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Condolences on India train crash toll of over 280

Modi on scene

NEW DELHI, June 3, (Agencies): Rescuers found no more survivors in the overturned and mangled wreckage of two passenger trains that derailed in eastern India, killing more than 280 people and injuring hundreds in one of the country's deadliest rail crashes in decades, officials said Saturday.

Chaotic scenes erupted after the derailment on Friday night about 220 kilometers (137 miles) southwest of Kolkata, as rescuers climbed atop the wrecked trains to break open doors and windows using cutting torches.

The death toll rose steadily throughout the night. Scores of bodies, covered by white sheets, lay on the ground near the tracks while locals and rescuers raced to free the hundreds of people trapped in the rail cars under the twisted metal and broken glass. Army soldiers and air force helicopters joined the effort.

An Associated Press photographer saw bodies still entangled in a badly mangled coach, as rescuers struggled to retrieve them working under the oppressive heat with temperatures reaching up to 35 degree Celsius (96 degrees Fahrenheit).



Rescuers work at the site of passenger trains accident, in Balasore district, in the eastern Indian state of Orissa, Saturday, June 3, 2023. Rescuers are wading through piles of debris and wreckage to pull out bodies and free people after two passenger trains derailed in India, killing more than 280 people. Hundreds of others were trapped inside more than a dozen mangled rail cars, in one of the country's deadliest train crashes in decades. (AP)

Tragic

"By 10 p.m. (on Friday) we were able to rescue the survivors. After that it was about picking up dead bodies," Sudhanshu Sarangi, director of Odisha state's fire and emergency department, told The Associated Press. "This is very, very tragic. I have never seen anything like this in my career."

At least 280 bodies were recovered overnight and into Saturday morning, he said. About 900 people were injured and the cause was under investigation.

Meanwhile, in Kuwait, His Highness the Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah on Saturday sent a cable of condolences to Indian President Droupadi Murmu over a train crash in India's eastern Odisha State, which left hundreds of people dead or injured, while wishing a swift recovery for the injured.

His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah also sent a cable of condolences to Indian President Droupadi Murmu.

The Kuwait Foreign Ministry on Saturday expressed sympathy with India in the aftermath of trains' collision in the east of the nation where hundreds of people perished or got injured.

The ministry expressed solace to New Delhi, the Indian government and people, on this painful affliction and wished the injured quick recovery.

The accident occurred at a time when Prime Minister Narendra Modi is focussing on the modernization of the British colonial-era railroad network in India, which has become the world's most populous country with 1.42 billion. Despite government efforts to improve rail safety, several hundred accidents occur every year on India's railways, the largest train network under one management in the world.

Modi flew to the crash site and spent half an hour examining the relief effort and talking to rescue officials. He was seen giving instructions on the phone to officials in New Delhi.

He later visited a hospital where he walked around inquiring from doctors about the treatment being given to the injured, and spoke to some of them, moving from bed to bed in a ward.

Punish

Modi told reporters that it was a sad moment and he was feeling the pain of those who have suffered in the accident. He said the government would do its utmost to help them and strictly punish those found responsible.

Modi on Saturday was supposed to inaugurate a high-speed train connecting Goa and Mumbai that is equipped with a collision avoidance system. The event was canceled after Friday's accident. The trains that derailed did not have that system.

Amitabh Sharma, a Railroad Ministry spokesperson, said the rescue work was near completion. Rail authorities will start removing the wreckage to repair the track and resume train operations, he said.

About 200 of the severely injured people were transferred to specialty hospitals in other cities in Odisha, said P.K. Jena, the state's top administrative official. Another 200 were discharged after receiving medical care and the rest were being treated in local hospitals, he added. Scores of people also showed up to donate blood.

The Conversation

Epic power shift in dedollarization

By Tuugi Chuluun
Loyola University Maryland

WASHINGTON, June 3, (AP): The Chinese economy's sheer size and rapid growth are impressive.

China maintained one of the highest economic growth rates in the world for more than a quarter of a century, helping lift over 800 million people out of poverty in just a few decades. The country is the largest exporter in the world and the most important trading partner of Japan, Germany, Brazil and many other countries. It has the second-largest economy after the U.S., based on the market exchange rate, and the largest based on purchasing power.

And yet the yuan still lags as a major global currency. The war in Ukraine, which started in February 2022, may change that.

As a professor of finance and expert on international finance, I understand how this geopolitical conflict may put China's currency on the next phase of its path to becoming a global currency - and prompt the onset of the decline of the U.S. dollar from its current dominance.

China has long wanted to make the yuan a global force and has mounted significant efforts to do so in recent years.

For example, the Chinese government launched the Cross-Border Interbank Payments System, or CIPS, in 2015 to facilitate cross-border payments in yuan. Three years later, in 2018, it launched the world's first yuan-denominated crude oil futures contracts to allow exporters to sell oil in yuan.

China has also emerged perhaps as the world's largest creditor, with the government and state-controlled enterprises extending loans to dozens of developing countries. And China is developing a digital yuan as one of the world's first central bank digital currencies. Even the trading hours for the yuan were recently extended on the mainland.

Thanks to these efforts, the yuan is now the fifth-most-traded currency in the world. That is a phenomenal rise from its 35th place in 2001. The yuan is also the fifth-most-actively used currency for global payments as of April 2023, up from 30th place in early 2011.

Rankings can be misleading, though. The yuan's average trading volume is still less than a 10th of the U.S. dollar's. Moreover, almost all trading was against the U.S. dollar, with little trading against other currencies.

And when it comes to global payments, the actual share of the yuan is a mere 2.3%, compared with 42.7% for the dollar and 31.7% for the euro. The yuan also constituted less than 3% of the world foreign exchange reserves at the end of 2022, compared with 58% for the dollar and 20% for the euro.

The U.S. dollar has reigned supreme as the dominant global currency for decades - and concern about how that benefits the U.S. and potentially hurts emerging markets is not new.

The value of the U.S. dollar appreciated significantly against most other currencies in 2022 as the Federal Reserve hiked interest rates. This had negative consequences for residents of almost any country that borrows in dollars, pays for imports in dollars, or buys wheat, oil or other commodities priced in dollars, as these transactions became more expensive.

After Russia invaded Ukraine in early 2022, the U.S. and its Western allies put sanctions on Russia, including cutting Russia's access to the global dollar-based payments system known as the Society for Worldwide Interbank Financial Telecommunication, or SWIFT. That clearly displayed how the dollar can be weaponized.

With Russia largely cut off from international financial markets, it stepped up its trade with China. Russia began receiving payments for coal and gas in yuan, and Moscow increased the yuan holdings in its foreign currency reserves. Russian companies like Rosneft issued bonds denominated in yuan. According to Bloomberg, the yuan is now the most-traded currency in Russia.

