will consider not awarding the same scope of work to the same contractor for different areas in the future in order to avoid the contractor's failure to implement the assigned work.

This strategy will include clauses specifying fines to impose on the contractor in case of such a situation.

He affirmed the company's commitment to impose all fines to contractors in the event of any violation, within the framework of the laws that preserve the company's rights, provided that this is done in accordance with the terms and conditions of the contract, and is based on the regulations of the financial authorities.

The source indicated that the company will continuously audit and follow-up with all its contractors to ensure compliance with the security requirements and safety standards in all their work contracted with the company.

He stressed the company's keenness to start procedures for renewing the ongoing contracts well before the end of their validity period in order to avoid extending contracts at high costs.

The source explained that KNPC is also working on coordinating with external parties when needed, and conducting a future study regarding fines for service contracts and maintenance of the local marketing department, in addition to investigating accuracy in determining all contract requirements of employment or others before issuing tenders and awarding contracts.



Kuwait's Ambassador to Egypt, Ghanim Al-Ghanim, handing over a fishing boat to a fisherman.

Two mosques inaugurated

Kuwaiti charity hands out fishing boats to Egyptians

ASWAN, Egypt, July 16, (KUNA): The Kuwait Office for Charitable Projects in Cairo delivered 24 fishing boats to small-scale fishermen in Aswan Governorate, south of Egypt.

This came during a ceremony attended by Kuwait's Ambassador to Egypt and Permanent Representative at the Arab League Ghanim Al-Ghanim and some Egyptian and Kuwaiti dignitaries.

The boats, which are funded by Kuwait's Al-Najat Charity society, worth KD 9,800 (about USD 30,000), are part of an initiative aiming to back fishermen.

Speaking at the ceremony, Al-Ghanim said that the projects inaugurated in Aswan today reflect good relations between Kuwait and Egypt.

He affirmed that Egypt and Kuwait have common goals and interests, and fruitful cooperation in various fields, thanks to the wise leaderships of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and Egyptian President AbdelFattah Al-Sisi.

Meanwhile, Sara Al-Mutairi, acting



KUNA photos

Kuwaiti Ambassador to Egypt Ghanim Al-Ghanim during the inauguration of Kuwait Mosque.

head of the office, said participating in this celebration "is the best evidence of Kuwait's keenness, with all its official and popular institutions and bodies, on contributing effectively to the various development projects in Egypt and a true embodiment of the deep-rooted relations between the two countries."

Furthermore, Al-Ghanim, accompanied by Al-Mutairi and deputy governor of Aswan Dr. Ghada Abu Zaid, inaugurated two mosques and a water desalination plant in the governorate.

Council executes 2023-2028 strategy

NCCAL mirrors Kuwait's cultural identity at local level and abroad

KUWAIT CITY, July 16, (KUNA): Kuwait National Council for Arts and Letters (NCCAL) has remarkably developed starting with activities at the local level when it was established in 1973 and later in the years expanding them at the regional and international levels.

The NCCAL, in half a century, succeeded in mirroring Kuwait's national and cultural identities, the State of Kuwait's advocacy of openness and efforts to enrich cultural knowledge.

Establishment of the council was planned by the late Amir Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah when he served as crown prince and prime minister. He had personally launched the initiative of establishing the NCCAL, first chaired by the late minister of state for cabinet affairs, Abdulaziz Hussein.

The late minister had shouldered responsibility of executing the plan, with aid of elite Kuwaiti literati, thinkers and artists.

An Amiri Decree was issued during era of the late Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Salem Al-Sabah on July 17, 1973. It had been decided to place the council after its birth under umbrella of the crown prince, Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad.

In later years, the council received special care and attention from the late Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, and nowadays by His Highness the Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah.

Currently, the council executes the 2023-2028 strategy, designed to bolster Kuwait's status on the global cultural map - with follow-up and support by the Minister of Information, Minister of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs, Abdulrahman Al-Mutairi.

Minister Al-Mutairi holds regular meetings with the council's leaders to tackle cultural issues and challenges facing it.

The NCCAL holds regular festivals and activities, issues dictionaries and references, organizes exhibitions, conventions and festivals, seminars and presents awards. Moreover, its personnel have helped in discovering relics and ancient treasures.

Furthermore, it backs the Kuwaiti diplomatic missions on the international and Arab arenas. Locally, it runs more than 17 cultural centers in Kuwait's six governorates as well as on Failaka island.

Sadaaqa presents KT Mathew

KUWAIT CITY, July 16: Sadaaqa, the show that documents and celebrates India Kuwait relationship by highlighting individual experiences presents the KT Mathew family of Kuwait on July 26.

Mr KT Mathew is a pioneer in the field of Health Science, Education and Informatics in Kuwait. He and his wife Leelamma have a special story rooted in hard work, honesty, and enterprise. Both KT and Leelamma arrived in Kuwait in the 1950s. KT Mathew joined the Chest Diseases Hospital as Senior Staff to run the microbiology lab at the age of 27. He was employee number 49 Senior Staff at the Ministry of Health, one of the earliest expatriates to join the Ministry. He had a Fulbright Scholarship to Stanford & University of Chicago but didn't have the means to reach the States. He sought work in Kuwait to pay the family debts and save up his passage money, but fate had other things in store.

In Kuwait, he met Leelamma, a young Indian woman working as lab technician at KOC's Ahmadi Hospital. They got married - the first Or-

Guest: **Mr KT Mathew**
AIEssa Medical

Sadaaqa
A show that celebrates India-Kuwait friendship
with Host **Chaitali B Roy**
Author / Broadcaster / Journalist
July 26th 2023
8 pm

Podcast on: Chaitali B Roy

thodox Christian wedding to take place in Kuwait. The young couple began their journey together in a country that was starting to experience the effects of oil boom. In 1975, their lives changed tracks. They had begun their lives as professionals in Kuwait but in the mid-seventies, KT Mathew chose to get into business. Since then, there has been no looking back. Together with their children, Thomas, KO and Sunita, who are also exceptional leaders in their fields, the KT Mathew family have given Kuwait strong companies straddling different sectors, providing employment to hundreds of people and contributing to Kuwait's growth and development. Their remarkable contribution to Kuwait's health, education and Informatics sector will be showcased in this episode.

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A DIGEST OF PUBLIC OPINION

'Railway project needs to be presented in transparent manner'

"SINCE 1995 or even before this date we have been hearing about a Kuwaiti project to build the railways linking the north of Kuwait with its south, as well as linking our country with some of the Gulf Cooperation Council countries," columnist Dr. **Mohammad Khaled Al-Azemi** wrote for **Al-Rai** daily.

"We did not know about this national, vital and important project except through newspapers, magazines and websites in the context of ambitious civil engineering projects such as bridges, widening streets, and others."

"Frequent news reports mentioned that this project comes in accordance with the Gulf Cooperation Council countries' direction towards establishing a joint railway network aimed at improving the economy, increasing the volume of trade and creating more job opportunities."

"For example, one of the magazines specialized in economics talked about major construction projects, including the railway project in Kuwait, by inviting consultants to submit bids for the first phase of the project."

"When we wanted to collect some information about this economic and vital project in Kuwait, we found that it is a railway transport network project, linking the north of Kuwait with its south, and includes three tracks with a total length of 565 kilometers, which are the Gulf, the commercial and the economic, and it includes a number of stations specialized in loading and storage, in addition to stations for transporting passengers and others for freight operations and transporting goods, and stations for maintenance."

"In 2021, Kuwaiti newspapers referred to the issue saying the Council of Ministers has assigned the implementation of the project to the Public Authority for Roads and Land Transport (PART), and set a timetable for the implementation process, so that the responsibility for completing the project would be transferred from the Partnership Projects Authority to the public and private sectors."

"At that time, the media indicated that the initial cost of the first phase of the project amounted to approximately 300 million dinars, and it will be 111 km long and include 4 stations that include maintenance, storage, loading, and transportation of passengers and goods."

"The media revealed that the delay in starting the implementation of the project in Kuwait during the approved timetable is due to the presence of obstacles in the course of the project, in addition to the inability of the concerned authorities to approve the budget for the implementation of the project."

"This information is general and anyone can obtain it, but the reality is different from that information, as we are talking about a project whose extension, locations, final form, or even a feasibility study has not been determined to explain to citizens its importance, and the gains it will include for Kuwait."

"They are only statements by officials, or jurisprudence from specialists, but the official study that accurately defines the features of this project, which - in fact - has no existence."

"Based on my engineering specialization, I see the need to present this national project in a transparent and clear manner, with the publication of a feasibility study for it, so that those with opinion and specialization have a role in determining the importance of its implementation, and not leaving matters to news distributed here and there."

Also:

"If Iran has a 40 percent right in Al-Durra, then we should have a 50 percent right in the Soroush field. This is in light of what was stated by an



Dr Al-Azemi

official source at the Iranian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which was published in the Kuwaiti newspaper "Al-Jarida" on July 7, 2023, saying "His country will not respond to Kuwait and Saudi Arabia's call to return to negotiations on the demarcation of maritime borders at the eastern border of the submerged divided zone in which the Durra field is located," columnist **Khaled Mohammad Al Maqames** wrote for **Al-Rai** daily.

"The report said, 'Iran considers that its share in al-Durra is more than 40 percent, and it will not back down from its right for any reason, and that no negotiations will take place before the opposite party accepts, and as long as the border demarcation has not been formally done between the two sides, the issue of wealth extraction must be agreed upon or for each side to extract wealth unilaterally.'

"Such a statement fully confirms the Iranian intentions towards escalating the issue and not committing to demarcating the borders except according to their preconditions, and that they have a right in the Durra field, ignoring all the legal rules of the law of the sea in demarcating the maritime borders of the opposing countries, which is the middle line, and that in their endeavor they want to impose their will and agitate the Iranian street and the misleading of the international community, and this prompts us to ask the question about how to address this Iranian claim?"

"What are the political and media facts to clarify Kuwait's right to demarcate its maritime borders with Iran? It is in the midst of our defense of the full entitlement of our country in the Al-Durra field against the Iranian claims, there is a large segment of the people who do not know the truth about this issue, including the government as well as members of the National Assembly, in addition to many Kuwaiti elite who speak about what they do not know, as some of them derive their opinions through social media platforms, and the formula of the statements issued by the Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Oil is more shy than clarification of the situation."

"What is required politically by the government is to take the initiative in clarifying the truth of such false allegations to the general Kuwaiti people, in order to immunize them from any malicious rumors and to stress the importance of asking the Iranian side to demarcate the maritime borders between the two countries, and not only to defend the Al-Durra field, and that it is in implementation international legal rules, the Kuwaiti territorial waters will exceed the submerged divided zone."

"The Iranian leadership knows with certainty that if these legal rules are applied, the maritime demarcation will reach the middle of the Soroush oil field, towards Iran."

"If the Iranian source declares that Iran has a right in the Al-Durra field by 40 percent, then the Kuwaiti response must be that we have a right in the Soroush field by 50 percent, when adopting the international legal rules for the middle line, which begins to be measured from the lowest water receding from the opposite shore with giving a trace of the existing islands such as Failaka Island and its dependencies, in addition to the islands of Kubbar, Qaruh and Umm al-Maradim."

"As it is known, Iran has bypassed the legal rules of the Law of the Sea by announcing the Iranian baseline in terms of considering the Iranian island of Kharg, which is about 17 nautical miles away from the Iranian coast, as a base point, and adopting straight lines to draw its baseline, which was objected to by many countries including Iraq, where Iran, in the light of this principle, introduced the Iraqi port of Al-Bakr as an extension to the Shatt Al-Arab within its territorial waters according to the concept of a straight line, noting that this principle does not apply to the state and shape of the Iranian coasts."

"The Kuwaiti position is very clear, and we must take the courageous

step in explaining to the world our right to participate in the Soroush field and not be satisfied with defending our right in the Durra field, which is wholly owned by the State of Kuwait."

"I know that we will be facing a future problem that Iran will create to escape forward without any regard for good neighborliness."



"The government does not know how to distinguish its friend from its enemy. Six years ago, Kuwait lent Tunisia \$500 million for five years to revive its economy. It gave Tunisia KD22 million to support water distribution networks, not to mention the huge Kuwaiti investments in that country. These are just examples," columnist **Ahmad Al-Dawas** wrote for **Al-Seyassah** daily.

"This country took a hostile stance against Kuwait during the Iraqi occupation. It has been said that when a Kuwaiti went out after praying in its mosques, the Tunisians beat him because he is Kuwaiti. It does not value Kuwait, which is evident in the fact that not a single street there is named after Kuwait!"

"This is also the case with Yemen. We helped this country and established the University of Sana'a there. We used Kuwait's money to pay the teachers, yet it stood against us during the occupation."

"We have loved Lebanon since the late 1950s, but in the end, the criminal 'Hezbollah' threatened Kuwait."

"Cuba took a hostile position against Kuwait and the fate of Kuwaitis during the occupation, but what did we do for it? We established diplomatic relations with it. We opened a Kuwaiti embassy in Havana and we were happy to establish the relationship."

"We consider Iraq a neighbor and a brother, yet it raises the issue on Abdullah or Mubarak Port from time to time. The heart of a member of the Iraqi Parliament is made of stone, such that she hates Kuwait. From time to time, she wishes that the Iraqi forces will enter the land of Kuwait."

"It does not end there, as Iraq will threaten Kuwait regarding Mubarak Port in the future. We already mentioned this in the article entitled, 'Possible Threat from the North', published in the Al-Watan and Al-Seyassah newspapers on Dec 31, 2013. Despite this, Kuwait has expressed its readiness for the reconstruction of Mosul or Iraq!"

"The position of Palestinians on the Iraqi occupation of Kuwait is very bad. It is a wound that does not heal in the heart of every Kuwaiti. We helped them for 70 years, but they turned against us with the dagger of treachery. In spite of this, Kuwait supports them financially and politically in international forums."

"After the massive destruction caused by the Syrian civil war, Syria deserves Kuwaiti support. Yes, Syria deserves this, considering its honorable stance on Kuwait during the Iraqi occupation."

"We can help other Arab countries but with reasonable amounts, because political positions change and so that we do not neglect internal affairs. Kuwaitis are upset with the government for squandering the country's money abroad, then it cries and claims it is suffering financial deficit."

"The Kuwaiti minister of finance said in 2016: 'Kuwaiti's foreign aid in the last five years reached more than \$42 billion covering support for the economies of Arab countries, deposits, unreciprocated grants and donations, and outstanding debts that exceed KD10 billion.'

"Moreover, Kuwait has spent on many conferences in a way that exceeds the budgets of African and Asian countries, the most recent of which was a conference on Yemeni reconciliation. Life and its cruelty. The pension hardly lasts for half a month, or may be less!"

— Compiled by Mai Elsoukary



Foreign liquor seized from the Egyptian bootlegger. Al-Anba photo

Life term, 15 yrs jail upheld for 2 in running over & killing bedoun

Egyptian arrested with 14 bottles of imported liquor

KUWAIT CITY, July 16: The Court of Cassation has upheld the verdicts of the Criminal Court and the Court of Appeals and sentenced to life imprisonment an unidentified person for running over and killing a young bedoun man in the Al-Qusour area.