Other countries took notice of Russia's increasing use of the yuan and saw an opportunity to decrease their own dependency on the dollar.

Bangladesh is now paying Russia in yuan for the construction of a nuclear power station. France is accepting payment in yuan for liquefied natural gas bought from China's state-owned oil company. A Brazilian bank controlled by a Chinese state bank is becoming the first Latin American bank to participate directly in China's payments system, CIPS. Iraq wants to pay for imports from China in yuan, and even Tesco, the British retailer, wants to pay for its Chinese imported goods in yuan.

The combined dollar amount of these transactions is still relatively small, but the shift to yuan is significant.

Iran, Saudis talk ties; BRICS may add both

Lavrov takes jabs at West

RIYADH, June 3, (Agencies): Saudi Minister of Foreign Affairs Prince Faisal bin Farhan bin Abdullah met with his Iranian counterpart Hossein Amir-Abdollahian in Cape Town, South Africa, on Friday on the sidelines of the Ministerial Meeting of Friends of

BRICS Group.

They explored ways to enhance the bilateral relations in various fields, and reviewed the steps to implement the agreement between the two countries signed in Beijing, the Saudi Press Agency (SPA) reported.

Both sides also discussed ways to ensure peace and security on regional and international scales.

They expressed a shared desire to intensify consultations on the prospects bilateral and multilateral cooperation in a way that serves the interests of the two countries, according to the SPA report.

The meeting was attended by the Undersecretary of the Saudi Ministry of Foreign Affairs for Multiple International Affairs Dr. Abdulrahman Al-Rassi, the Saudi Ambassador to South Africa Sultan Al-Luyhan Al-Anqari, and the Director General of Foreign Minister's Office Abdulrahman Al-Dawood.

The Friends of BRICS ministerial meeting opened on Thursday with 12 countries taking part, including Saudi Arabia, Iran, the United Arab Emirates and Egypt.

Meanwhile, Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov met Thursday with China's deputy foreign minister and other top diplomats from the BRICS bloc of developing economies for discussions that included the group's possible expansion to include the major oil-producing nations of Saudi Arabia, Iran and the United Arab Emirates.

Ahead of the talks at a luxury oceanside hotel in South Africa, Lavrov cast BRICS - an acronym for current members Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa - as central to the establishment of a "more just" world order.

The Russian minister also took swipes at the West for its sanctions and other forms of what Lavrov alleged was "financial blackmail" against Moscow, according to a translation of his comments.

South African Foreign Minister Naledi Pandor, who hosted the talks, confirmed that an invitation had been extended to Russian President Vladimir Putin to attend a larger BRICS summit scheduled for August despite Putin being the subject of an International Criminal Court arrest warrant.

Thursday's meeting in Cape Town of the foreign ministers of Russia, Brazil, India and South Africa, and Chinese Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs Ma Zhaoxun, was a precursor to that main BRICS summit in Johannesburg and comes less than two weeks after the world's most advanced economies held their own summit in Japan.

Extending sanctions against Russia as punishment for its invasion of Ukraine and finding ways to deal with China's global economic influence dominated the Group of Seven gathering in Hiroshima.

Two detained for vote buying Eligible voters total 793,646

By Saeed Mahmoud Saleh
Arab Times Staff and Agencies

KUWAIT CITY, June 3: The number of eligible voters in the National Assembly election on June 6, 2023 totaled 793,646 -- 396,751 men and 406,895 women.

A total of 103 schools have been allocated as polling centers in the five constituencies -- 20 in the First Constituency, 18 in the Second Constituency, 15 in the Third Constituency, 25 in the Fourth Constituency and 25 in the Fifth Constituency.

The number of voters in the First Constituency reached 99,779 -- 48,348 men and 51,431 women; 90,394 in the Second Constituency -- 44,289 men and 46,105 women; 137,978 in the Third Constituency -- 66,226 men and 71,752 women; 208,740 in the Fourth Constituency -- 100,832 men and 107,908 women and 256,755 in the Fifth Constituency -- 127,056 men and 129,699 women.

Meanwhile, officers from the Criminal Investigation General Department in the Interior Ministry have arrested a former MP and Second Constituency candidate, whose identity has not been disclosed, for buying votes.

On the other hand, Al-Qyas Center surveyed a random sample of voters on their preferred candidates in the second and fourth constituencies as follows:

Second Constituency

- 1- Marzouq Al-Ghanim
- 2- Muhammad Al-Mutair
- 3- Badr Al-Mulla

- 4- Badr Nashmi Al-Anzi
- 5- Hamad Al-Matar
- 6- Hamed Al-Bazzali
- 7- Falah Al-Hajri
- 8- Abdulwahab Al-Essa
- 9- Shuaib Shaaban
- 10- Khalil Al-Saleh

Fourth Constituency

- 1- Shuaib Al-Muwaizri
- 2- Muhammad Hayef Al-Mutairi
- 3- Thamer Al-Suwait
- 4- Obaid Al-Wasmi
- 5- Abdullah Fehad
- 6- Fayez Al-Jomhour
- 7- Mubarak Al-Hajraf
- 8- Mubarak Al-Tasha
- 9- Badr Sayyar Al-Shemmari
- 10- Marzouq Al-Khalifa

Also:

KUWAIT CITY: Two persons dealing in illicit vote buying for service of three candidates for forthcoming National Assembly elections have been arrested, the Ministry of Interior declared on Saturday.

The ministry said the detention had been carried out in line with guidelines by the First Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Interior and Acting Minister of Defense **Sheikh Talal Khaled Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah** to clamp down on any act that might undermine integrity of the elections due on June 6.

MP personnel have seized and confiscated money caches while the persons involved in the illegal act have been referred to the public prosecution.



US First Lady Jill Biden, center left, listens to Mostafa Waziri, secretary-general of the Supreme Council of Antiquities, during her visit to the historical site of Giza Pyramids, near Cairo, Egypt, June 3, 2023. (AP)

NewsWatch

WASHINGTON: The United States has announced sanctions against a group of Iranian and Turkish people and firms accused of plotting to assassinate former U.S. government officials, dual U.S. and Iranian nationals, and dissidents.

Three Iran- and Turkey-based people; a company affiliated with Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps Quds Force, which is a branch of the country's military; and two senior officials of Iran's Intelligence Organization are accused of being involved in plotting to kill journalists and activists, according to the U.S. Treasury Department. (AP)

BERLIN: Iran has released one Danish and two Austrian citizens, the European countries said Friday, thanking Oman and Belgium for their help in getting the trio freed.

Austrian Foreign Minister Alexander Schallenberg said he was "very relieved" that **Kamran Ghaderi** and **Masoud Mosahab** were being brought home after "years of arduous imprisonment in Iran." (AP)

WASHINGTON: US Secretary of State Antony Blinken will travel to Saudi Arabia June 6-8 to meet with Saudi officials to discuss U.S.-Saudi strategic cooperation on regional and global issues including economic and security cooperation, said the State Department spokesperson **Matthew Miller** on Friday.

On June 7, the Secretary will also participate in a U.S.-Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) Ministerial to discuss the growing cooperation with "our GCC partners to promote security, stability, de-escalation, regional integration, and economic opportunities across the Middle East." (AP)

UNITED NATIONS: The U.N. Security Council adopted a resolution Friday renewing the European Union's permission to inspect vessels off Libya's coast suspected of violating the arms embargo on the troubled North African nation.

The vote on the resolution sponsored by France and Malta was 14-0, with Russia abstaining, just as it did last year. It claimed the EU operation has been ineffective in stopping the flow of illegal weapons to Libya. (AP)



OPINION OTHER VOICES

Australian war veteran unlawfully killed prisoners

'Blood the rookie' soils a Victoria Cross

Australia's most decorated living war veteran unlawfully killed prisoners and committed other war crimes in Afghanistan, a judge ruled Thursday in dismissing the claims by Victoria Cross recipient Ben Roberts-Smith that he was defamed by media.

Federal Court Justice Anthony Besanko ruled that the articles published in 2018 were substantially true about a number of war crimes committed by Roberts-Smith, a former Special Air Service Regiment corporal who now is a media company executive.

Besanko found Roberts-Smith, who was also awarded the Medal of Gallantry for his Afghanistan War service, "broke the moral and legal rules of military engagement" and disgraced Australia through his conduct.

The ruling is regarded as a significant win for press freedom against Australia's extraordinarily restrictive defamation laws following a hard-fought trial over 110 court hearing days that is estimated to have cost more than 25 million Australian dollars (\$16 million) in legal fees.

Proven allegations included that Roberts-Smith, the son of a judge, used a machine gun to shoot a prisoner with a prosthetic leg in the back at a Taliban compound codenamed Whiskey 108 in Uruzgan province in 2009. He kept the man's prosthetic as a novelty beer drinking vessel.

The man was one of two unarmed Afghans that Roberts-Smith's patrol had dragged from a tunnel. Roberts-Smith pressured a "newly deployed and inexperienced" soldier to kill the second, older man to "blood the rookie," the court found.

The proven accusations also included that Roberts-Smith killed an unarmed, handcuffed farmer named Ali Jan by kicking him from a cliff top and into a riverbed at the Afghan village of Darwan in 2012. Roberts-

Smith then directed a soldier under his command to shoot Jan dead.

Also found to be true were accusations that Roberts-Smith, who stands 2.02 meters (6 feet, 7 inches) tall, bullied soldiers and assaulted Afghan civilians.

Two of six unlawful killings Roberts-Smith was accused of involvement in were not proven to the civil court standard of balance of probability, the judge found.

Reports of domestic violence allegedly committed by Roberts-Smith were also found to be unproven and defamatory. But the judge found the unproven allegations would not have further damaged the veteran's reputation.

Had such war crime allegations been made in a criminal court, they would have had to be proven to a higher standard of beyond reasonable doubt.

Roberts-Smith, 44, had denied any wrongdoing. His lawyers blamed "corrosive jealousy" by "bitter people" within the SAS who had run a "poisonous campaign against him."

The civil case made claims of defamation against The Sydney Morning Herald, The Age and The Canberra Times over their articles.

Nick McKenzie, one of the reporters responsible for the contentious articles, praised the SAS veterans who had testified against the national hero.

"Today is a day of justice. It's a day of justice for those brave men of the SAS who stood up and told the truth about who Ben Roberts-Smith is - a war criminal, a bully and a liar," McKenzie told reporters outside court.

"Australia should be proud of those men in the SAS. They are the

majority in the SAS and they stood up for what was right and they have been vindicated," McKenzie added.

Roberts-Smith's lawyer, Arthur Moses, asked for 42 days to consider lodging an appeal to the Full Bench of the Federal Court.

The case's legal costs have been underwritten by billionaire Kerry Stokes, executive chair of Seven West Media where Roberts-Smith is employed.

Stokes has stood by Roberts-Smith, saying in a statement: "The judgment does not accord with the man I know."

"I know this will be particularly hard for Ben who has always maintained his innocence," Stokes said.

Roberts-Smith had attended every day of his trial but did not appear at the Sydney court for the decision. Media have published a photo of him sunning himself by a swimming pool Wednesday on the Indonesian resort island of Bali.

Roberts-Smith is one of several Australian military personnel under investigation from Australian Federal Police for alleged war crimes in Afghanistan.

The first criminal charge for an alleged illegal killing in Afghanistan was made in March. Former SAS trooper Oliver Schulz was charged with the war crime of murder in the death of an Afghan who was shot in 2012 in a wheat field in Uruzgan province.

Australian Special Air Service Association chair Martin Hamilton-Smith described the ruling as a "very disappointing day" for the elite regiment. He said if more veterans were to be prosecuted for war crimes, they should be charged without delay.

Continued on Page 3



Children stand in al-Hol camp, which houses families of members of the Islamic State group in Hasakeh province, Syria, Wednesday, April 19, 2023. (AP)

Future still uncertain

DAESH teens undergo rehabilitation

For at least four years, thousands of children have been growing up in a camp in northeast Syria housing families of Islamic State group militants, raised in an atmosphere where the group's radical ideology still circulates and where they have almost no chance for an education.

Fearing that a new generation of militants will emerge from al-Hol Camp, the Kurdish officials who govern eastern and northern Syria are experimenting with a rehabilitation program aimed at pulling children out of extremist thought.

It means, however, removing them from their mothers and families for an unknown period of time, a practice that has raised concerns among rights groups. And even if they are deemed rehabilitated, the children's future remains in limbo with their home countries reluctant to take them back.

"If these children stay in the camp, this will lead to the rise of a new generation of extremists who could be more fanatic(al) than those who were before," said Khaled Remo, co-chair of the Kurdish-led administration's office of justice and reform affairs.

Recently, an Associated Press team was allowed to visit the Orkesh Center, a rehabilitation facility that opened late last year. It's home to dozens of young boys taken from al-Hol. Ranging in age between 11 and 18, they represent about 15 different nationalities, including France and Germany.

At Orkesh, boys are taught drawing and music, all with the theme of tolerance. They also learn skills for future jobs like a tailor or a barber. They wake up early and have breakfast at 7 a.m., then have classes until 3 p.m., after which they can play soccer and basketball. They live in dormitory-type rooms, where they are expected to keep order and their beds made. They are allowed contact with parents and siblings.