The court also put behind bars another man, believed to be the accomplice of the main culprit, for 15 years, reports Al-Anba daily.

According to case papers, the incident dates back to early January of 2021, when a quarrel took place in front of a Diwaniya in the Al-Qusour area, followed by an exchange of beatings, and the two citizens running over and hitting the victim, identified only as A.K., with the vehicle.

Several attempts were made to rescue the victim, who was admitted to intensive care unit of a hospital, but he died of severe injuries sustained as a result of the run-over by the convicts.

Bootlegger arrested: The Ahmadi security patrolmen taken into custody an Egyptian a.k.a Chivas and seized from him 14 bottles of imported alcohol, reports Al-Anba daily.

The daily said the suspect was caught in Umm Al-Haiman near the Al-Wafra farms. A security source said the man driving a vehicle was asked to pull over after he appeared confused when a police patrol drove alongside.

The man was asked to pull over and police found the booze bottles near the front seat of the car. During interrogation the suspect admitted to bootlegging activity.

The contraband and the suspect have been referred to the General Department of Drugs and Alcohol Control (GDDAC).



'Beware of fake messages': The Ministry of Interior has warned the public about messages on imposing fines for not recording traffic violations, stressing this is the work of individuals involved in fraudulent operations, reports Al-Anba daily.



Motorist seen driving on pedestrian bridge, and the seized vehicle. Al-Rai photo

Motorist caught driving on pedestrian bridge

The Ministry of Interior has taken into custody an unidentified motorist for driving his vehicle on the pedestrian bridge at an unident-

fied location, reports Al-Rai daily. The daily added, the motorist was arrested after a video clip went viral in the social media.

The ministry statement said on Wednesday, the driver was identified and arrested, and his vehicle has been impounded.

Work underway to open new centers: Mol

'750,000 people complete biometric fingerprints'

KUWAIT CITY, July 16: Until now about 750,000 citizens and residents have completed the biometric fingerprints within 75 days, said Ministry of Interior Saturday and stressed that it continues to take fingerprints for everyone, reports Al-Qabas daily.

The Public Relations and Security Media Department of the ministry said in a press statement that work is underway to open new centers in some commercial complexes and the ministries complex,

to make it easy for everyone to complete this procedure.

The ministry added that citizens and residents can book biometric fingerprint appointments through the "Sahel" application and the "Meta platform", while citizens of the Gulf Cooperation Council countries can book appointments through the website of the Ministry of Interior (moi.gov.kw), stressing that "passengers are allowed to leave from the State of Kuwait without the need to take a finger-

print, and it is taken upon return."

The ministry stated that these efforts come within the framework of the Ministry's strategy aimed at developing and automating services provided to the public to facilitate the citizens, residents and GCC citizens to save time and effort and raise the level of performance and achievement.

The sources pointed out that the new security system at the border crossings has achieved remarkable success.

The ministry called on everyone to ignore fake messages or websites of unknown origin, claiming that fines will be imposed for failure to register traffic violations.

It affirmed that in case of committing a traffic violation, the concerned individual is notified through the

unified government application for electronic services — Sahel.

The ministry issued the advisory after many citizens and expatriates were deceived by such fake messages.

Meanwhile, Kuwait Anti-Corruption Authority (Nazaha) has

warned the public about fake social media accounts pretending to be that of the authority, while stressing it does not request for personal or banking data or money from individuals through telephone calls, text messages or email, reports Al-Jarida daily.

Traffic statistics for H1 of 2023

KUWAIT CITY, July 16: According to the semi-annual statistics issued by the General Traffic Department based on instructions from its Director General Major General Yousef Al-Khada, the number of juveniles who were arrested for driving vehicles without obtaining a driving license during the first half of this year and were referred to the Public Prosecution reached 940, reports Aljarida daily.

According to the traffic statistics, the number of wanted persons who were arrested by the patrol officers of the General Traffic Department reached 916, of whom 471 were judicial wanted persons, 288 had arrest warrants issued against them by security and judicial authorities, and 157 persons had absconding cases filed against them.

The number of communications received by the Operations Room of the General Traffic Department during the first half of this year amounted to 75,889, and they were all dealt with by the patrol teams of the General Traffic Department.

The number of wanted vehicles during the first half of this year amounted to 517, which were seized by traffic patrol teams, and cases of theft or breach of trust were registered against them.

The number of vehicles and motorcycles that were impounded during the first half of this year amounted to 4,034, of which 2,494 vehicles and 1,540 motorcycles were impounded in the garage of the General Traffic Department.

Over the past week, the security and traffic campaigns resulted in the issuance of 34,000 traffic citations, the arrest of 47 reckless drivers, the referral of 93 vehicles and

118 motorcycles to the impoundment garage, and the referral of 73 juveniles to the Juvenile Prosecution after they were caught driving vehicles without driving licenses.

An officer from the Public Relations and Awareness Department of the General Traffic Department Major Abdullah Bu Hassan said, "The patrol teams from the traffic departments in all six governorates, in addition to the patrol teams of the Traffic Operations Department and the Traffic Investigation Department, carried out a number of traffic security campaigns throughout the past week, which resulted in the issuance of citations to 34,000 people, issuance of 174 other citations, the arrest of 73 juveniles who drove vehicles without driving licenses, and seizure of 93 vehicles and 118 motorcycles."

The patrol teams of the General Traffic Department dealt with 3,058 accidents during the past week, of which 387 were serious and 1,559 were minor."

Major Abdullah Bu Hassan stated that the patrol officers of the General Traffic Department referred 47 security wanted persons to the concerned authorities, and impounded 21 vehicles that were wanted by security and judicial authorities.

He explained that the traffic patrol teams were able to arrest five people who were behaving in a disoriented manner and were found in possession of narcotics. They also seized 21 wanted vehicles, and arrested 47 people wanted by security and judicial authorities. They also arrested 15 expatriates who violated the residency law, 18 persons who did not have proof of identity, and 14 persons against whom arrest warrants were filed.

Islamic State group declared the establishment of a self-styled "caliphate," a traditional model of Islamic rule, in wide areas under its control in Iraq and Syria.

After a yearslong campaign that left tens of thousands dead in both countries, IS was defeated in Iraq in 2017 and in March 2019 in Syria. In recent years, Syrian government forces regained control of much of Syria with the help of Russia and Iran.

Iraqi PM

Continued from Page 1

Security cooperation against extremist groups was likely to top the agenda for the two-day visit.

The two countries, where Iran enjoys wide influence, have a joint 600 kilometer-long (373-mile) border. In June 2014, the

TOURISM

Business Plus



Many motivated by 'revenge tourism'

Tourists pack Europe, boosted by Yanks



Revellers, mostly tourists, look on from balconies at the running of the bulls during the San Fermin fiestas in Pamplona, Spain, Saturday, July 8, 2023. Crowds are packing the Colosseum, the Louvre, the Acropolis and other major attractions as tourism exceeds 2019 records in some of Europe's most popular destinations. While European tourists helped the industry on the road to recovery last year, the upswing this summer is led largely by Americans, who are lifted by a strong dollar and in some cases pandemic savings. (AP)

Despite predictable pockets of overtourism, travel to and within Europe overall is still down 10% from 2019, according to the World Tourism Organization. That is partly due to fewer people visiting countries close to the war in Ukraine, including Lithuania, Finland, Moldova and Poland.

Tourists are waiting more than two hours to visit the Acropolis in Athens. Taxi lines at Rome's main train station are running just as long. And so many visitors are concentrating around St. Mark's Square in Venice that crowds get backed up crossing bridges - even on weekdays.

After three years of pandemic limitations, tourism is expected to exceed 2019 records in some of Europe's most popular destinations this summer, from Barcelona and Rome, Athens and Venice to the scenic islands of Santorini in Greece, Capri in Italy and Mallorca in Spain.

While European tourists edged the industry toward recovery last year, the upswing this summer is led largely by Americans, boosted by a strong dollar and in some cases pandemic savings. Many arrive motivated by "revenge tourism" - so eager to explore again that they're undaunted by higher fares and hotel costs.

Lauren Gonzalez, 25, landed in Rome this week with four high school and college friends for a 16-day romp through the Italian capital, Florence and the seaside after three years of U.S. vacations. They aren't concerned about the high prices and

the crowds. "We kind of saved up, and we know this is a trip that is meaningful," said Gonzalez, who works at a marketing agency. "We are all in our mid-20s. It's a (moment of) change in our lives. ... This is something special. The crowds don't deter us. We live in Florida. We have all been to Disney World in the heat. We are all good."

Americans appear equally unperturbed by recent riots in Paris and other French cities. There was a small drop in flight bookings, but it was mainly for domestic travel. "Some of my friends said, 'It's a little crazy there right now,' but we thought summer is really a good time for us to go, so we'll just take precautions," Joanne Titus, a 38-year-old from Maryland, said while strolling the iconic Champs-Élysées shopping boulevard.

The return of mass tourism is a boon to hotels and restaurants, which suffered under COVID-19 restrictions. But there is a downside, too, as pledges to rethink tourism to make it more sustainable have largely gone unheeded.

"The pandemic should have taught us a lesson," said Alessandra Priante, director of the regional department for Europe at the U.N.

World Tourism Organization.

Instead, she said, the mindset "is about recuperating the cash. Everything is about revenue, about the here and now."

"We have to see what is going to happen in two or three years' time because the prices at the moment are unsustainable," she said.

The mayor of Florence is stopping new short-term apartment rentals from proliferating in the historic center, which is protected as a UNESCO heritage site, as mayors of Italy's other art cities call for a nationwide law to manage the sector.

Elsewhere, the anti-mass tourism movements that were active before the pandemic have not reappeared, but the battle lines are still being drawn: graffiti misdirected tourists in Barcelona away from - instead of toward - the Gaudi-designed Park Güell.

Despite predictable pockets of overtourism, travel to and within Europe overall is still down 10% from 2019, according to the World Tourism Organization. That is partly due to fewer people visiting countries close to the war in Ukraine, including Lithuania, Finland, Moldova and Poland.

In addition, Chinese visitors have not fully returned, with flights

from China and other Asia-Pacific countries down 45% from 2019, according to travel data company ForwardKeys.

Tourism-dependent Greece expects 30 million visitors this year, still shy of 2019's 34 million record. Still, the number of flights are up so far, and tourist hotspots are taking the brunt.

The Culture Ministry will introduce a new ticketing system for the Acropolis this month, providing hourly slots for visitors to even out crowds. But no remedy is being discussed for the parking line of cruise ships on the islands of Mykonos and Santorini on busy mornings.

Spain's tourism minister, Héctor Gómez, called it "a historic summer for tourism," with 8.2 million tourists arriving in May alone, breaking records for a second straight month. Still, some hotel groups say reservations slowed in the first weeks of summer, owing to the steep rise in prices for flights and rooms.

Costs are growing as flights from the U.S. to Europe are up 2% from 2019 levels, according to ForwardKeys.

"The rising appetite for long-haul travel from America is the continued result of the 'revenge travel' boom caused by the pandemic

lockdowns," said Tim Hentschel, CEO of HotelPlanner, a booking site. "Big cities within these popular European countries are certainly going to be busy during the summer."

Americans have pushed arrivals in Italian bucket-list destinations like Rome, Florence, Venice and Capri above pre-pandemic levels, according to Italy's hotel association, Federberghi.

They bring a lot of pent-up buying power: U.S. tourists in Italy spent 74% more in tax-free indulgences in the first three months of the year, compared with same period of 2019.

"Then there is the rest of Italy that lives from Italian and European tourism, and at the moment, it is still under 2019 levels," Federberghi president Bernabo Bocca said.

He expects it will take another year for an across-the-board recovery. An economic slowdown discouraged German arrivals, while Italians "are less prone to spending this year," he said.

And wallets will be stretched. Lodging costs in Florence rose 53% over last year, while Venice saw a 25% increase and Rome a 21% hike, according to the Italian consumer group Codacons.

Even gelato will cost a premium 21% over last year, due to higher sugar and milk prices.

Perhaps nothing has encouraged the rise in tourism in key spots more than a surge in short-term apartment rentals. With hotel room numbers constant, Bocca of Federberghi blames the surge for the huge crowds in Rome, inflating taxi lines and crowding crosswalks so that city buses cannot continue their routes.

In Rome and Florence, "walking down the street, out of every building door, emerges a tourist with a suitcase," he said.

While Florence's mayor is limiting the number of short-term rentals in the historic center to 8,000, no action has been taken in Venice. The canal-lined city counts 49,432 residents in its historic center and 49,272 tourist beds, nearly half of those being apartments available for short-term rental.

Inconveniences are "daily," said Giacomo Salerno, a researcher at Venice's Ca' Foscari University focusing on tourism.

It difficult to walk down streets clogged with visitors or take public water buses "saturated with tourists with their suitcases," he said.

Students cannot find affordable housing because owners prefer to cash in with vacation rentals. The dwindling number of residents means a dearth of services, including a lack of family doctors largely due to the high cost of living, driven up by tourist demand.

Venice has delayed plans to charge day-trippers a tax to enter the city, meant to curb arrivals. But activists like Salerno say that will do little to resolve the issue of a declining population and encroaching tourists, instead cementing Venice's fate as "an amusement park."

"It would be like saying the only use for the city is touristic," Salerno said. (AP)

Fusion of luxury and nature

More travelers cozy up to glamping, even amid high costs

U.S. national park visitors in 2021 spent, on average, \$351 daily per group on traditional lodging outside the parks, such as hotels or bed-and-breakfast establishments. Parties who camped spent just \$149.

Camping can be one of the cheapest ways to travel. Yet a relatively new style of camping is proliferating — by some metrics — and it's glamping.

Glamping is a fusion of luxury and nature, where tents are filled with plush pillows, and some even have private bathrooms with heated, running water. Campgrounds typically are outfitted with fast Wi-Fi, and such camping activities as pitching a tent and starting a fire are already done for you. But the blend of outdoor glamor with hotel comfort commands prices more expensive than those of high-end hotels. It's also a sharp contrast to what traditional campers spend.

U.S. national park visitors in 2021 spent, on average, \$351 daily per group on traditional lodging

outside the parks, such as hotels or bed-and-breakfast establishments. Parties who camped spent just \$149, according to a Department of the Interior 2021 visitor spending report. That's a 58% discount for visitors willing to exchange concrete for canvas. But canvas doesn't always connote cost savings. That is, if you're glamping.

For example, you might pay \$650 per night after taxes and resort fees at Under Canvas Zion as part of a glamping trip to Utah's Zion National Park this fall. Situated about 30 minutes from the park's entrance, the resort's accommodations include safari-inspired tents with beds, bathrooms, hot showers and wood-burning stoves. There's no electricity, but guests can borrow USB battery packs to keep devices

charged. The resort fee covers all-you-can-roast s'mores, live music and yoga classes.

That \$650 covers the entry-level tent, which accommodates two adults via a king bed. The suite tent, which includes a queen sofa bed in addition to the king bed (thus better for families) can run nearly \$850 per night on autumn weekends.

Under Canvas is among the biggest glamping operators. Another is AutoCamp, which offers canvas tents as well as other accommodations including Airstream trailers. A weekend stay at AutoCamp Zion this fall can cost about \$570 per night after taxes and fees. A larger campsite with an Airstream and tent (large enough for six) can cost nearly \$900 nightly. Yet such prices aren't turning off travelers; glamp-

ing is exploding in popularity.

In 2022, an estimated 10.5 million households went glamping, up from an estimated 7.7 million households in 2020. That's according to the 2023 North American Camping & Outdoor Hospitality Report from Kampgrounds of America (KOA), which runs more than 500 campgrounds across the United States and Canada.

Camping of all kinds took off at the beginning of the pandemic.

In 2019, 23.5 million North American households said they camped in traditional tents, a figure that ballooned 31% to 30.8 million in 2020, according to KOA's survey. By 2021, that had grown by an even sharper 50.2% compared with 2019, to 35.3 million.

In 2022, traditional camping en-

thusiasts dropped off to levels lower than 2020's numbers, back to about 30.4 million households.

Camping of all kinds accounted for 40% of all North American vacations in 2021 but dropped to 32% in 2022. Some people might have gotten over camping, but that's only if your definition of camping means pitching your own tent and starting your own fire.

If you're willing to consider glamping as a form of camping, then North America's enthusiasm for camping is just getting started. While KOA said this is the first time it has seen a drop in the number of tent-camping households since it started tracking data in 2014, interest in glamping is growing — so much that the overall rate of camping of all kinds is at a record high. (AP)

editor's choice



Musk says Twitter is losing cash

Elon Musk says Twitter is still losing cash because advertising has dropped by half.

In a reply to a tweet offering business advice, Musk tweeted Saturday, "We're still negative cash flow, due to (about a) 50% drop in advertising revenue plus heavy debt load."

"Need to reach positive cash flow before we have the luxury of anything else," he concluded. Ever since he took over Twitter in

a \$44 billion deal last fall, Musk has tried to reassure advertisers who were concerned about the ouster of top executives, widespread layoffs and a different approach to content moderation. Some high-profile users who had been banned were allowed back on the site.

In April, Musk said most of the advertisers who left had returned and that the company might become cash-flow positive in the second quarter.

In May, he hired a new CEO, Linda Yaccarino, an NBC Universal executive with deep ties to the advertising industry.

But since then, Twitter has upset some users by imposing new limits on how many tweets they can view in a day, and some users complained that they were locked out of the site. Musk said the restrictions were needed to prevent unauthorized scraping of potentially valuable data. (AP)

Tesla's 1st electric pickup has rolled off the assembly line

Tesla says its first production Cybertruck electric pickup has rolled off the assembly line, nearly two years behind the original schedule.

The company tweeted a photo on Saturday showing scores of workers in helmets and yellow vests surrounding the truck.

"First Cybertruck built at Giga Texas!" Tesla tweeted, including a cowboy hat-wearing emoji. Owner Elon Musk retweeted the post.

Musk unveiled the truck in late 2019, and Tesla had said production would start in late 2021, although the company has since cautioned that production would begin slowly and in smaller numbers than Tesla's other vehicles.

With its wedge shape and stainless-steel body - which Tesla calls the exoskeleton - the Cybertruck looks nothing like a traditional pickup. Some analysts have panned it as a niche product that

won't have broad appeal. Musk said in April that the company expected to deliver the first truck probably in the July-through-September quarter. He said that as with other new products, production would start slowly and then speed up. "It takes time to get the manufacturing line going," he said, "and this is really a very radical product. It's not made in the way that other cars are made. So let's see." (AP)

Market Movements

14-07-2023

	Change	Closing pts		Change	Closing pts
UAE - DFM	+0.13	4,009.83	JAPAN - Nikkei	-0.09	32,391.26
PHILIPPINES - PSEI	+0.70	6,624.79	PAKISTAN - KSE 100	-0.50	45,071.94
EGYPT - EGX 30	+1.16	17,342.29	SAUDI - Tadawul	-0.16	11,707.87

Business

Britain's economy shrank by 0.1% in May

Cooling US inflation boosts bets on Fed pause

By National Bank of Kuwait

Cooling US inflation accelerated the decline in the greenback, benefiting risk assets around the world. The dollar is down nearly 3.9% YTD and is trading 13% lower than its peak in 2022. The decline provided relief to the Japanese yen which gained 2.4% last week, turning from one of the worst performing currencies in 2023 to one of the best in the past week. Weakness in the Yen has been challenging for Japan's import-reliant economy, leading to expectations Japan would again intervene in markets to support its currency. The euro and pound jumped to levels not seen since Q1 of 2022, ending the week at 1.1231 and 1.3092 respectively.

As the dollar traded near 15-month lows, the MSCI World Equity index rose to its highest so far this year. Meanwhile Treasury yields eased in recent days, with the 2-year return dropping to 4.75% and the 10-year down to 3.82%. In commodities, oil priced edged higher on the bullish sentiment over US demand, while gold prices ended the week 1.6% higher as the lower dollar increased the metal's attractiveness for other currency holders.

United States

Annual Inflation at 3%

US inflation rose just 0.2% m/m in June versus forecasts of a 0.3% gain. Annually, the consumer price index increased 3%, marking its slowest pace since March 2021 when price increases were running at a more than 40-year high. Stripping out volatile items, the core CPI rose 4.8% y/y and 0.2% m/m versus respective estimates of 5% and 0.3%. Fed officials expect inflation will continue to drop, particularly as costs ease for shelter, which represents one-third of the weighting in CPI.

The figures may provide some breathing room for the Federal Reserve as it aims to bring down inflation that was running at around 9% in 2022. Still, traders are pricing in a 91% probability of a 25bps hike when it meets July 25-26, however they expect the central bank to pause for the rest of the year.

Producer Prices Barely Increase

In another sign that inflation is cooling in the US,

Highlights
■ US CPI rose 0.2% m/m and 3% y/y, rising by the slowest pace since March 2021.
■ Producer prices revealed another sign inflation is cooling in the US, registering a mere 0.1% y/u gain.
■ US unemployment benefits fell last week, dropping by 12,000 to 237,000 in the week ending July 8.
■ The Bank of Canada hiked its overnight rate by 0.25 bps on Wednesday following a surprise quarter-point increase in June.
■ Britain's economy shrank by 0.1% in May after a hit to activity from a trio of bank holidays. The figure followed growth of 0.2% in April.

producer prices barely rose in June from a year earlier. The producer price index rose 0.1% y/y, marking its smallest advance since 2020 and followed a 0.9% rise in May. On a monthly basis, PPI increased 0.1% after falling the prior month. Excluding food, energy, and trade services, the index rose 2.6% y/y, the smallest gain since February 2021. A broad shift in consumer demand toward services and away from goods has alleviated inflationary pressures at the producer level, as well as normalizing supply chains and more stable commodity prices.

Labor Market Stays Resilient

US applications for unemployment benefits fell last week, as initial claims dropped by 12,000 to 237,000 in the week ending July 8. Continuing claims, which represents those who have received benefits for longer than one week, rose to 1.73 million in the week through July 1, marking the first increase in four weeks. For the last few months, applications for unemployment benefits have remained largely steady. Employers are continuing to add jobs at a healthy pace each month, illustrating an encouraging picture of the labor market and its resilience in the face of the Federal Reserve's aggressive rate-hike campaign.

Canada

BoC Lifts Rate, Remains Hawkish

The Bank of Canada raised its main rate by 0.25 bps on Wednesday, sending its target for the overnight rate to 5% from 4.75% following a surprise quarter-point increase in June. The back-to-back rate rises in June and July represents a sharp change from the bank's rhetoric in January, where it declared a pause on further tightening on the belief that its series of aggressive hikes would damp inflation and employment throughout the year. The central bank foresees inflation cooling from its current 3.4% level to 2% in mid-2025, six months later than previously expected. Money markets increased bets for another rate increase in September.

Bank of Canada Governor Tiff Macklem said the central bank is prepared to raise interest rates further should inflation fail to moderate as forecasted. "We are going to be taking each decision one at a time, on the best available information," Macklem said at a press conference. He added that officials agreed interest rates needed to go higher and "the cost of delaying action was larger than the benefit of waiting." Money markets increased bets for another rate increase in September.

United Kingdom

UK Economy Shrinks in May

Britain's economy shrank by 0.1% in May after a

Kuwait

Kuwaiti Dinar

USD/KWD closed last week at 0.30630.

Rates - 16th July, 2023

Currencies	Previous Week Levels				This Week's Expected Range		3-Month
	Open	Low	High	Close	Minimum	Maximum	Forward
EUR	1.0969	1.0942	1.1244	1.1227	1.1165	1.1330	1.1282
GBP	1.2833	1.2748	1.3144	1.3086	1.3050	1.3190	1.3092
JPY	142.18	137.23	143.00	138.73	138.20	139.25	136.79
CHF	0.8893	0.8564	0.8918	0.8617	0.8565	0.8655	0.8538

Bid to avert budget cuts

\$38 mln collected from more than 175 high-income tax delinquents, says IRS

WASHINGTON, July 16, (AP): The IRS is showcasing its new capability to aggressively audit high-income tax dodgers as it makes the case for sustained funding and tries to avert budget cuts sought by Republicans who want to gut the agency.

IRS leaders said they collected \$38 million in delinquent taxes from more than 175 high-income taxpayers in the past few months.

In one case, an individual had used money owed to the government to buy a Maserati and a Bentley, and roughly 100 high-income people tried to get favorable tax treatment through Puerto Rico without meeting certain tax requirements. Many of those cases are expected to face criminal investigation.

"It just shows you how much money is out there in delinquent taxes, and there are so many more cases for us to tackle," said new IRS Commissioner Daniel Werfel, just four months into the job. "There's just a significant opportunity there."

No comparable figures exist for how those high-dollar tax collections compared with previous years, said Jodie Reynolds, speaking for the agency. Rather, the new data reflect an initiative that started after the agency received a new funding stream through the Inflation Reduction Act passed in August by Democrats.

Collection

The new data collection "is an example of work we expect to continue to focus on with IRA funding," she said.

Werfel, in a call with reporters on Thursday, also cited the federal tax collector's enhanced ability to identify tax delinquents from resources provided by the Inflation Reduction Act.

The agency was in line for an \$80 billion infusion under the law but that money is vulnerable to potential cutbacks.

House Republicans built a \$1.4 billion reduction to the IRS into the debt ceiling and budget cuts package passed by Congress this summer. The White House said the debt deal also has a separate agreement to take \$20 billion from the IRS over the next two years and divert that money to other non-defense programs.

Now, the agency is trying to show the value of the Inflation Reduction Act funding for taxpayers as appropriations season closes in, and to show the impact of its efforts to do more to audit high-income taxpayers. Last summer Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen gave the IRS leadership instructions not to increase audit rates on people making less than \$400,000 a year annually, and to focus on high-income taxpayers.

A team of academic economists and IRS researchers in 2021 found that the top 1% of U.S. income earners fail to report more than 20% of their earnings to the IRS.

Season

The IRS said its workers answered 3 million more phone calls than in the last filing season, cut wait times to 3 minutes from 28 and cleared the backlog of unprocessed 2022 tax returns that had no errors. It is opening new taxpayer assistance centers and holding events to help people who live far from the agency's in-person offices.

"The mixed results here of some taxpayers, still frustrated, and some taxpayers seeing dramatic improvements tells us we have more work to do," Werfel said.

The IRS's enforcement staff has shrunk by about one-third since 2010 and has been operating with outdated technology that the agency said it is gradually automating.

In April, the agency released a report outlining how it would spend the money allotted through the Inflation Reduction Act, such as bringing more paper-based systems online and answering taxpayers' phone calls promptly.

Other plans are more ambitious, including exploring ways to create a government-operated electronic free-file tax return system, which is currently being piloted.

The idea of providing additional money for the agency has been politically controversial since 2013, when the IRS under the Obama administration was found to scrutinize political groups that applied for tax-exempt status.

A Treasury Department inspector general report found that both conservative and liberal groups were chosen for scrutiny.

Microsoft is moving closer to complete Activision takeover

Court rebuffs regulators

WASHINGTON, July 16, (AP): A U.S. appeals court on Friday rejected a bid by federal regulators to block Microsoft from closing its \$68.7 billion deal to buy video game maker Activision Blizzard, paving the way for the completion of the biggest acquisition in tech history after a legal battle over whether it will undermine competition.

In a brief ruling, a three-judge panel on the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals concluded there were no grounds for issuing an order that would have prevented Microsoft from completing its nearly 18-month-old deal to take over the maker of popular video games such as Call of Duty.

The Redmond, Washington, software maker is facing a potential \$3 billion termination fee if the deal isn't completed by Tuesday.

"This brings us another step closer to the finish line in this marathon of global regulatory reviews," Microsoft President Brad Smith said in a statement.

The appeal filed by the U.S. Federal Trade Commission was a last-ditch effort from antitrust enforcers to halt the merger after another federal judge earlier this week ruled against the agency's attempt to block it. The FTC was seeking an injunction to prevent Microsoft from moving to close the deal as early as this weekend.

The FTC declined to comment on the ruling.

U.S. District Judge Jacqueline Scott Corley's earlier ruling, published Tuesday, said the FTC hadn't shown that the deal would cause substantial harm. She focused, in part, on Microsoft's promises and economic incentive to keep Call of Duty available on rivals to its own Xbox gaming system, such as Sony's PlayStation and Nintendo's Switch.

In its appeal, the FTC argued Corley made "fundamental errors."

"This case is about more than a single video game and the console hardware to play it," the FTC said. "It is about the future of the gaming industry. At stake is how future gamers will play and whether the emerging subscription and cloud markets will



The logo for Microsoft, and a scene from Activision 'Call of Duty - Modern Warfare,' are shown in this photo, in New York, Wednesday, June 21, 2023. A judge handed Microsoft a big victory on Tuesday, declining to stop its \$69 billion takeover of video game maker Activision Blizzard. (AP)

Britain officially joins Trans-Pacific bloc

WELLINGTON, New Zealand, July 16, (AP): Britain on Sunday officially joined an Asia-Pacific trade group that includes Japan and 10 other nations during a meeting in New Zealand.

The trade bloc covers more than 500 million people and 15% of the world's economy. For Britain, it represents the largest trade deal it has struck since leaving the European Union more than three years ago.

Britain first announced in March it had reached an agreement to join the bloc, which was created in 2018, after more than two years of negotiations. It is the first new member to join the bloc, called the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP).

It also includes New Zealand, Aus-

tralia, Brunei, Canada, Chile, Malaysia, Mexico, Peru, Singapore and Vietnam.