Authorities did not permit the AP to speak to the boys at the center, citing privacy concerns. During a separate visit to al-Hol, residents were hostile, and none agreed to be interviewed. The AP also approached families that were released from al-Hol, but none responded to requests for comment. The newness of the program makes it difficult to assess its effectiveness.

Still, the center underscores how U.S.-backed Kurdish authorities are wrestling with the legacy of Islamic State, years after the group was defeated in a brutal war in Syria and Iraq that ended in 2019.

Al-Hol Camp is an open wound left by that conflict. The camp holds about 51,000 people, the vast majority women and children, including the wives, widows and other family members of IS militants. Most are Syrians and Iraqis. But there are also around 8,000 women and children from 60 other nationalities who live in a part of the camp known as the Annex. They are generally considered the most die-hard IS supporters among the camp residents.

The camp population is down from its height of 73,000 people, mostly because of Syrians and Iraqis who were allowed to go home. But other countries have largely balked at taking back their nationals, who traveled to join IS after the radical group seized large parts of Iraq and Syria in 2014.

Though Kurdish-led security forces run the camp, they have struggled to keep control. IS radicalism remains rife, with fervent followers intimidating others, particularly in the Annex, home to more than 5,000 children.

Children in al-Hol have little to do and little chance for education. Fewer than half the 25,000 children in the camp attend reading and writing classes at its teaching centers.

During a recent tour by the AP inside al-Hol, some young boys threw stones at the reporters. One drew a finger across his throat in a beheading motion as he looked at the journalists.

"Those kids once they reach the age of 12, they could become dangerous and could kill and beat up others," the camp's director Jihan Hanan told the AP.

"So we had a choice, which is to put them at rehabilitation centers and keep them away from the extreme ideology that their mothers carry," she said.

Sheikhmous Ahmad, a Kurdish official overseeing camps for displaced people, said that once the boys turn 13, IS loyalists make them get married to young girls - another reason for removing them.

So far, the number of children going through rehabilitation is small, around 300, all of them boys from the Annex. Ninety-seven are at the recently-launched Orkesh Center, near the border town of Qamishli about a two-hour drive from al-Hol. The rest are at al-Houri, another center that began taking in boys for rehabilitation in 2017, as U.S.-backed, Kurdish-led forces took back territory from IS in Syria.

Al-Houri underscores the long-term problem: Some of the boys have been at the center for years since there is nowhere else to go. The only alternative would be to send them back to al-Hol. Only four children have been repatriated from al-Houri, administrators said.

"While the transfer of these boys to separate detention centers may be well-intentioned, this is not rehabilitation. This is indefinite detention without charge of children, who are themselves victims of ISIS," said Letta Tayler, associate director of the Crisis and Conflict Division at Human Rights Watch.

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editor's choice



Minister orders arrest of two top officials of Central Prison

Nazaha refers some former MoH officials, others to prosecution

Escaped African held

KUWAIT CITY, June 3: The Ministry of the Interior announced that personnel from the Criminal Investigation Department, in cooperation with the Airport Security Department have arrested the African man who had escaped from Kuwait International Airport, reports Al-Rai daily.

The arrest came after the Undersecretary of the Ministry of Interior, Lieutenant General Anwar Abdul Latif Al-Barjas, ordered the formation of an immediate investigation committee to find out the circumstances that led to the escape of the man on Wednesday.

Earlier it was reported that after the man arrived at the airport, during the fingerprint process it became clear he had been deported from the country and was awaiting deportation back to from where he came.

Mujezat Al-Shifa won the gold medal in an international competition for a number of its products for the year 2023

Mujezat Al-Shifa Honey Company received a number of the most prominent international quality awards in recognition of its pioneering excellence in the manufacture of high-quality bee honey products, as it came in the first three places and won the gold medal for four products of Sidr honey lollipops, and the silver medal for five other products for the year 2023.



In a related context, the expert in honey production and beekeeping and the director of Mujezat Al-Shifa Company, Muhammad Qasim Al-Majdadi, said: "The fact that our products won these awards, in addition to obtaining international quality certificates in advance, is the result of the years' efforts and experiences of our cadres, in addition to our constant and tireless endeavor to improve and develop honey products in all their forms." And its types, in addition to our keenness to apply the highest and most accurate specifications of international quality in our products to satisfy the needs and aspirations of consumers.

KUWAIT CITY, June 3: After what happened at the Central Prison last Tuesday, and the firm decisions issued by the First Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Interior and Acting Minister of Defense Sheikh Talal Al-Khaled, to control the situation, protect prisoners and punish those who misuse power, the Ministry of Interior announced the referral of the Central prison events to the Public Prosecution, reports Al-Qabas daily.

The ministry stated that this came on the recommendation of the committee formed by Sheikh Talal Al-Khaled to investigate the events.

Sheikh Talal Al-Khaled had issued a ministerial decision to arrest the Assistant Undersecretary of the Ministry of Interior for Private Security and Correctional Institutions Affairs, Major General Abdullah Saffah, and the Director General of the General Department of Correctional Institutions, Brigadier General Fahd Al-Obeid, in connection with these events.

Sheikh Talal Al-Khaled decided to appoint Brigadier General Nasser Al-Azmi as the Director General of Correctional Institutions and Brigadier Hazaa Al-Juaib as his deputy.

In addition, Al-Qabas sources reported that procedures are continuing to enhance security discipline, prevent any defect within the central prison, and establish transparency and apply the law to anyone who abuses power.

The sources indicated that, based on the directives of the First Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Interior and Acting Minister of Defense Sheikh Talal Al-Khaled, the concerned inspection teams continued their tours of the central prison to inspect the conditions of the inmates and listen to them, in addition to tightening procedures to control any prohibited items in the possession of the prisoners and prevent them from entering them.

The sources indicated that the next stage will witness other measures related to improving the conditions of inmates in the wards and addressing the negatives, in addition to more decisions aimed at devoting human rights in coordination with the concerned state authorities, and periodic reports will be submitted to the Minister of Interior on all affairs of correctional institutions.

Meanwhile, Kuwait Anti-Corruption Authority (Nazaha) has referred some former Ministry of Health officials and others to the Public Prosecution on suspicion of harming State funds due to their negligence, pursuant to Article 14 of Public Funds Protection Law number One of 1993 and Clause One of Article 22 of the law on the establishment of the authority, reports Al-Rai daily.

Blaze at Salmi tires' dumpsite 'deliberate'

KUWAIT CITY, June 3, (Agencies): Kuwait Fire Force (KFF) announced Saturday that the blaze that erupted at the used tires' dumping site in Al-Salmi area Friday was "deliberate".