"We are honored to become the CPTPP's first new member and to join this extraordinary community of now 12 economies spanning Asia, the Pacific and now Europe," said British Trade Minister Kemi Badenoch. "This is a modern and ambitious agreement and our membership of this exciting, growing and forward-looking bloc is proof that the UK's doors are open for business." Badenoch said that more than half a million Britons already work for companies from the bloc's member nations.

Shigeyuki Goto, Japan's economic minister, said adding Britain would strengthen the bloc.

Khan came under fire from Republicans at a hearing Thursday in the House of Representatives for the agency's enforcement record, with one California lawmaker questioning whether the FTC was picking losing fights against mergers on purpose to pressure Congress to update its anti-trust laws.

"Absolutely not," Khan replied, while acknowledging that "unfortunately, things don't always go our way."

The FTC's appeal said Corley, herself a Biden nominee, applied the wrong legal standard by effectively requiring its attorneys to prove their full case now rather than in a trial due to start in August before the FTC's in-house judge. It was the FTC, however, that had asked Corley for an urgent hearing on its request to block Microsoft and Activision Blizzard from rushing to close the deal.

Passengers walk into the Departures entrance at the North Terminal of Gatwick Airport near Crawley, just south of London, Wednesday, July 22, 2020. Hundreds of thousands of British vacationers face potential disruption to their travel plans at the start of the school summer holidays, after almost 1,000 workers at London's Gatwick Airport voted to strike in a dispute over pay. (AP)



hundreds of thousands face disruption at Gatwick Airport

Hundreds of thousands of British vacationers face potential disruption to their travel plans at the start of the school summer holidays, after almost 1,000 workers at London's Gatwick Airport voted to strike in a dispute over pay. The Unite union said Friday that members, including baggage handlers and check-in staff, who are employed by four private contractors will walk out for four days from July 28 and again for a subsequent four-day stretch from Aug. 4. The union said the action will "inevitably" cause disruption to flights at the height of

the summer holiday season after the school year has ended. The airlines affected are British Airways, easyJet, Ryanair, TUI, WestJet and Wizz Air. Gatwick, which is just south of the U.K. capital, is London's second-busiest airport behind Heathrow, with a particular focus during the summer to Europe's beach resorts in the Mediterranean. A total of 4,410 flights are scheduled to depart Gatwick across all the strike days, equating to more than 840,000 seats, according to aviation data company Cirium.

Those involved in the dispute are employed by ASC, Menzies Aviation, GGS and DHL Services, which conduct outsourced operations for airlines including ground handling, baggage handling and check-in. Unite said it has been in negotiations with the four companies since January. "As part of Unite's unyielding focus on the jobs, pay and condition of its members, the union has drawn a line in the sand and is committed to eradicating the scourge of low pay at the airport," said Sharon Graham, the union's general-secretary. (AP)

A boost from First Republic takeover

JPMorgan second quarter profit jumps 67 percent

WASHINGTON, July 16, (AP) JPMorgan's second-quarter profits rose by 67% as the nation's largest bank made more loans to customers, took advantage of higher interest rates, and got a boost from its recent acquisition of First Republic Bank.

The bank earned \$14.5 billion in the three months ended June 30, compared with \$8.65 billion in the same period last year. On a per share basis, the bank earned \$4.75, easily outpacing Wall Street expectations for \$3.97, according to a survey of analysts by FactSet.

Revenue rose to \$42.4 billion, from \$31.6 billion a year ago.

JPMorgan Chase & Co. has been one of the benefactors of the banking crisis that came after the failure of Silicon Valley Bank, Signature Bank and First Republic Bank. The bank saw billions of dollars of deposits flow into its vaults, mostly from well-to-do customers, and was able to buy First Republic Bank after it failed.

In the deal, JPMorgan acquired 84 First Republic branches, bringing it \$92

billion in deposits and \$203 billion in loans and other securities. First Republic's rich clientele is currently being integrated into JPMorgan's private bank and wealth management businesses. Since the transaction closed, First Republic deposits totaled \$6 billion, suggesting "strong client retention," JPMorgan said.

Net income attributable to First Republic was \$2.4 billion in the quarter, which included a gain estimated at \$2.7 billion, JPMorgan said. The bank also set aside \$1.2 billion to cover bad loans in the First Republic portfolio.

Net interest income in the period was \$21.9 billion, up 44% over the same period last year, or 38% not including the First Republic transaction.

JPMorgan raised its outlook for net interest income for the year to \$87 billion from its previous forecast of \$81 billion as the amount of money it collected on loans rose faster than what it paid out on deposits. Beyond this year, the bank expects a decline in net interest income as competition for deposits

forces it to pay higher interest to depositors. Executives also cited "significant uncertainty" with regard to the broader economy, including interest rates, which have risen rapidly over the past year as the Federal Reserve cranked up its benchmark rate in an effort to quell four-decade high inflation.

Most economists expect the Fed to raise rates at least another quarter-point this year. The Fed's next two-day policy meeting begins July 25.

JPMorgan's community and consumer banking division also had a strong quarter with revenue of \$17.2 billion, up 37% from last year's \$12.6 billion.

Shares of JPMorgan rose about 1.8% in early trading Friday.

Separately, Citigroup said second-quarter profit fell 36% from a year ago, mostly due to a slowdown in its investment banking division. Citi earned \$1.33 per share compared with \$2.19 per share a year earlier. The result still topped Wall Street's forecast for profit of \$1.31 per share. Citi shares fell 1.5%.

Yellen visits India again to promote closer ties and tackle global economic problems

Debt restructuring in developing countries to be canvassed

GANDHINAGAR, India, July 16, (AP): On the heels of a trip to Beijing, U.S. Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen is back in India for the third time in nine months, this time to meet finance ministers from the Group of 20 nations about global economic challenges like the increased threat of debt defaults facing low-income countries.

Yellen told reporters in Gandhinagar, the capital of the western Indian state of Gujarat, on Sunday that she was trying to foster warming relations between the U.S. and India. She also plans a stop in Hanoi, Vietnam, to address supply chain reliability, clean energy transition and other matters of economic resilience.

Yellen said her goals for her time in India were to press for debt restructuring in developing countries in economic distress, push to modernize global development banks to make them more climate-focused and deepen the ever-growing U.S.-India relationship.

Yellen's frequent stops in the country signal the importance of that relationship at a time of tension with China.

India's longstanding relationship with Russia has also loomed as the Kremlin's invasion of Ukraine continues despite U.S. and allied countries' efforts to sanction and economically bludgeon Russia's economy. India has not taken part in the efforts to punish Russia and maintains energy trade with that country despite a Group of Seven agreed-upon price cap on Russian oil, which has seen some success in slowing Russia's economy.

Yellen said ending the war in Ukraine "is first and foremost a moral imperative. But it's also the single best thing we can do for the global economy."

She added the U.S. would continue to cut off Russia's access to the military equipment and technologies that it needs to wage war against Ukraine.

"One of our core goals this year is to combat Russia's efforts to evade our sanctions. Our coalition is building on the actions we've taken in recent months to crack down on these efforts," Yellen said.

The U.S. increasingly relies on India and has courted its leaders.

She said the U.S. sees India as an indispensable partner in its friend-shoring strategy for increasing the resilience of supply chains.

She added private U.S. firms see India as an excellent place for producing goods and exporting to the United States.

She also noted that slowing growth in China has impacted growth in many other countries.

"It is something I discussed with my Chinese counterparts. I think the Chinese are anxious to communicate that their business environment is open. There is a desire certainly to see foreign investment," Yellen said.

President Joe Biden hosted a White House state visit honoring Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi in June, designed to highlight and foster ties. The two leaders pronounced the U.S.-India relationship never stronger and rolled out new business deals between the nations.

Raymond Vickery Jr., a policy expert on U.S.-India relations at the Center for Strategic and International Studies, said Yellen's coming to



U.S. Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen addresses a press conference in Gandhinagar, India, Sunday, July 16, 2023. Yellen is in India to attend the third G20 Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors (FMCBGs) meeting under the Indian G20 Presidency. (AP)

Appeals court pauses order that limits Biden admin contact with social media companies

NEW ORLEANS, July 16, (AP): A federal appeals court Friday temporarily paused a lower court's order limiting executive branch officials' communications with social media companies about controversial online posts.

Biden administration lawyers had asked the 5th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in New Orleans to stay the preliminary injunction issued on July 4 by U.S. District Judge Terry Doughty. Doughty himself had rejected a request to put his order on hold pending appeal.

Friday's brief 5th Circuit order put Doughty's injunction on hold "until further orders of the court." It called for arguments in the case to be scheduled on an expedited basis.

Filed last year, the lawsuit claimed the administration, in effect, censored free speech by discussing possible regulatory action the government could take while pressuring companies to remove what it deemed misinformation. COVID-19 vaccines, legal issues involving President Joe Biden's son Hunter and election fraud allegations were among the topics spotlighted in the lawsuit.

India shortly after visiting China is meaningful in that Indian officials "are going to want to know in great detail what happened in the meetings with her Chinese counterparts and see where it fits with their perspective on economic relations with China."

"They're going to want to know whether or not the United States is serious about moving some of its sourcing activity from China to India."

A senior Treasury official, speaking on condition of anonymity to preview Yellen's trip, said there was hope that debt treatments for Ghana and Sri Lanka will be discussed and completed quickly at the meetings.

Doughty, nominated to the federal bench by former President Donald Trump, issued an Independence Day order and accompanying reasons that covered more than 160 pages. He said the plaintiffs were likely to win their ongoing lawsuit. His injunction blocked the Department of Health and Human Services, the FBI and multiple other government agencies and administration officials from "encouraging, pressuring, or inducing in any manner the removal, deletion, suppression, or reduction of content containing protected free speech."

Administration lawyers said the order was overly broad and vague, raising questions about what officials can say in conversations with social media companies or in public statements. They said Doughty's order posed a threat of "grave" public harm by chilling executive branch efforts to combat online misinformation.

Doughty rejected the administration's request for a stay on Monday, writing: "Defendants argue that the injunction should be stayed because it might interfere with the Govern-

ment's ability to continue working with social-media companies to censor Americans' core political speech on the basis of viewpoint. In other words, the Government seeks a stay of the injunction so that it can continue violating the First Amendment."

In its request that the 5th Circuit issue a stay, administration lawyers said there has been no evidence of threats by the administration. "The district court identified no evidence suggesting that a threat accompanied any request for the removal of content. Indeed, the order denying the stay - presumably highlighting the ostensibly strongest evidence - referred to 'a series of public media statements,'" the administration said.

Friday's "administrative stay" was issued without comment by a panel of three 5th Circuit judges: Carl Stewart, nominated to the court by former President Bill Clinton; James Graves, nominated by former President Barack Obama; and Andrew Oldham, nominated by Trump. A different panel drawn from the court, which has 17 active members, will hear arguments on a longer stay.

deals with other nations in debt distress.

Yellen's trip comes shortly after she spent a week in China, meeting the nation's finance ministry and discussing mutual trade restrictions and national security concerns.

Harold W. Furchtgott-Roth, a senior fellow at the Hudson Institute, said Yellen's trip to India "is a reflection of a naturally developing alliance."

"India has a great deal of tension with China - they have constant border disputes," he said. "And India wants to develop and has developed into sort of an Indian Ocean naval power, which is also a region that China wants to develop."

Bank renews campaign

KIB names winners of Al Dirwaza digital account opening draw for May and June

KUWAIT CITY July 16: Kuwait International Bank (KIB) announced the name of the winner of its Al Dirwaza digital account opening campaign for the month of May, whereby customer Faraj Mousa Faraj Behbahani won the draw. Meanwhile, for the month of June, customer Abdullah Nayef Awad Almutairi won. This draw comes after the Bank renewed the campaign designed to provide a distinctive digital banking experience and to reward customers who opened an Al Dirwaza account through digital platforms, whether KIB Online or the KIB Mobile application.

Commenting on the draw, Nawaf Al-Kharyef, Assistant General Manager of the Retail Banking Department at KIB, said: "The draws and prizes of this distinctive campaign continue to encourage customers to save while allowing them to enjoy the latest innovative digital banking solutions. Al Dirwaza account, the best of its kind in Kuwait, continues to attract customers interested in economizing, saving, and profiting, thanks to KIB's professional team and its continuous efforts, in addition to the loyalty and constant support of existing customers."

Al-Kharyef added: "The continuous development of this unique campaign reaffirms the vital role played by KIB in innovation and providing an integrated banking experience with exceptional advantages, as it focuses on customers' priorities and meets all their needs. We continue to bear witness to the constant success of the Al Dirwaza digital account opening campaign, thanks to a set of factors that include team competency, swift response for accessing digital services, the added value of prizes and rewards, and the maximum possible use of the best banking product in its category. The Al Dirwaza account provides customers with the highest expected monthly returns, in addition to draws for excellent cash prizes, while being fully compliant to the provisions of Islamic Sharia and approved by the KIB Sharia Supervisory Board."



Nawaf Al-Kharyef

It is worth noting that KIB seeks to constantly enrich its customers' banking experience, by developing advanced digital solutions to ensure greater ease and a higher level of performance and efficiency in banking operations. The Bank also aims to keep pace with the modern lifestyle of its customers, as well as rewarding all segments through innovative offers and promotional campaigns, in a way that realizes their aspirations and meets their needs.

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".

Morgan Stanley at Work announces mid-Year technology enhancements

NEW YORK, July 16, (Business Wire): Morgan Stanley at Work announced the latest batch of technology enhancements to its stock plan platform Equity Edge Online® (EEO) and Shareworks, which together serve roughly 40% of the S&P 500 in the U.S. The updates focus on improved administration, automation, and private market client liquidity solutions, all to further advance Morgan Stanley at Work's ongoing integration journey and help deliver a more unified experience for corporate clients and their workplace participants.

Additionally, Morgan Stanley at Work now offers deferred compensation technology solutions to support plan sponsors and participants, from record keeping, to digital enrollment, plan management and reporting. And lastly, for both EEO and Shareworks, Morgan Stanley Financial Advisors now have increased visibility to access stock plan details when private company participants engage an Advisor.

"Since the very beginning of Morgan Stanley at Work, our mission has been to reinvent the user experience for companies and their participants, delivering a more intuitive ecosystem that plugs our workplace offering into the full power and potential of Morgan Stanley as a whole," said Mark Mitchell, Chief Product Officer of Morgan Stanley at Work. "It's an exciting frontier, and these latest updates help us continue to drive deeper automation-knowing this helps businesses and their participants achieve even more."

Morgan Stanley at Work offers a suite of financial solutions, which spans Equity Compensation through Shareworks and E*TRADE Equity Edge Online, Retirement and Financial Wellness Solutions. Morgan

Stanley at Work combines cutting-edge planning and Morgan Stanley intellectual capital and financial education delivered through multiple channels to enable employees to build a holistic plan to achieve their financial goals. Securities products and services are offered by E*TRADE Securities LLC, Member SIPC. In connection with stock plan solutions offered by Morgan Stanley at Work, E*TRADE Securities LLC and Morgan Stanley Smith Barney LLC provide brokerage services to stock plan participants. E*TRADE Financial Corporate Services, Inc. and E*TRADE Securities LLC are separate but affiliated subsidiaries of Morgan Stanley.

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Morgan Stanley Wealth Management is the trade name of Morgan Stanley Smith Barney LLC, a registered broker-dealer in the United States.

‘AI systems could one day turn against humanity’

FTC probes ChatGPT creator OpenAI over consumer protection issues

WASHINGTON, July 16: The US Federal Trade Commission has launched an investigation into ChatGPT creator OpenAI and whether the artificial intelligence company violated consumer protection laws by scraping public data and publishing false information through its chatbot.

The agency sent OpenAI a 20-page letter requesting detailed information on its AI technology, products, customers, privacy safeguards and data security arrangements.

An FTC spokesperson had no comment on the investigation, which was first reported by The Washington Post on.

The FTC document the Post published told OpenAI that the agency was investigating whether it has “engaged in unfair or deceptive privacy or data security practices” or practices harming consumers.

OpenAI founder Sam Altman tweeted disappointment that the investigation was disclosed in a “leak,” noting that would “not help build trust,” but added that the company will work with the FTC.

Confident

“It’s super important to us that our technology is safe and pro-consumer, and we are confident we follow the law,” he wrote. “We protect user privacy and design our systems to learn about the world, not private individuals.”

OpenAI has faced scrutiny elsewhere. Italian regulators temporarily blocked ChatGPT over privacy concerns, and privacy watchdogs in France, Spain, Ireland and Canada also are paying closer attention, including

OpenAI signs deal with AP to license news stories

‘Industry is far weaker today’

WASHINGTON, July 16: ChatGPT-maker OpenAI and The Associated Press have said that they’ve made a deal for the artificial intelligence company to license AP’s archive of news stories. “The arrangement sees OpenAI licensing part of AP’s text archive, while AP will leverage OpenAI’s technology and product expertise,” the two organizations said in a joint statement.

Financial terms of the deal were not disclosed.

OpenAI and other technology companies must ingest large troves of written works, such as books, news articles and social media chatter, to improve their AI systems known as large language models. Last year’s release of ChatGPT has sparked a boom in “generative AI” products that can create new passages of text, images and other media.

The tools have raised concerns about their propensity to spout falsehoods that are hard to notice because of the system’s strong command of the grammar of human languages. They

some that have launched investigations after receiving complaints.

The FTC’s move is a serious regulatory threat to the nascent but fast-growing AI industry, although it’s not the only challenge facing these companies.

Comedian Sarah Silverman and two

also have raised questions about to what extent news organizations and others whose writing, artwork, music or other work was used to “train” the AI models should be compensated.

Security

The US Federal Trade Commission told OpenAI it had opened an investigation into whether the company had engaged in unfair or deceptive privacy or data security practices in scraping public data - or caused harm by publishing false information through its chatbot products. The FTC did not immediately reply to a request for comment on the investigation, which The Washington Post was first to report.

Along with news organizations, book authors have sought compensation for their works being used to train AI systems. More than 4,000 writers - among them Nora Roberts, Margaret Atwood, Louise Erdrich and Jodi Picoult - signed a letter late last month to the CEOs of OpenAI, Google, Mi-

crosoft, Meta and other AI developers accusing them of exploitative practices in building chatbots that “mimic and regurgitate” their language, style and ideas. Some novelists and the comedian Sarah Silverman have also sued OpenAI for copyright infringement.

“We are pleased that OpenAI recognizes that fact-based, nonpartisan news content is essential to this evolving technology, and that they respect the value of our intellectual property,” said a written statement from Kristin Heitmann, AP senior vice president and chief revenue officer. “AP firmly supports a framework that will ensure intellectual property is protected and content creators are fairly compensated for their work.”

The two companies said they are also examining “potential use cases for generative AI in news products and services,” though didn’t give specifics. OpenAI and AP both “believe in the responsible creation and use of these AI systems,” the statement said.

OpenAI will have access to AP

news stories going back to 1985.

The AP deal is valuable to a company like OpenAI because it provides a trove of material that it can use for training purposes, and is also a hedge against losing access to material because of lawsuits that have threatened its access to material, said Nick Diakopoulos, a professor of communications studies and computer science at Northwestern University.

“In order to guard against how the courts may decide, maybe you want to go out and sign licensing deals so you’re guaranteed legal access to the material you’ll need,” Diakopoulos said.

The AP doesn’t currently use any generative AI in its news stories, but has used other forms of AI for nearly a decade, including to automate corporate earnings reports and recap some sporting events. It also runs a program that helps local news organizations incorporate AI into their operations, and recently launched an AI-powered image archive search. (AP)

emphasize difficult-to-evaluate existential threats such as the possibility that superintelligent AI systems could one day turn against humanity.

Some argue that focusing on a far-off “science fiction trope” of superpowerful AI could make it harder to take action against already existing harms that require regulators to dig deep on data transparency, discriminatory behavior and potential for trickery and disinformation.

Distraction

“It’s the fear of these systems and our lack of understanding of them that is making everyone have a collective freak-out,” Suresh Venkatasubramanian, a Brown University computer scientist and former assistant director for science and justice at the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy, told the AP in May. “This fear, which is very unfounded, is a distraction from all the concerns we’re dealing with right now.”

News of the FTC’s OpenAI investigation broke just hours after a combative House Judiciary Committee hearing in which FTC Chair Lina Khan faced off against Republican lawmakers, who said she has been too aggressive in pursuing technology companies over allegations of wrongdoing.

Republicans said she has been harassing Twitter since its acquisition by Elon Musk, arbitrarily suing large tech companies and declining to recuse herself from certain cases. Khan pushed back, arguing that more regulation is necessary as the companies have grown and that tech conglomeration could hurt the economy and consumers. (AP)

Digital platforms open 24/7

ABK announces closure days on occasion of Hijri New Year

KUWAIT CITY, July 16: Al Ahli Bank of Kuwait (ABK) extends its greetings to His Highness the Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, His Highness the Crown Prince, Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, as well as the government, people, and residents of Kuwait on the occasion of the Hijri New Year, hoping it bestows an abundance of blessings.

ABK discloses that its branches will be closed on Wednesday, 19 July, 2023 and Thursday, 20 July, 2023 to resume operations on Sunday, 23 July, 2023. During this time, ABK’s newly launched digital branch in Al Khiran will be functional to service customers from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m.

The Bank has also confirmed its full operational readiness to serve customers 24/7 via its various digital platforms throughout the Hijri New Year holiday. This includes Online Banking via eahli.

com, Mobile Banking through the ABK app, as well as the Bank’s call center Ahlan Ahli 1 899 899.

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

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



Group photo of the graduates.

‘Most promising talents’

Burgan Bank celebrates outstanding employees’ ‘graduation’ from KGDP



A group photo of KFH and Kuwait University officials.

Bank keen to help youth achieve their goals

KFH participates in ‘Future Makers Expo’

KUWAIT CITY, July 16: Kuwait Finance House (KFH) participated in the Future Makers Exhibition organized by Kuwait University in Sabah Al-Salem University City, for graduates from inside and outside Kuwait.

KFH’s participation in the exhibition, which was inaugurated by the Acting Kuwait University President, Prof. Fahad Al-Rashidi, comes as a reinforcement of its CSR strategy aimed at supporting youth and students.

KFH is always keen on participating in exhibitions that support young people and contribute to achieving their

goals, finding ways to open horizons towards more success, creativity and scientific development, and motivating young people to move forward and plan for the future successfully.

At the exhibition, KFH’s booth witnessed a team of cheerful employees eager to answer questions and accept job applications. KFH recognizes the importance of attracting exceptional talent to the labor market, which is why they have successfully enticed hundreds of young Kuwaitis from various institutes and universities in recent years.

KFH gives Kuwaitis the opportunity to occupy leadership positions and build distinguished capabilities and expertise in various sectors. Working in KFH covers multiple economic fields. This represents a professional value for young employees and contributes to the development of leadership capabilities.

KFH’s participation at the exhibition comes within the framework of its interest in the human element with focus on the youth, as it also participates in career fairs organized by universities, both public and private.

KUWAIT CITY, July 16: Burgan Bank recently celebrated three of its most promising talents for completing the 10th round of the Kuwait Graduate Development Program (KGDP), which falls under the umbrella of the Central Bank of Kuwait’s (CBK) “Kafa’a” initiative in cooperation with the Institute of Banking Studies (IBS) and Kuwaiti banks. As part of Burgan’s commitment to the advancement of its staff, the Bank continues to support its high-performing talents by nominating and enrolling them in market-leading programs, such as KGDP, for enriched learning opportunities.

In support of its outstanding program graduates, Burgan’s HR management attended the graduation ceremony, which took place at Millennium Central Kuwait Downtown.

Success

Commenting on the success of Burgan’s employees, Mrs. Fatma Ahmad, Learning Manager at Burgan Bank, said: “We are very proud of our Burgan participants for their successful completion of the KGDP program. Throughout the year, they have demonstrated exceptional dedication and determination by seizing every opportunity for personal and professional growth and development.”

The challenging academic content of the KGDP year-long program covered a wide range of subjects, including finance, risk management, customer relations, and leadership development. Furthermore, the program offered both international and local field experiences, allowing the participants to gain invaluable insights into global banking practices while also understanding the nuances of the domestic market.

On her part, Mrs. Zahra Boarki, Manager of Skills Development at Burgan Bank, noted that the development of Burgan’s talents, especially the most promising and high-performing employees, is key to the organization’s overall success and ability to maintain its leading position among Kuwait’s banking and financial institutions.

From food waste to compost

Pakistani Embassy contributes to a ‘sustainable environment’

KUWAIT CITY, July 16: The Embassy of Pakistan in Kuwait in collaboration with Shamia Nature Reserve took an initiative aimed at contributing to a sustainable environment and supporting Kuwait’s vision for 2035. This joint effort focused on transforming the leftover waste from the Pakistan Mango Festival into valuable compost, highlighting Pakistan’s commitment to environmental stewardship.

The Pakistan Mango Festival, held recently at Souk Al-Mubarakya and Al-Zahraa Co-operative Society, celebrated the rich exquisite taste of Pakistan’s renowned mangoes.

Recognizing the importance of minimizing food waste and promoting sustainable practices, the Embassy with support of Ms. Adiba Al-Fahad, founder of Shamia Nature Reserve as well as Pakistan’s Women Forum, undertook the initiative of repurposing the festival’s leftovers, by utilising the remnants of the Pakistan Mango Festival, including peels, seeds, and other organic waste for making compost.

This compost production process is aligned with Kuwait’s ambitious vision for 2035, which emphasizes sustainable development and environmental preser-

vation. The resulting compost serves as a valuable resource for enhancing soil fertility, reducing the need for chemical fertilizers, and improving agricultural practices. This joint effort not only prevented wastage but also contributed to the economy by creating a sustainable solution that benefits both the environment and local communities.

Ambassador Malik Muhammad Farooq expressed his gratitude towards Shamia Nature Reserve for their collaboration and underscored the significance of this partnership. He conveyed his gratitude to be part of this remarkable initiative, aligning Pakistan’s commitment to environmental sustainability with Kuwait’s vision for a prosperous future. He shared that by repurposing the leftovers of the Pakistan Mango Festival into compost, the embassy and the Pakistani community are actively contributing to a greener and more sustainable Kuwait.

This joint effort undertaken by the Embassy of Pakistan and Shamia Nature Reserve is a testament to the shared commitment of Pakistan and Kuwait in addressing climate change, fostering sustainable development, and building a greener future.



A photo from the event.



A photo from the event.

Attracting young national cadres

Training courses organized for Kuwait Insurance employees

KUWAIT CITY, July 16: Kuwait Insurance Company organized quality training courses and workshops through KIC Academy, on planning and leading business meetings, professional development, positive leadership, stress management, and team-building. The training was provided within the framework of programs to enhance the efficiency and capabilities of manpower and development of employee skills, along other training courses held by the company throughout the year, with the aim of developing professional capabilities in line with the company’s vi-

in recruitment fairs that aim to introduce young talent to the company’s future strategy, and attract distinguished students.

In a statement, the company affirmed that employee training courses reflect the constant pursuit and great interest that the company attaches to KIC employees, and indicated that as the main pillar of the company’s human resource strategy, participation in such initiatives contributes to adding professional value as well as enhancing the company’s operational performance.

in recruitment fairs that aim to introduce young talent to the company’s future strategy, and attract distinguished students.

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The Conversation

Narcissistic abuse can be insidious and hard to recognize

Little bit of narcissism healthy – how to tell when it's pathological

By April Nisan Ilkmen
Adler University

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

During former president Donald Trump's campaign and presidency, the word narcissism became something of a buzzword. And in recent years the word has been popularized on social media and in the press. As a result, social media and other online platforms are now rife with insights, tips, stories and theories from life coaches, therapists, psychologists and self-proclaimed narcissists about navigating relationships with narcissists or managing one's own symptoms.

The term "narcissism" is commonly used to describe anyone who is egotistical and self-absorbed. Someone who exhibits narcissistic traits may have a personality disorder known as narcissistic personality disorder.

Over the past decade, the rapid development of social networking sites has caused profound changes in the way people communicate and interact. Social media websites such as Facebook, TikTok and Instagram can feel like a narcissistic field day. In seconds, one can share self-enhancing content – flattering pictures, boastful statuses and enviable vacations – with a vast audience and receive immediate feedback in the form of "likes" and reinforcing comments from followers.

As a licensed couple and family therapist who specializes in relationship issues related to attachment, I have worked with many couples with one partner who is on the narcissistic personality disorder spectrum. One reason the narcissistic partner is challenging to treat is that they're adept at persuading their partner that they are the dysfunctional one.

Defining narcissism

Dr. Otto Kernberg, a psychiatrist who specializes in personality disorders, differentiates between normal and pathological narcissism using a framework that assesses a person's capacity to participate in satisfactory romantic relationships.

Normal narcissism refers to a well-integrated sense of self that is generally for the greater good, such as a healthy sense of pride in oneself and one's accomplishments. Pathological narcissism describes extreme fluctuations between feelings of inferiority and failure with a sense of superiority and grandiosity.

Each person has a bit of normal narcissism within them. This can take the form of having self-confidence and even a modicum of entitlement while still displaying empathy and emotion. Research shows the role of healthy narcissism occurs at subclinical levels in everyday populations and can help motivate people to enhance themselves and to progress in life.

But when striving for achievement or gain involves an excessive desire for attention and approval and an outside, grandiose sense of self, it is no longer in the realm of healthy narcissism.

A pathological narcissist sees everyone else as an extension of self. Those in a narcissist's life, especially in their inner circle, must always demonstrate perfection because they contribute to the narcissist's own self-image. Like many personality disorders, narcissism manifests itself in intimate relationships through the cycle of idealization and devaluation, creating the concept of the so-called toxic relationship.