The investigation teams completed technical examination and interrogated eyewitnesses about the fire that erupted at the dumping site on an area of 4,000 sq m, the KFF said in a statement issued by its media

and public relations department.

Wind speed contributed to fuelling the fire at the tires in the area that was extinguished by the KFF firefighters, it added.

After checking the site of the fire, neither electrical nor thermal sources have been found, it said, indicating that the results of the probe said that the fire was caused by a "deliberate" act.

diwaniya

A DIGEST OF PUBLIC OPINION

'Hoping more number of women joining judiciary'

"THE concept of the judiciary in law books and legal references is the judicial authority, and it can be defined as the authority that specializes in interpreting and applying the law in order to settle disputes under this law," columnist **Dr. Ghadir Muhammad Asiri** wrote for **Al-Qabas** daily.

"We find that there are some countries that excel in indicators of corruption and financial and administrative transparency, such as Denmark, Sweden, Finland, New Zealand, Switzerland and Singapore, unlike many countries in which we find interference and lack of clarity.



Dr Ghadir Asiri

"International covenants and global treaties called for the independence of the judiciary and gave it absolute power. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights stipulated in Article 8 that 'every person has the right to resort to the competent courts in his country'; and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights stipulated in Article 14 that "all people are equal" before the judiciary, and it is the right of every individual when deciding on any criminal charge brought against him or his rights and obligations in any civil suit, that his case be considered in a fair and public manner by a competent, independent, impartial court established by law.

"Judicial rulings were supported by independence in judgment, and rulings in the judicial system in developed countries were fortified in choosing a judge and that there should be no interference in choices through mediation or social comparison from relatives or friends in the judicial authority.

"In this sector, social acquaintances and nepotism are important, because this job does not tolerate social or political pleasantries, as it is the first ladder to reform and fight corruption in society.

"It is one of the jobs in which the strongest types of punishment are carried out for the accused, up to execution.

"Developed countries are required to hold accountable those who attempt to distort any authority in the state, and reform awareness must be spread to all important authorities for societies to advance, grow, and achieve social justice for citizens.

"Article 162 of the Kuwaiti constitution made sure that "the honor of the judiciary, the integrity of judges, and their justice are the foundation of kingship and a guarantee of rights and freedoms."

"And this text was followed by the text of Article 163 of the constitution, which stipulates that "no party has authority over a judge in his judgment, and it is not permissible in the event of interference."

"In the course of justice, the law guarantees the independence of the judiciary and shows the guarantees of judges, their rulings, and the conditions of their removability.

"With this clarity and a call for societal reform for individuals in the state, the principle of trust between citizens and the state stems from it, and security and safety prevail in it.

"We also hope that there will be greater numbers of women in the judiciary, as Kuwait was late in accepting women into the judiciary, despite the readiness of women graduates from universities and law schools.

"To prove that they have a degree of professional responsibility in assuming this job, and in the past, the reactionary controversy was raised, to which women in Kuwait are accustomed to questioning their abilities, in many positions and jobs by raising that sterile controversy, which ends with the competence of Kuwaiti women and their ability to occupy global positions like men.

"Kuwaiti, and after 2006, the Kuwaiti woman proved it after a law student applied to become a public prosecutor, and her argument was that the law does not require masculinity, and she filed a lawsuit that the advertisement violated the law, and here the voices rose to demand the achievement of social justice and to be accepted in this job in small numbers compared to her male colleagues, and we hope for more acceptance of Kuwaiti women without shame in this field."

Also:

"The Municipal Council is one of the

oldest and most important institutions beneficial to Kuwait and its people. It is the link between the citizens and the government. Its decisions are welcomed and accepted by the public, so it preserved its position and even increased its position after the participation of women in the membership of the council. Kuwaitis are glad about it, because of the taste and creativity that women carry to add glimpses of aesthetics for every project," columnist **Salem Al-Subaei** wrote for **Al-Anba** daily.

"Newspapers told us about imposing fees on car shades. It is noticeable that one-third of the council members rejected the decision. This is an evidence that collecting 500 fils per square meter is not covered by the law on the establishment of the council and it is not a solution!

"We suffer from visual distortion, along with the scenes of chaos and randomness in shapes, colors and materials of car shades brought back to us the 'shinko' and 'kirby' nests that the Cabinet removed in the 1970s. Whenever a citizen decides to build his house, the Kuwait Municipality intervenes and stipulates the proportions and specifications of the building, even though the land is his property, so how about if the land belongs to the homeland and wants to benefit from it? Since the beneficiary citizen will voluntarily undertake the expenses of establishing the car shade, why do we not reconcile his personal demands with the general demand?"

"An Iranian buys judges! A Bangladeshi buys security officers ... A Pakistani sells votes ...," columnist **Dr Najj Al-Zaid** wrote for **Al-Jarida** daily.

"We learned about this through the media. Whatever we do not know and has yet to be announced will surface sooner or later. We will learn about many issues, in which corruption is mixed with security professions and judges, as well as blatant political interference, such as buying votes!

"The expatriates in these cases could just be a front. Undoubtedly, the real perpetrator is a Kuwaiti hidden behind the expat facade! If part of security is compromised and part of the judiciary and a large part of the Parliament are hacked, what do we have left?!"

"We have become a State without security, without a judiciary and without a parliament. This means we are a State without an entity and without a strict leadership that faces these challenges aimed at destroying society! The continuation of the sweeping decline is not in the interest of the government, so it must act swiftly and decisively."

"Rumor spread on social media that the Ethiopian community is not less disturbing and not less dangerous. Ask the brothers in Saudi Arabia, because their experience with the community is very bitter, as members of the community have been a source of annoyance for the authorities!" columnist **Talal Al-Saeid** wrote for **Al-Seyassah** daily.

"The important development is that an Ethiopian arrived at Kuwait International Airport and was forbidden to enter. A decision was then taken to deport him -- on the next flight back to his country. Then, the securitymen ignored him, so he fled from the airport hotel. He climbed over the grid and entered the country. Camera recordings are being downloaded to determine the security gaps, through which he escaped!

"To shorten the time for senior officials, we say: There is no need to discuss the defects and shortcomings of the frontier guards who made the State lose its prestige. This is not the first time and it will not be the last.

"The State's record is full of those banned from traveling who were smuggled by the guards. It is also full of those who were denied entry, but entered the country in one way or another, thereby, violating the Residency Law, just like thousands of others who succeeded in circumventing the law without being arrested, or they got out after being arrested.

"In the end, the Ministry of Interior is required to intensify efforts to arrest this particular fugitive as soon as possible and interrogate him to find out how he escaped -- if someone helped him escape. He knows that he is prohibited from entering the country, yet he came here. Undoubtedly, someone waited for him outside the airport, knowing that he would flee."

— Compiled by **Mai Elsoukary**



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2 Bedroom Chalet (4 persons inclusive of breakfast) per night.	BHD 136.198/-net
Weekends (Thursday & Friday)	Price
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2 Bedroom Chalet (4 persons inclusive of breakfast) per night.	BHD 153.222/-net

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Warning against answering fake phone calls, messages

KUWAIT CITY, June 3: The Public Authority for Civil Information (PACI) has warned citizens and expatriates about unscrupulous individuals impersonating its employees and make telephone calls to request for personal data, reports Al-Rai daily.

On its official social media accounts, the authority posted an advisory, urging everyone not to respond to these calls; indicating it does not request for updating personal data through telephone.

MoC: The Ministry of Communications, represented by the postal sector, has warned of the spread of messages requesting data to send postal shipments, reports Al-Rai daily.

The ministry stated unknown messages include informing the customer that he has a shipment and the Ministry wants to deliver it to him, but due to non-availability of address, the shipment will be returned to the warehouse, and the customer is asked to register again via an electronic link that is sent to him.

After the unsuspecting victim registers on the link sent to him, this helps the fraudsters to steal the data. So the ministry has called on all those who receive such messages to beware and "not respond to this type of message," saying "the ministry does not send such messages and is not responsible in case if someone falls prey."

Venmo, other cash apps could be vulnerable, watchdog warns

Customers of Venmo, PayPal and CashApp should not store their money with those apps for the long term because the funds might not be safe during a crisis, the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau warned Thursday.

The alert comes several weeks after the failure of Silicon Valley Bank, Signature Bank and First Republic Bank, which all experienced bank runs after fearful customers with uninsured deposits pulled their money

en masse.

The Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation insures bank accounts up to \$250,000. But money stored in Venmo or CashApp or Apple Cash is not being held in a traditional bank account. So, if there is an event similar to a bank run with those payment apps, those funds may not be protected.

Some of the funds may be eligible for pass-through insurance coverage if customers do certain activities with

the apps, the CFPB said, but generally by default the apps are not covered by deposit insurance. For example, if a customer opened a PayPal Savings account, it would have deposit insurance through PayPal's partner bank, Synchrony Bank.

But the general PayPal account is not covered by insurance. For Apple Cash, which can be insured through Green Dot Bank, it requires a user to verify their identity to get deposit insurance. (AP)

online banking issue resolved: Chase

Customers of Chase's online banking services saw double transactions, fees and payments in their accounts on Friday, in a glitch that was not fixed until late in the day. Numerous Chase customers had posted on social media that their rent or bill payments were taken out of their accounts twice and reported hold times with customer service approaching more than an hour. The New York-based bank is one of the country's largest financial institutions with millions of online customers. Transactions over Zelle, the bank's own

peer-to-peer payment service, were also impacted with Chase customers. Chase said late Friday that the bank had "resolved the underlying issue" and was in the process of issuing refunds or reversing transactions for customers.

Online banking services, while usually reliable, sometimes spectacularly fail or have temporary outages that tend to spook their customers. Banks typically will resolve an error in their services within hours, and no customer is liable for any errors in their accounts that occur when these happen. (AP)

Market Movements

02-06-2023

Change Closing pts

	Change	Closing pts
JAPAN - Nikkei	+376.21	31,524.22
PHILIPPINES - PSEI	+81.43	6,512.01
PAKISTAN - KSE 100	+82.51	41,356.23
UK - FTSE 100	+117.01	7,607.28
EUROPE - Euro Stoxx 50	+65.91	4,323.52

Business

Q8Aviation now operates at two largest airports on continent of Oceania

Kuwait Petroleum Int'l wins fuel supply contract for Melbourne Airport

Other Voices

OPEC ... Guessing game

By Kamel Al-Harami
Independent Oil Analyst

TOMORROW is not far away to know the outcome of OPEC's meeting in Vienna, as well as the possibility of Russia joining the meeting as a strong partner for creating OPEC+.



Al-Harami

Everyone is betting on the outcome of the meeting to know if there is going to be an increase in the oil production or if there will be more production cuts or if the status quo will be retained to leave the production level as it is, because last month, voluntary production cuts of 1.5 million barrels were implemented.

Oil prices are still in the low 70s level, which is not adding much to the OPEC's price target of above \$80 per barrel. This does not seem forthcoming at the moment, despite every effort being exerted by reducing oil production rates. Also, Russian oil production rate remains unchanged, despite the G7 boycott, with a \$65 price gap on its crude oil sales, and \$100 for petroleum products.

At such cheap prices, India and Russia are finding it very comfortable to buy and import as much oil available in their countries, and to convert the same raw oil into products, which are then shipped to G7 countries at international prices. The same can be done by other producing countries, as they can buy cheap finished products from Russia, use it domestically and sell their own products to international market, thus making huge margin

on the imported Russian products. The concern is the volume that other countries are going to push into the market, which makes things awkward in terms of the reason why the oil price is not at the level of \$80. The USA, Brazil and Canada are pushing more oils, something perhaps OPEC did not take into consideration. It also seems as though the USA will again reach its historical level of close to 12 million barrels.

It certainly will not be good for OPEC+ to reduce production at this time, especially when the demand for gasoline is on the rise due to the start of the driving season as well as the upcoming July holidays, as which the preparation for autumn will begin and the demand for oil will pick up again.

It seems the best option for OPEC is to leave everything in its place and let the market forces do its magic with the prices. The demand will soon start rising, so there is no need to annoy the consumers.

One last observation... The meeting of OPEC+ tomorrow is going to be different this time with the absence of the biggest news agencies - Reuters and Bloomberg - as they were not officially invited this time. However, that will not stop them from performing their core business of reporting and analyzing the outcome. We hope it will be the last time, and they will be back with the rest of the media next time.

In conclusion, we hope the result of OPEC+ will not be shocking, but will be within the expectations of no change in the production level. OPEC has its monthly agenda to take further actions if needed!

□ □ □

Email: nafikuw@yaho.com

'Shrink the room'

How Biden, McCarthy struck debt limit deal, staved off catastrophe

WASHINGTON, June 3, (AP) - It was advice that Mitch McConnell had offered to Joe Biden once already: To resolve the debt limit standoff, he needed to strike a deal with House Speaker Kevin McCarthy - and McCarthy alone. But after the first meeting of the top four congressional leaders with the president in early May, the Senate minority leader felt the need to reemphasize his counsel.

After returning from the White House that day, McConnell called the president to privately urge him to "shrink the room" - meaning no direct involvement in the talks for himself, Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer and House Minority Leader Hakeem Jeffries.