Finding a victim

A narcissist chooses their partners based on whether the partner affirms their grandiose sense of self. And since having that affirmation is the key driver for a narcissist's relationship, they are generally not interested in learning a lot about the other person.

The things that attract narcissists are not the personal characteristics of the other person or even the connection that comes from the relationship. If the person has a reputable status in their eyes and they find the person appealing, they are usually willing to move forward quickly in the relationship. Unfortunately, as a narcissist's genuine interest in the other person is typically superficial, the narcissist often loses interest in the relationship just as suddenly as they began it.

Narcissistic abuse is a form of extreme psychological and emotional abuse marked by

manipulative communication and intentional deception for exploitation by a person who meets the criteria for pathological narcissism.

Forms of narcissism

Narcissistic abuse can be insidious and hard to recognize. Since the signs of narcissistic abuse aren't always obvious, it's important to name and recognize them.

■ **Gaslighting:** The narcissist uses a manipulation strategy known as gaslighting to make the victim doubt his or her own ability to make a decision or take an action. People use this technique to maintain control over the other person's sense of reality. When gaslighting occurs, victims are left feeling doubtful and insecure and some even have difficulty recognizing that they are being gaslighted. In some relationships, a co-dependency develops between the narcissist and the victim in which the victim accepts the narcissist's position of authority.

■ **Victim mentality:** This mindset, which is common for those with narcissistic personality disorder, implies that everybody owes the narcissist something. In my clinical experience, I have often witnessed the narcissist creating a false narrative about how they did not get what they were supposed to get in life because they were wronged by others. This story allows them to feel entitled to have anger and resentment toward anyone, especially toward people they perceive as successful.

■ **Cycle of idealization and devaluation:** Narcissists form polarized beliefs about themselves and others, meaning that their opinions of themselves and others can be exceptionally positive or unrealistically negative.

During the idealization stage, the narcissist creates a sense of unbreakable connection with the victim. No matter what type of relationship it is – whether romantic, professional or familial – it moves fast and has an intense quality to it.

At some point, the narcissist's partner will disappoint them in some way, usually not on purpose. As a response, the narcissist will criticize every move, jump to conclusions and react dramatically to these perceived disappointments. The narcissist will begin to see their partner as flawed and accuse them of not being the perfect partner they were supposed to be. This phase is characterized by verbal and physical abuse, humiliation, bullying and smearing.

Feelings of emptiness: According to Kernberg, the psychiatrist mentioned above, the inability of narcissists to develop fulfilling and lasting relationships results in a chronically empty internal world.

Narcissistic personality disorder patients will often find themselves "waking up" at age 40, 50 or 60 with a desperate sense of loss. The narcissist often struggles with feelings of emptiness that stem from relying on a false grandiose sense of self that prevents them from being vulnerable.

In turn, they project their feelings of emptiness onto the partner in a relationship. Many of these patients suffer from a loss of identity and sense of helplessness and feel alienated from the world.

Navigating relationships

Since the narcissist often develops controlling and manipulative relationships with the partner's friends and family, the victim may feel reluctant to rely on their intimate circle for support. Finding a therapist who specializes in narcissistic abuse recovery is the first step to start the healing process.

I have had a lot of patients tell me that their therapists aren't familiar with the term "pathological narcissism." If they're not, I suggest that, if possible, these patients find therapists who specialize in emotionally focused therapy or transference focused therapy. These therapies help identify destructive patterns of communication as they arise during a therapy session, rather than focusing only on interactions that arise outside of therapy.

From my perspective, relationships with a narcissistic partner are some of the hardest to treat. The narcissistic partners are often unwilling to participate in therapy because they will not admit that they need help and find it challenging to collaborate with the therapist. Effective couples therapy is rare but not impossible and can occur only when the narcissistic partner acknowledges that their expectations are unreasonable and destructive. (AP)

HMTM shows significant 'reduction' in neurodegeneration in Alzheimer's

'Oral drug with strong safety profile'

Diagnosis takes an average of 8.4 years after symptom onset

FDA approves Takhzyro to prevent HAE attacks in kids 2 years of age and older

ABERDEEN, Scotland, July 16: TauRx Pharmaceuticals Ltd, a global leader in Tau-based research in Alzheimer's disease (AD), has announced results from a prespecified analysis of the Phase 3 Lucidity trial that measured the impact of HMTM on neurofilament light chain (NFL), an established biomarker for brain neurodegeneration. Blood concentration of NFL showed a statistically significant 93% reduction in change over 12 months in participants receiving HMTM at a dose of 16 mg/day relative to the control group, which correlated significantly with a tau biomarker (p-tau 181) in blood.

Neurofilaments and tau proteins are essential for neuronal structure and function in the brain. In AD, tau protein aggregates to form toxic fibrils, which damage neurons. The extent of this damage can be measured by the amount of leakage of neurofilament protein into the bloodstream. NFL concentration in blood is known to correlate with tau pathology, disease severity, and therefore cognitive decline and brain atrophy in AD. HMTM, a tau aggregation inhibitor, was designed to reduce tau pathology in AD. Changes in NFL concentration by HMTM indicate a direct impact on disease pathology.

Approval

"NFL is a well-studied biomarker with wide applicability to different neurological disorders, including AD," said Henrik Zetterberg, Professor of Neurochemistry, UCL Queen Square Institute of Neurology. "Clinical practice has been waiting decades to uncover meaningful advancements to address unmet needs of people with AD. These new results further support the importance of NFL as an AD biomarker both for diagnosis and measurement of treatment effect."

"The NFL results demonstrate that a drug targeting tau pathology reduces the neurodegeneration that underlies clinical decline in AD," said Claude Wischik, Executive Chairman, TauRx. "They bring us a step closer to offering an effective new treatment option for people with AD. Because it is taken as a tablet and has a strong safety profile, HMTM would be readily accessible to people needing a disease-modifying treatment."

TauRx will submit the HMTM results from Lucidity and earlier trials for regulatory approval in the US, UK and other territories.

Lucidity comprised a 12-month double-blind controlled Phase 3 clinical trial followed by a 12-month period in which all participants received HMTM at 16 mg/day. The trial investigated change in various clinical and biomarker outcomes comparing HMTM 16 mg/day with methylthionium chloride (MTC) given 4 mg twice weekly as a control over the first 12 months. NFL was the principal blood biomarker endpoint in this study. The Lucidity trial is now complete and TauRx is preparing publications to report both the NFL

and pharmacodynamic data from the SPRING Study, an open-label Phase 3 trial in 21 HAE patients 2 to 12 years of age. The primary objectives of the Spring Study were the safety and pharmacokinetics of Takhzyro. The most common treatment-related treatment emergent adverse events in the study were injection site pain (29%), injection site erythema (14%), injection site swelling (5%), administration site pain (5%) and injection site reaction (5%). The prevention of HAE attacks was measured as a secondary objective. Takhzyro reduced the rate of HAE attacks in pediatric patients by a mean of 94.8% compared to baseline, from 1.84 attacks per month to 0.08 attacks during the 52-week treatment period (N=21). The majority of patients (76.2%, n=16) were attack-free with an average of 99.5% attack-free days.

Designed

These efficacy results are from an open-label, non-controlled trial, and the study was not designed for statistical hypothesis testing. Further confirmatory studies are required to draw any conclusions from these data.

"Today's approval of the expanded indication of Takhzyro represents a significant step forward for the HAE community as it helps some of its youngest patients who are living with the disease to have a long-term prophylaxis treatment available to them," said Julie Kim, president, US Business Unit and US country head at Takeda. "Takeda is a committed leader in the rare disease space, and today's approval underscores our confidence in Takhzyro, as well as our dedication to addressing the needs of HAE patients through continued research, clinical programs and real-world data collection."

Takhzyro was originally approved in the US in 2018 for prophylaxis to prevent attacks of HAE in adult and pediatric patients 12 years and older. It is currently

available in more than 60 countries around the world and is supported by a robust clinical development program, which includes one of the largest prevention studies in HAE with the longest active treatment duration.

Takhzyro is a fully human monoclonal antibody that specifically binds and decreases plasma kallikrein activity and is indicated for prophylaxis to prevent attacks of HAE in patients 2 years of age and older. Takhzyro is intended for self-administration for patients 12 years of age and older, or administration by a caregiver with subcutaneous injection of solution in a single-dose prefilled syringe or in a single-dose vial. The patient or caregiver should be trained by a healthcare professional. For pediatric patients 2 to 12 years of age, Takhzyro should be administered by a healthcare provider or caregiver with a subcutaneous injection of solution in a single-dose prefilled syringe. It is not known if Takhzyro is safe and effective in children under 2 years of age.

Takhzyro may cause serious side effects, including allergic reactions. Call your healthcare provider or get emergency help right away if you have any of the following symptoms:

- wheezing
- difficulty breathing
- chest tightness
- fast heartbeat
- faintness
- rash
- hives

The most common side effects seen with Takhzyro were injection site reactions (pain, redness, and bruising), upper respiratory infection, headache, rash, dizziness, diarrhea, and muscle aches.

These are not all the possible side effects of Takhzyro.

Takhzyro has not been studied in pregnant or breastfeeding women. Talk to your healthcare provider about the risk of taking Takhzyro if you are pregnant, plan to be pregnant, are breastfeeding, or plan to breastfeed.

data and the full 24-month data. Age-related factors lead to misfolding and aggregation of tau proteins, and the subsequent formation of tau tangles in AD. Tau aggregation begins many years before symptoms of dementia appear. Tau aggregation pathology correlates with the clinical decline (loss of memory and ability to care for oneself) commonly seen in people with AD, establishing it as an important target for treatment. HMTM works

by inhibiting pathological aggregation of tau protein.

TauRx was founded in 2002 in Singapore, with primary research facilities and operation based in Aberdeen, UK. The company has dedicated the past two decades to developing treatments and diagnostics for Alzheimer's and other neurodegenerative diseases due to protein aggregation pathology. Alzheimer's disease is a lead-

ing cause of disability and death throughout the world and is one of the most important public health issues that need to be addressed globally. TauRx will contribute to addressing this unmet need with data from Lucidity and pursuit of regulatory approvals in line with its overall plans to make HMTM available to patients and pursue clinical development in other related neurodegenerative diseases.

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Film

In '20 Days in Mariupol' docu, horrors of war are illuminated

NEW YORK, July 16, (AP) — Associated Press video journalist Mstyslav Chernov had just broken out of Mariupol after covering the first 20 days of the Russian invasion of the Ukrainian city and was feeling guilty about leaving. He and his colleagues, photographer Evgeniy Maloletka and producer Vasilisa Stepanenko, had been the last journalists there, sending crucial dispatches from a city under a full-scale assault.

The day after, a theater with hundreds of people sheltering inside was bombed and he knew no one was there to document it. That's when Chernov decided he wanted to do something bigger. He'd filmed some 30 hours of footage over his days in Mariupol. But poor - and sometimes no - internet connections made it extremely difficult to export anything. All told, he estimates only about 40 minutes of that successfully made it out to the world.

"Those shots which went out were very important. They went on the AP and then to thousands of news outlets," Chernov said earlier this year. "However, I had much more. ... I thought I should do something more. I should do something more with that 30 hours of footage to tell a bigger story and more context to show the audience of the scale."

The bigger story became a documentary, "20 Days in Mariupol," a joint project between The Associated Press and PBS "Frontline," which premiered earlier this year at Sundance Film Festival in Park City, Utah, where it won the audience award for world cinema documentary. Their reporting was also awarded two Pulitzer Prizes, including the prestigious public service award and for breaking news photography. And now the film is coming to a handful of theaters around the US in July, starting with New York and Chicago.

Chernov knew there were many ways to tell this story. But he decided early on to keep it contained to those harrowing first 20 days that

he and his colleagues were on the ground, to evoke the claustrophobic feeling of being trapped. He also chose to narrate it himself and tell it as a journalist would.

"It's just a lens through which we see the stories of Mariupol's residents, the death, their suffering the destruction of their homes," he said. "At the same time, I felt that I can do it. I'm allowed to do it because I'm part of the community. I was born in eastern Ukraine and (a) photographer who worked with me was born in the city which is right next to Mariupol, which got occupied. So this is our story too."

Neutrality

As an AP employee, Chernov was extremely aware of maintaining neutrality and being unbiased.

"It's OK to tell the audiences about your emotions," he said. "It's just important to not let those emotions dictate what you show and don't show. ... While narrated by me, I still tried to keep it fair."

He encounters quite a few different reactions to him and his colleagues being on the ground. Some thanked them for doing their jobs. Some called them prostitutes. Some doctors urged them to film graphic scenes of injured and dead children to show the world what had been done.

After Chernov left Mariupol and was finally able to catch up with the news reports around the world, he was stunned by the effect their footage had. They followed up with people they'd met during their time there, some who got out, others who didn't, and asked whether or not they'd affected their lives.

Some said relatives had found them because of the footage, or that they'd been able to get help. Doctors and officials said it made it easier

to negotiate the green corridor to safety.

"I don't know how much of that is our footage, how much of that is just what happens," Chernov said. "But I really would like to believe that we did make a difference, because I guess that's what journalism is about, to inform people so they make certain decisions."

Another mission for him was to provide historical evidence for potential war crimes. Chernov is keenly aware that the war is not even history yet. It is a painful reality that is ongoing.

At Sundance he was able to watch the film, edited by Michelle Mizner of "Frontline," with an audience two times. The film got a standing ovation at the premiere. And at a subsequent screening he met several audience members who said they were from Mariupol and that their relatives were escaping the besieged city at the same time he was. The theaters had counselors on standby in case anyone needed support.

"I hoped they will have emotional responses and they did. But at the same time to watch people crying, it's hard," he said. "When you place an audience for 90 minutes into this chaos and this mess and this violence, there is a risk of people getting too overwhelmed or even pushed back by the amount of this violence."

"You just really want to show how it really was," he added. "That was the main challenge of making choices while assembling the film. How do you show the gravity but at the same time not push the audience away? ... We had already two screenings and audience responses are very strong. People are crying, people are depressed and they express a wide range of feelings, from anger, to sadness, to grief. That is what I as a filmmaker intended to do. But at the same time, I realize that probably that's not easy for everyone."

Variety



This image released by Warner Bros. Pictures shows, (from left), Margot Robbie, Alexandra Shipp, Michael Cera, Ariana Greenblatt and America Ferrera in a scene from 'Barbie.' (AP)

Film

Summer's most online movie showdown

The story behind 'Barbenheimer'

LOS ANGELES, July 16, (AP) — The very online showdown between Greta Gerwig's "Barbie" and Christopher Nolan's "Oppenheimer" all started with a date: July 21.

It's not uncommon for studios to counterprogram films in different genres on a big weekend, but the stark differences between an intense, serious-minded picture about the man who oversaw the development of the atomic bomb and a lighthearted, candy-colored anthropomorphizing of a childhood doll quickly became the stuff of viral fodder.

There's even some disagreement over whether it's "Barbieheimer" or "Barbenheimer" or "Boppenheimer" or yet another tortured portmanteau - a phenomenon on which the AP Stylebook has yet to offer guidance, but for the purposes of this article will be "Barbenheimer."

It didn't hurt that both Nolan and Gerwig have very passionate and very online fandoms eager to join in. Never mind that many of those fans overlap - the memes, allegiances, and T-shirts were just too fun.

Both movies often trend on social media when the other releases a new asset - a trailer, a picture, an interview. On one level, it's a marketing department's dream. Awareness could not be higher, the conversation couldn't be louder, and neither film even has official reviews out yet.

"Barbenheimer" is a marketing gift borne out of social media and I think it's benefiting both films," said Paul Dergarabedian, the senior media analyst for analytics firm Comscore. "You're certainly aware of both movies in a more profound and compelling way than I think might have otherwise happened had they been released on different weekends."

AMC Theaters reported that 20,000 of its AMC Stubs members had purchased tickets for a double feature. If you're counting, that's 294 minutes of moviewatching. Even Margot Robbie - Barbie herself - and Tom Cruise, the star of another summer blockbuster, have started plotting the ideal "Barbenheimer" day.

"It's a perfect double bill," said Robbie at her movie's London premiere Wednesday. "I think actually start your day with 'Barbie,' then go straight into 'Oppenheimer' and then a 'Barbie' chaser."

Cruise - whose "Mission: Impossible - Dead Reckoning Part One" opened a little over a week before the "Barbenheimer" showdown - said at his premiere he'd

plan to see both on their opening day, likely starting with "Oppenheimer," which seems to be the internet's preferred viewing order as well.

"Barbie" actor Issa Rae thinks there's a reason for that.

"I think that there's a very specific order that if you see them in. If you see 'Oppenheimer' last then you might be a bit of a psychopath," she diagnosed at the London premiere.

The showdown has made armchair marketing experts out of everyone, quick to scrutinize every move by Warner Bros. and Universal - as though it's possible to compare two extraordinarily different campaigns.

One has infinite opportunities for very pink, sparkly photo opportunities, whimsical brand partnerships for seemingly everything from underwear to pool floats, large-scale fan events with autograph signings and pop stars like Billie Eilish posting about the soundtrack. In other words, the "Barbie" campaign can go nuclear.

"Oppenheimer" has the bomb, the alluring mystery and the big screen hook, but it's not the kind of movie that lends itself to, say, a frozen yogurt collaboration.

Competition

Is the competition real, though, or just a meme? Some in Hollywood wondered if Warner Bros. plopped "Barbie" on the weekend as a slight to Nolan, who had opened many films for the studio in that corridor including "Inception" and "Dunkirk." He left Warner Bros. amid its controversial decision to send a year's worth of movies to streaming and made "Oppenheimer" with Universal instead. But a pointed box office war doesn't exactly make sense for a studio that has talked recently about wanting to lure Nolan back.

There is an unspoken code of conduct: Never badmouth another studio's film, publicly at least. This is partly decorum, especially when it comes to "box office showdowns" which all will say are a creation of the press and sideline spectators. But it's also rooted in some truth: The conventional thinking is that having eyes on one movie is good for other movies - you see their posters and trailers and on some level everyone benefits.

And social media has allowed movie stars to get in on the game, too. Following reports that Cruise was irked the latest "Mission: Impossible" was going to

lose its IMAX screens to "Oppenheimer" after only a week, Cruise posted photos of himself and director Christopher McQuarrie standing in front of posters for "Indiana Jones and the Dial of Destiny," "Barbie" and "Oppenheimer," holding tickets for each.

"This summer is full of amazing movies to see in theaters. These are just a few that we can't wait to see on the big screen," Cruise's Instagram caption read.

The official accounts for "Indiana Jones," "Barbie" and "Oppenheimer" responded with supportive notes. Gerwig and Robbie even followed with a similar photo series a few days later, which the official "Oppenheimer" Instagram account reposted in its stories. Charged with playing Oppenheimer, Cillian Murphy told the AP at his movie's London premiere that "of course" he'd be seeing "Barbie." The sporting cross-promotion between four studios - Universal, Warner Bros., Disney and Paramount - is something the film business has not quite seen before.

"Not only is Tom Cruise the biggest box office star in the world, but he's also an incredible ambassador for the movie theater, for the movie theater experience and boosting other movies," Dergarabedian said. "And that collegial atmosphere within the framework of what is seen as the very competitive box office derby is kind of a nice thing."

Still, everyone likes a No. 1 debut, and both "Barbie" and "Oppenheimer" reportedly carry \$100 million production price tags (not including the millions spent on marketing). As far as box office tracking goes, "Barbie" has it in the bag with forecasts showing that it could open above \$90 million in North America. "Oppenheimer" meanwhile is tracking in the \$40 million range. Then there's the wild card of "Mission: Impossible 7's" second weekend, which could snag second place.

Still even with a second- or third-place start, "Oppenheimer" could be destined for a long, steady, profitable run into awards season. Adult audiences for R-rated movies are not often the ones who pack theaters the first weekend.

Back in 2008, in the midst of the recession, Warner Bros. and Universal faced off on the same July weekend with another Nolan film that went up against a lighthearted confection: "The Dark Knight" and "Mamma Mia!" - both of which went on to be enormously profitable (though Nolan did win the first weekend).

ATLANTA: The ex-wife of R&B singer Usher is calling to drain Georgia's largest lake, where her son was fatally injured 11 years ago.

Fashion designer Tameka Foster has collected more than 2,500 signatures for her online petition imploring officials to "drain, clean, and restore" Lake Sidney Lanier, to allow for safety improvements

and the removal of hazardous debris and other obstructions.

Kile Glover, her 11-year-old son with Bounce TV founder Ryan Glover, died in July 2012 after a personal watercraft struck the boy as he floated in an inner tube on the lake.

"Draining, cleaning, and restoring Lake Lanier is not only



Usher

Foster

necessary but also an opportunity to honor the memory of those who have lost their lives and prevent further tragedies," Foster wrote in her change.org petition, which she has also promoted on her Instagram page.

Located roughly an hour's drive northeast of Atlanta, Lake Lanier covers nearly 60 square miles (155

square kilometers) and has waters up to 160 feet (49 meters) deep. It's far from just a getaway for millions of boaters, anglers and other yearly visitors.

The lake provides drinking water for about 5 million people, according to the Chattahoochee Riverkeeper conservation group. And Buford Dam at the lake's

southern end generates hydroelectric power for the metro Atlanta area.

The Army Corps of Engineers constructed Lake Lanier in the 1950s. The Corps' district office in Mobile, Alabama, which still operates the lake, did not immediately return phone and email messages seeking comment. (AP)

People & Places

Music

Semi-autobiography

After 50 yrs in films, Potter debuts album

LOS ANGELES, July 16, (AP) — Award-winning director **Sally Potter** has challenged British society throughout her 50-year career, in films like "Orlando," "The Party," and "Ginger and Rosa." Now, at 73, Potter's creative resolve forges on with her first studio album, "Pink Bikini."

The LP, self-released Friday, is a semi-autobiographical collection of alternative tracks that detail Potter's adolescence in 1960s London.

Across 12 songs, the filmmaker revisits tumultuous relationships and oppressive social strictures.

"There's something very life-affirming about working in another medium, learning a new skill or making a change at what was considered to be a point in one's life where you're supposed to know exactly who you are and what you're going to do," Potter told The Associated Press.



Potter

Potter found lyrical inspiration in notebooks she filled with poems over her lifetime. Coincidentally, the songs on "Pink Bikini" deal with a variety of different subjects, including frustration with beauty standards ("Ginger Curls"), a "ban the bomb" march ("Black and White Badge"), and female

authorship ("Ghosts"), delivered atop minor keys and alluring instrumentals.

"Some people say I have a rhyming gene," Potter says.

The AP spoke to Potter about making the move from movies to music. Answers are edited for clarity and brevity.

AP: Your background is interdisciplinary; you've co-composed or curated music in your films. But when did this album begin for you?

Potter: It's quite a mystery to me, actually. Why now? Why this? I think I felt a very strong desire to work with the apparent simplicity of the song form. After making big films that always involve vast numbers of people and a lot of money ... the appeal of the short form is so enduring and so emotionally rich and so direct and so intimate.

AP: What was it like revisiting your adolescence on this album, at this stage in your life?

Potter: I'm not sure she's ever left me, actually. I'm not sure that any of our young selves ever leave us. But revisiting those memories is such a strange thing, and that's one of the things that the songs (are) about: Am I remembering this? Or am I remembering a photograph of this? And then in the act of telling the story, because each of the songs is a small story, one begins to kind of rewrite history.

AP: How do gender dynamics influence your songs?

Potter: I chose these teenage years because (it is) the moment of intense crisis around gender identification, when you first start noticing that you're being treated according to the sex you were born. If I just speak about myself, and my generation of girls, as we were moving into puberty as a time of great loss, loss of freedom, dynamism ... all of a sudden (you're) having to think what impression you're making and the restrictions of being a female. At the same time, it's an incredible kind of growth, seething with hormones, feelings, confusion, trauma, intensity, and finding out very many things about yourself in the world. It's a very brilliant, intense period to write about.

AP: On "Pink Bikini," are you exploring what it means to be like a woman reclaiming artistry?

Potter: I would say not so much reclaiming as carrying on regardless of whether people want to or not.

AP: Songs like "Ginger Curls," "Pink Bikini" and "Hymn" are intertwined with a feeling of shame. Does shame intersect with your sense of femininity?

Potter: I think young girls learn to feel shame. (Even) before social media, we had a very problematic relationship with the body, where it's a double message. You're supposed to display (yourself) on the one hand, and be proud of it, on the other hand, you're supposed to hide it. Because if you display it too much, you're a slut. And if you hide it too much, you're frigid. That was very much a kind of sixties and seventies thing - those impossible, contradictory demands of all women.

"Hymn" is a fight back against religious oppression. It's a fight back against shame. A show of love between people of the same sex. That was more the feeling of all of the songs actually, about this oppression that suddenly arrives.

AP: You bring up nuclear warfare in "Black and White Badge." Your films also talk about this period and political dissidence. How was it exploring your life and those feelings in music compared to in film?

Potter: In film, you can tell the story in a more rounded way through characters, put words in people's mouths, set up the situation, and get lots of visuals. In a song, it's evocative in a distilled way, an era with simple language. I thought, "How can I write about something that was so important to me - climate change, the threat of an apocalypse essentially - and not to make it too heavy?" I wanted to lighten it. I sang in a fairly undramatized way. You can be a 12-year-old girl on a march - militant against the very existence of nuclear weapons on the one hand - and on the other hand, worry about not being looking cool enough. There's a bit of humor in the midst of fear of the apocalypse, the ultimate terror.

AP: Are there questions from your '60s childhood that you think are relevant in 2023?

Potter: One can't mention climate change too many times because I think the fear of everything ending - what's bigger than that? There is nothing bigger than that. It's paralyzing.

The Cuban Missile Crisis, which (happened) when I was 11, looked very close to being World War III. I think (this generation's) feeling of crisis is similar to then. Confusions around sexuality ... and domestic life. There are so many things in common, and those are the simple things.

Also:

LOS ANGELES: The Grammy-winning rock band Greta Van Fleet is back with a "Starcatcher," a strong album that shows the quartet's maturity and embraces a more prog rock and psychedelic flavor. The first single, the sprawling, Woodstock-y "Meeting the Master," made the top 40 of Billboard's Hot Rock & Alternative Songs chart. Producer **Dave Cobb** took the guys back to their roots as a live band. A few days after the release, Greta Van Fleet kick off a new tour in **Nashville** at the Bridgestone Arena and will make stops at Madison Square Garden in **New York** and The Forum in Los Angeles and **London's** OVO Arena Wembley.



This image released by Apple TV+ shows, (from left), Leiah Harvey, Jared Harris and Lou Llobell in a scene from 'Foundation.' (AP)

Television

Apple TV+ sci-fi series flashes forward some 140 years

New 'Foundation' digs even deeper

NEW YORK, July 16, (AP) — A sprawling, mighty galaxy was created in season one of "Foundation." Now it's time to rip it up.

Season two of the ambitious Apple TV+ sci-fi series flashes forward some 140 years and it's quickly clear that the clones who form the authoritarian order in the galaxy are losing their grip, leading to a note of chaos.

"Stasis is boring in terms of drama," said David S. Goyer, the series' co-creator, executive producer and showrunner. "Conflict is more interesting. So we've introduced this monolithic genetic dynasty and now we're starting to destroy it."

"Foundation" is built on author Isaac Asimov's short stories that he started writing just after World War II and are now a cornerstone of the sci-fi genre. Many attempts to get it onto screens have failed until now.

The saga is set some 12,000 years in the future. Under the rule of the Galactic Empire, humanity has spread to the far corners of the galaxy. Much of the first season was spent explaining how it all worked and introducing the main characters.

"I didn't have that burden with season two," says Goyer. "I felt like we could just start and shoot things out of a cannon and I wanted to keep up that pace. So I think season two is a faster pace. I think we had a lot more runway this time to dig in even deeper and more emotionally with the characters."

Visually stunning and inventive, the series has explored the trade-offs between individual liberty and dynastic rule, how religion can be weaponized and the logical extremes to genetics. The notions of fate and

free will play a big part in season two.

"Part of the drama of this season is which kind of universe are we living in - a sliding doors universe or are we not? Is the future predetermined or do our actions matter? Is there individual agency or not?" says Goyer.

Goyer has flipped the race and gender of several characters in Asimov's original text but perhaps the biggest change is the replacement of the Empire's ruling committee with a trio of emperor clones called the Cleons - one a teen preparing to rule, one in middle age after ruling and one who reigns in his prime.

Dynasty

Season one ended with Cleon XIII on the throne and season two dawns with Cleon XVII ruling. Lee Pace, who plays both men, says the new emperor flirts with ending the genetic dynasty.

"He believes he's an individual and he is refusing this idea that he's just another one of the clones. He is embracing the idea that he is a sentient individual and he will determine his own path," Pace says.

Cleon XVII is taking a risky path and not just because he's bedding his robot minder, who is over 18,000 years old. Assassins come for him in his first scene and he is flirting with the idea of marriage to create offspring the old fashioned way - but his princess-to-be may have her own nefarious reasons.

"You can't escape your destiny in a way you might try to," says Pace. "As the momentum of the unraveling of the empire starts to really take hold, I think the character is only going to get better."

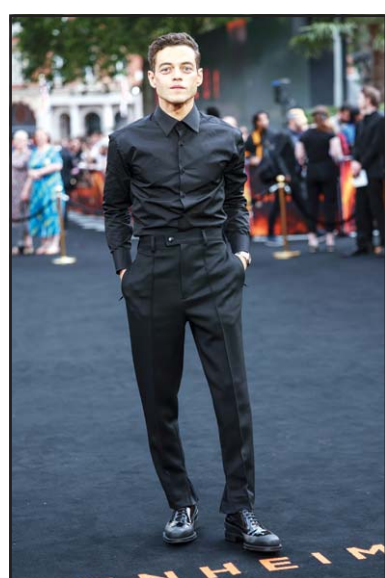
The show's main catalyst is the brilliant scientist Hari Seldon (played by Jared Harris), inventor of psychohistory, which analyzes the past actions of large groups of people in order to predict what they might do next. One of his students is the gifted mathematician Gaal Dornick (actor Lou Llobell). Both have cheated death in their own ways to rejoin viewers more than a century after season one.