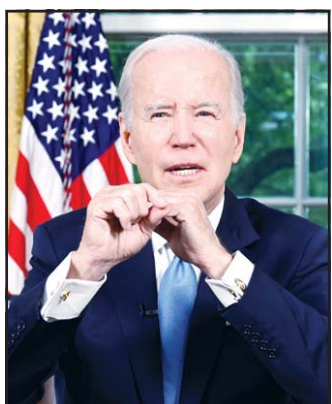
That, McConnell stressed to Biden, was the only way to avert a potentially economy-rattling default. A week later, Biden and McCarthy essentially adopted that path, tapping a handful of trusted emissaries to negotiate a deal that would lift the debt limit. It was a turning point in an impasse that, until then, seemed intractable.

Debate

Having lived through the debacle of a 2011 debt limit fight, Biden would not entertain any concessions for a task that he viewed as Congress' fundamental responsibility. But McCarthy, prodded by conservatives insisting on sweeping changes to federal spending, was intent on using the nation's borrowing authority as leverage even if it edged the U.S. closer to default.

The scramble that ensued showed how two of the most powerful figures in Washington - who share a belief in the power of personal relationships, despite not having much of one between themselves - jointly staved off an unprecedented default that could have ravaged the economy and held unknown political consequences.

It's a tale of an underestimated House speaker determined to defy expectations that he couldn't address a complex debt limit fight, and a president who tuned out the noise from his



President Joe Biden addresses the nation on the budget deal that lifts the federal debt limit and averts a U.S. government default, from the Oval Office of the White House in Washington, Friday, June 2, 2023. (AP)

own party to ensure a default would not happen on his watch.

But it was also a standoff largely instigated by Republicans who argued they needed to use the debt limit threat as a cudgel to rein in federal spending. And even with a resounding 314-117 House vote - followed by a 63-36 Senate vote - the episode is testing the durability of McCarthy's speakership and his ability to tame a restive hard-right flank.

McCarthy, now emboldened, is unfazed.

He reflected back on his election as speaker after the House passed the debt limit package, referring to his long battle to claim the gavel in January. "Every question you gave me (was), what could we survive, what could we even do? I told you then, it's not how you start, it's how you finish."

This account of the weeks-long saga of how Washington defused the debt limit crisis is based on interviews with lawmakers, senior White House officials and top congressional aides, some who requested anonymity to discuss details of private negotiations.

KUWAIT CITY, June 3, (KUNA): Q8Aviation, the aviation fuels marketing arm of Kuwait Petroleum International, has gained a major contract to supply and market jet fuel at Melbourne Airport in Australia.

Together with Sydney Airport, Q8Aviation now operates at the two largest airports on the continent of Oceania, the company said in a press release on Saturday.

The Company's Executive Vice President for Planning and Finance, Waleed Al Ben Ali, and Q8Aviation's

General Manager, Naser Ben-Butain were in attendance at Melbourne to commence the operation and to meet stakeholders.

The new fuel service at Melbourne Airport is expected to position Q8Aviation amongst the biggest suppliers in the Australian jet fuel market, it added.

Success

Kuwait Petroleum's President and CEO Shafi Al-Ajmi commented: "Asia-Pacific continues to be one of the world's fastest growing regions for

aviation and this success is a significant step towards realizing our ambitions."

"Growing our aviation fuel business is one of the pillars of our strategy and working with the second largest airport in Australia show our customers how committed we are to serve them around the world. The excellent effort by the team at Q8Aviation has resulted in this success, and I congratulate everyone for their skill and tenacity throughout the lengthy and detailed discussions," he added.

Kuwait Petroleum International is

the international downstream subsidiary of Kuwait Petroleum Corporation, ranked as one of the world's largest national oil companies.

Established in 1983, KPI operates over 4700 service stations across Europe under its brands, Q8, Q8Easy and Tango, and provides over 70 airlines with jet fuel in major airport hubs.

It also runs two state-of-the-art lubricant blending plants in Belgium and Italy under the brand Q8Oils and owns shares in three joint venture refineries in Italy, Vietnam, and Oman.

Wall Street leaps, nearly escapes its bear market

US stocks rally after strong jobs report

NEW YORK, June 3, (AP) - Stocks rushed higher Friday after a strong report on the U.S. job market suggested a recession may not be as close as Wall Street had feared.

The S&P 500 leaped 1.5% for the latest surge in a rally that vaulted it nearly 20% since mid-October. That put Wall Street's main measure of health on the edge of entering what's called a "bull market" despite a long list of challenges.

The Dow Jones Industrial Average rallied 701 points, or 2.1%, while the Nasdaq composite gained 1.1%.

The indexes got a boost after a report showed employers unexpectedly accelerated their hiring last month. It's the latest signal that the job market remains remarkably solid despite much higher interest rates, and it offers a hefty pillar of support for an economy that's begun to slow.

Areas of the market that do best when the economy is healthy led a widespread rally, including stocks of industrial companies, energy producers and banks. Exxon Mobil rose 2.3% as prices for crude oil climbed on hopes that a resilient economy would burn more fuel.

Perhaps more importantly for markets, the Labor Department's monthly jobs report also showed a slowdown in increases for workers' pay even as hiring strengthened.

While that may discourage workers trying to keep up with prices at the register, investors believe slower wage gains will mean less upward pressure on inflation across the economy.

Hikes

That in turn could allow the Federal Reserve to take it easier on its hikes to interest rates meant to lower inflation. High rates do that by slowing the economy and hurting investment prices, and they've already caused pain for the banking and manufacturing industries.

The unemployment rate also rose by more than expected last month, moving up to 3.7% from a five-decade low. That implies a bit more slack in the job market and seems to conflict with the gangbusters hiring numbers, whose data comes from a separate survey.

Following the report, traders were largely expecting the Fed to hold interest rates steady at its next meeting in two weeks. If it does, that would be the first time it hasn't hiked rates in more than a year.

A pause on rate hikes would offer some breathing room for an economy that's already seen manufacturing contract sharply for months.

Higher rates have also hurt many smaller and mid-sized banks, in part because customers have pulled deposits in search of higher interest at money-market funds.

Several high-profile bank failures since March have shaken the market, leading Wall Street to hunt for other possible weak links.

Several under the heaviest scrutiny rallied following the jobs report. PacWest Bancorp leaped 14.1%, for example, to trim its loss for the year to 66.6%.

But Fed officials have also warned recently that a pause on rate hikes in June wouldn't necessarily mean the end to hikes.

Traders are increasingly expecting the Fed to follow up a June pause with a July hike to interest rates, according to data from CME Group. That helped

push Treasury yields higher.

The yield on the 10-year Treasury climbed to 3.69% from 3.60% late Thursday. It helps set rates for mortgages and other important loans.