Seldon's calculations and theories have gotten him and his followers exiled to the galaxy's edge, where they've created a settlement called the Foundation. But that science has become a religion more than 100 years later and there is talk of a second Foundation settlement, too.

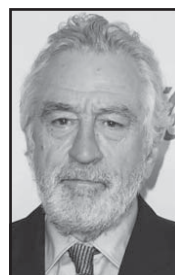
"Foundation" is a challenging show, one that jumps backward and forward in huge swaths of time so that mothers are sometimes younger than their daughters, and it tests its viewers on concepts like four-dimensional space and the poetic meter known as anapestic tetrameter.

Goyer says fans should expect the unexpected with season two. If the pilot of season one opened with magisterial shots of big vistas, season two opens very differently, with an intimate black-and-white image of Seldon going slightly mad. There's also a fresh lightness to the episodes.

"I think there was a lot of concern when we were making the first season that we were making a 'Serious' show," he says. "I felt very strongly that adding some moments of appropriate levity were really important to expanding the emotional palette of the show."



Rami Malek poses for photographers upon arrival at the premiere for the film 'Oppenheimer' on Thursday, July 13, in London. (AP)



Robert



Drena

Variety

NEW YORK: A 20-year-old woman has been arrested on federal narcotics charges and is accused of selling the drugs that led to the death of actor **Robert De Niro's** 19-year-old grandson, a law enforcement official said Friday.

The woman, **Sofia Haley Marks**, appeared in **Manhattan** federal court on Friday and agreed to remain behind bars until she requests bail at a later date. Prosecutors said they would oppose a request for her release.

Marks was arrested Thursday evening on three counts of narcotics distribution stemming from the sale of drugs to **Leandro De Niro Rodriguez**, the law enforcement official said. The official was not authorized to discuss details of the investigation publicly and spoke to The Associated Press on condition of anonymity.

Rodriguez was found dead in his Manhattan apartment on July 2. His mother, **Drena De Niro**, announced the death on Instagram. **Amy Gallicchio**, an assistant federal defender who represented Marks on Friday, said Marks planned to hire a lawyer. Gallicchio declined comment outside court.

US Attorney Damian Williams said in a statement that at least one of the fake oxycodone pills sold by Marks was "taken by a teenager who subsequently died of a suspected overdose." Rodriguez was not identified by name in court documents.

Williams said the arrest "was critical because, as we allege, Marks knew the pills could kill, and she continued selling them anyway."

The prosecutor said fentanyl was now the primary killer of Americans from ages 18 to 49. An estimated 109,680 people died from drug overdoses in 2022, including about 75,000 from fentanyl and other synthetic opioids.

"More than cancer, car accidents, or gun violence, it is a law enforcement crisis and a public health crisis. And we are doing everything we can to stop it," he said.

Rodriguez's cause of death remains under investigation, a spokesperson for

the city medical examiner's office said. (AP)



BEIJING: China's fast fashion retailer Shein is facing a lawsuit that claims the clothing maker's copyright infringement is so aggressive, it amounts to racketeering.

The filing this week claims that Shein is in violation of the Racketeer Infl-

enced and Corrupt Organizations Act, better known as RICO, a law originally crafted to prosecute organized crime.

"Shein has grown rich by committing individual infringements over and over again, as part of a long and continuous pattern of racketeering, which shows no sign of abating," the filing says.

In an organized effort to create as many as 6,000 new items per day,



Luke Bryan performs during Day 3 at the Windy City Smokeout festival on Saturday, July 15, at United Center in Chicago. (AP)

Shein uses a "byzantine shell game of a corporate structure" to rip off designers, a coordinated illegal operation that can best be combated through the use of RICO statutes, according to the lawsuit.

The lawsuit is just the latest in a series of difficulties Shein has faced. In May a bipartisan group of two dozen lawmakers asked the Securities and Exchange Commission to put the brakes on an initial public offering by Shein until it verified that it does not use forced labor from the country's predominantly Muslim Uyghur population.

The lawsuit, filed by three fashion designers in the US District Court for the Central District of California, alleges "Shein produced, distributed, and sold exact copies of their creative work."

"At issue here, inexplicably, are truly exact copies of copyrightable graphic design appearing on Shein products," the civil lawsuit states.

The designers are seeking unspecified damages and want injunctive relief to prevent further racketeering activity.

"Shein takes all claims of infringement seriously, and we take swift action when complaints are raised by valid IP rights holders," Shein said in a prepared statement Friday. "We will vigorously defend ourselves against this lawsuit and any claims that are without merit."

Shein hasn't said whether it plans to go public this year, but there are reports that the company is raising money in anticipation of a US listing before the end of the year. (AP)



Britain's Henry Searle in action against Russia's Yaroslav Demin during the boy's singles final on day fourteen of the Wimbledon tennis championships in London. (AP)

Sports

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Searle wins junior singles titles to end drought

Oda becomes youngest male Wimbledon champion

WIMBLEDON, England, July 16, (AP): Clervie Ngounoue of the United States and Henry Searle of Britain won the junior singles titles at Wimbledon on Sunday.

The 16-year-old Ngounoue became the second straight American - and 15th overall - to win the girls' singles title at the All England Club by beating Nikola Bartunkova of the Czech Republic 6-2, 6-2. Liv Hovde won it last year, becoming only the second American in 30 years to do so.

Ngounoue didn't drop a set throughout the tournament en route to her first Grand Slam singles title.

"I'm really excited that this is my first," said Ngounoue, who lives in Orlando, Florida. "It was a battle out there."

Searle became the first British player in 61 years to win the boys' singles title, defeating Yaroslav Demin 6-4, 6-4 in front of a partisan crowd on No. 1 Court.

TENNIS

"It's a pretty special feeling and it is not going to come too often and I am going to try and enjoy it," Searle said. "It was amazing in front of this crowd today."

Gabriele Vulpitta of Italy and Jakub Filip of the Czech Republic won the boys' doubles title by beating Branko Djuric of Serbia and Arthur Gea of France 6-3, 6-3. In the girls' doubles final, Czech duo Laura Samsonova and Alena Kovackova beat British pair Hannah Klugman and Isabelle Lacy 6-4, 7-5.

Tokito Oda became the youngest man to win a Wimbledon singles title in any discipline after defeating Alfie Hewitt in the men's wheelchair final.

The 17-year-old Japanese player won 6-4, 6-2 on No. 1 Court to earn his second straight Grand Slam title after also winning the French Open in June.

"I'm still 17. So, I want to open a champagne, but I couldn't," Oda said. "So I have to drink sparkling water."

His French Open victory, where he also beat Hewitt in the final, made Oda the youngest man to win a Grand Slam singles title in any discipline - excluding juniors - at 17 years, 33 days.

He was 17 years, 69 days when he won the Wimbledon title. Boris Becker was the youngest men's singles champion at the All England Club at 17 years, 228 days in 1985.

In the women's wheelchair doubles final, Diede De Groot followed up her singles victory by adding another title alongside Jiske Griffioen. The Dutch pair beat Yui Kamiji of Japan and Kgothatso Montjane of South Africa 6-1, 6-4.

De Groot beat Griffioen in the singles final on Saturday for her 11th straight Grand Slam title and 19th overall. She now has 17 in doubles, including three at Wimbledon. It was a 15th major doubles title for Griffioen.

Meanwhile, Ons Jabeur used a white kleenex to wipe away tears as she walked to her post-match news conference 1 1/2 hours after falling to 0-3 in Grand Slam finals by coming up short against Marketa Vondrousova in the Wimbledon final.

Jabeur called it "the most painful loss of my career," and was grateful for the consoling embrace she received from Kate, the Princess of Wales, during the trophy presentation at Centre Court - "Hugs are always welcome," the 28-year-old Tunisian said - and the comforting words she heard later from Kim Clijsters, the International Tennis Hall of Fame member who was defeated in her first four major finals before winning the next four.

The 6-4, 6-4 setback against



Japan's Tokito Oda celebrates with the trophy after beating Britain's Alfie Hewitt to win the final of the men's wheelchair singles on day fourteen of the Wimbledon tennis championships in London. (AP)

Vondrousova, the first unseeded woman to win Wimbledon, followed Jabeur's losses to Elena Rybakina in the final at the All England Club last July and to Iga Swiatek in the final at the U.S. Open last September.

"You cannot force things. It wasn't meant to be," said Jabeur, the only Arab woman and only North African woman to make it to the last round in singles at any major tournament. "Hopefully I will be like the others that failed a couple of times ... and it will come after."

Her day started awkwardly: Jabeur showed up to the main stadium to warm up before the match wearing black clothes, which is against the All England Club's rules requiring white attire on the competition courts.



Netherlands' Wout Poels celebrates as he crosses the finish line to win the fifteenth stage of the Tour de France cycling race over 179 kilometers (111 miles) with start in Les Gets Les Portes du Soleil and finish in Saint-Gervais Mont-Blanc, France. (AP)

Vingegaard 'keeps' yellow jersey as Poels solos to victory in 15th stage

SAINT-GERVAIS MONT-BLANC, France, July 16, (AP): Jonas Vingegaard kept intact his 10-second overall lead in the Tour de France as Dutch veteran Wout Poels soloed to victory after a tough trek in the Alps with a mountaintop finish.

Poels, who was part of an early breakaway in Sunday's 15th stage, took advantage of a short but very steep ascent located just before the final 7-kilometer (4-mile) climb leading to the finish line to move away.

Wout van Aert finished second, more than two minutes behind, with Mathieu Burgaudeau completing the stage podium.

Locked in a pulsating fight for the yellow jersey since the start of the race, Vingegaard and two-time Tour winner Tadej Pogacar once again stayed together throughout the day in the group of main contenders.

CYCLING

Pogacar tried to sprint away from his rival 900 meters from the line but Vingegaard, the defending champion, immediately jumped on his wheel and did not lose any time. Their duel will resume in Tuesday's time trial.

Monday is a rest day.

Heartbreaker for MacIntyre

McIlroy birdies last 2 holes to win Scottish Open

Hosts reach 242-6 at stumps on 1st day

Sri Lanka fight back against Pakistan in first Test

GULLANE, Scotland, July 16, (AP): Rory McIlroy birdied the last two holes in whipping wind Sunday for a 2-under 68 to win the Genesis Scottish Open, his first victory on Scottish soil, and take a load of confidence into the final major of the year.

McIlroy was one shot behind Robert MacIntyre when he played the slope to near perfection on the par-3 17th for a 4-foot birdie putt to tie for the lead. Then, he delivered what McIlroy called his best shot of the year - a 2-iron into the wind to 10 feet for a final birdie.

It was a heartbreaker for MacIntyre, who was trying to win his national open and delivered a class shot of his own. MacIntyre hammered a 3-wood from the rough on the 18th hole at The

GOLF

Renaissance Club to 4 feet, pumping both fists when it dropped for a 64.

It was a remarkable closing round given the wind that was rough and relentless off the Firth of Forth, and it looked for the longest time that it would give the 26-year-old MacIntyre the signature victory of his young career.

The victory came at an ideal time. McIlroy heads south to Royal Liverpool for the British Open, where he tries to end his nine-year drought in the majors. McIlroy won the claret jug the last time The Open was played at Royal Liverpool in 2014.

"That was such a tough day - so tough," McIlroy said. "To play that back nine in 4-under par to win the tournament, I'm really proud of how I stuck in there. I hit some amazing shots down the stretch. It feels incredible. It's been a long six months, I feel, since I won in Dubai. I've given myself tons of chances, and hopefully this win sort of breaks the seal for me, especially going into next week."

McIlroy finished at 15-under 265 and moved past Jon Rahm to No. 2 in the world.

Scottie Scheffler, the No. 1 player in the world, closed with a 70 and tied for third with Byeong Hun An (70) and David Lingmerth (68). Scheffler has finished among the top five in his last seven tournaments, two of them majors.

An and Lingmerth received a consolation prize by earning spots in the

GALLE, Sri Lanka, July 16, (AP): Sri Lanka staged a fight-back after being reduced to 54-4 in the first session and reached 242-6 at stumps on day one of the first test against Pakistan at the Galle International Stadium on Sunday.

Only 65.4 overs of the scheduled 90 were possible due to rain and play will get underway early on day two in a bid to make up for the lost time.

Vice-captain Dhananjaya de Silva put on an inspired show as he posted a back to the wall 94 and more importantly shared two crucial partnerships to help Sri Lanka recover.

De Silva was scheduled to bat at No. 6 wouldn't have expected to be called upon in the first session of the game but found himself doing just that after Shaheen Afridi and Naseem Shah bowled terrific spells with the new ball.

Afridi hadn't played any test cricket after hurting his knee in July last year and on his comeback accounted for three top-order wickets to peg Sri Lanka back. Naseem also troubled the batsmen with genuine pace and was unlucky not to

pick up more than one wicket.

Afridi became the 19th Pakistan player and the fourth quickest among fast bowlers from his country to the 100-wicket milestone when he had opening batsman Nishan Madushka caught behind.

After the early damage by the seamers, de Silva added 131 runs with Angelo Mathews for the fifth wicket.

CRICKET

Mathews looked uncomfortable against pace earlier on in his innings but once the spin came on he settled down and went on to post his 39th test half-century. He was dismissed for 64 when he nicked one to the wicketkeeper off the bowling of leg-spinner Abrar Ahmed.

"It was tough batting earlier on," Mathews said. "We had to be watchful but we were able to cash in after some time."

British Open, awarded to the leading three players not already exempt. The final spot went to Nicolai Hojgaard (67), who will join twin brother Rasmus at Royal Liverpool.

The Scottish crowd had been chanting MacIntyre's name all week around The Renaissance Club, and they roared when he delivered the 3-wood and birdie putt to the 18th, one of the toughest closing holes on tour.

MacIntyre was so caught up in the moment he had to hold back tears leaving the green.

"I'll never forget it. I had to take a minute coming off 18," he said. "If not The Open, the Scottish Open will be up there with the event I want to play for the rest of my life. It's one I've dreamed of winning since I watched at home, and I thought today coming down once I birdied 18, I thought, this might be the

one. But it's not to be just now.

"Rory McIlroy's potentially the best in the world, and he showed why today."

McIlroy matched him with a shot every bit as good.

He was 201 yards from the pin, dead into the wind, a perfect 3-iron for him - except that McIlroy decided to replace his 3-iron with a 2-iron for the windy week.



Northern Ireland's Rory McIlroy lifts the trophy following day four of the Genesis Scottish Open 2023 golf tournament at The Renaissance Club, North Berwick, Britain. (AP)