The two-year Treasury yield, which moves more on expectations for Fed action, jumped to 4.50% from 4.34%.

Also helping to support Wall Street was the Senate giving final approval late Thursday to a deal that

will allow the U.S. government to avoid a potentially disastrous default on its debt. The move was widely expected by investors, and the deal moves next to President Joe Biden for his signature.

Lululemon Athletica jumped 11.3% after it reported stronger profit for the latest quarter than expected, crediting accelerating sales trends in China and other factors. It also raised its forecast for results over the full year.

MongoDB soared 28% after the database company reported bigger profit than expected. The company said it's confident it will benefit from the wave of enthusiasm around artificial intelligence that's swept the business world.

A frenzy around AI has helped the S&P 500 climb to its highest levels since August. Nvidia, whose chips are helping to power the move into AI, has soared 169% this year, for example.

American United School of Kuwait Celebrates Class of 2023



AUS Class of 2023



Ebtisam El-Harbi, Salutatorian



Leena Lee, Valedictorian

The American United School of Kuwait (AUS) proudly commemorated its 5th Graduation Ceremony for the Class of 2023. A total of 64 exceptional graduates were honored, including 6 with honors diplomas and 10 with distinguished diplomas.

Esteemed guests, including Shaikha Dana Nasser Al-Sabah, Mr. Meshal Ali, and Sir James Holtsnider, joined the ceremony to deliver warm greetings.

Mr. Abdulaziz Al Loughani, CEO of Floward, inspired the graduates to make a lasting impact and pursue their passions. Valedictorian Lina Lee and salutatorian Ebtisam

AlHarbi shared profound messages on unity and embracing change.

Mr. Michael Winninger, Director of AUS, congratulated the graduates, encouraging them to believe in themselves and chase their dreams.

The AUS graduates will pursue higher education in renowned institutions and countries worldwide.

Established in 2013, AUS provides an exceptional American education, nurturing responsible global citizens.

The graduation ceremony celebrated the collective efforts of the graduates, their families, faculty, and the AUS community, reflecting the school's commitment to excellence.

ABK opens its first interactive digital branch in Al Khiran Mall

Branch features first-of-its-kind hologram technology

KUWAIT CITY, June 3: Al Ahli Bank of Kuwait (ABK), a financial institution which strives to embrace cutting-edge banking solutions, has recently unveiled its latest offering to the Kuwaiti banking industry: a pioneering first-of-its-kind digital branch located at Al Khiran Mall.

Serving as a testament to the Bank's unwavering commitment towards elevating customer experiences through state-of-the-art, secure, and agile digital banking services, this groundbreaking initiative further reinforces ABK's status as a front-runner in the realm of financial innovation. By integrating the latest technology into its operational workflow, the Bank endeavors to remain a prominent figure in the evolving landscape of the Kuwaiti banking industry.

ABK celebrated the inauguration of its new branch in Al Khiran Mall, attended by Abdulla Al Sumait, Acting Group CEO, Loai Muqames, CEO-Kuwait, Johair Marafi, Acting General Manager of Retail Banking, as well as several members of management and representatives of Kuwaiti media outlets. Attendees were introduced to the most prominent services offered at the new branch which serve as part of the Bank's digital transformation plan aimed to enhance customer service.

The new digital branch in Al Khiran boasts intelligent and innovative technologies, which are considered the first of their kind in Kuwait, including interactive digital screens that enable visitors to utilize them without the need for touch. The branch also features a never-seen-before in Kuwait hologram feature that provides customers with a unique banking experience.

On this momentous occasion, Marafi expressed her enthusiasm and said, "The unveiling of ABK's digital branch, which represents an embodiment of our customer-centric approach and steadfast commitment to meeting the evolving needs of our esteemed clientele, underpins our unwavering focus towards facilitating seamless, efficient, and satisfaction-guaranteed banking experiences. Aligned with our ambitions, we relentlessly strive to exceed customer expectations, thereby elevating our position as a leading player in the rapidly-shifting landscape of the Kuwaiti banking industry."

In line with ABK's unwavering mission to provide exceptional banking services to all customers across Kuwait, the recently established digital branch will not only cater to the residents of Al Khiran, but also the neighboring areas. This development serves as an integral milestone which helps



ABK officials pose for a group photo after a pioneering first-of-its-kind digital branch located at Al Khiran Mall.



Cutting the inaugural ribbon.



The interior of the digital branch.

revolutionize customers' banking experience across Kuwait with enhanced accessibility and convenience.

Marafi continued, "The launch of our first digital branch in Al Khiran Mall embodies our approach to keeping up with digital developments. The branch's modern and distinctive design delivers a futuristic environment supported by unprecedented technology that comes together to create a pioneering banking experience that further enhances our position in the Kuwaiti market amid the rapidly developing needs of the local banking industry."

Equipped with the latest technologies, the branch reinforces ABK's leadership position in the domain of modern banking, enriching customers with added value through swift account opening, hassle-free transactions, and high security measures. The new digital branch offers various self-service options for customers of all segments, including the provision of a digital signature service through devices in collaboration with the Public Authority for Civil Information including a range of tablet devices. In addition to this, the branch pro-

vides self-service ATMs that offer cash deposit services, higher cash withdrawals, check deposits, account statements, customer account transfers, card payments, card and account inquiries, loan applications, card replacement requests, PIN resets, card activations, and limit increases for on-line and card withdrawals. The Bank plans to introduce more services in the near future for its customers.

Moreover, traditional ATMs are available at the new branch which offer cash deposit and withdrawal services, cardless withdrawals, pass-

word changes, transfers to customer accounts and other beneficiaries, card payments, check deposits, and account statements, among others.

She continued, "To inquire about any products or services, customers can also video chat with our staff through the available self-service machines which will facilitate smooth and instant transactions. We strive to continue to introduce the latest technologies to the banking sector to attract more customers to enjoy the Bank's various benefits."

Marafi emphasized that ABK is

keen to offer innovative services which enhance customers' banking experience. These plans confirm ABK's strong focus on digital transformation to enhance customer satisfaction.

She continued, "ABK remains committed to benchmarking its services against the highest international standards in the banking industry and continually fostering innovation through the introduction of worthwhile products and services. Our commitment to technology-driven banking and unparalleled customer service underscores our ambition to lead the charge towards digital transformation and maintain our position as a leading bank in the Kuwaiti market."

Furthermore, Marafi highlighted the significance of the branch in catering to customers' ever-evolving and burgeoning requirements. Aligned with the Bank's unwavering commitment towards technology-driven banking, the new digital branch adheres to the highest quality standards and benchmarks to elevate the Bank's capabilities in delivering advanced banking products and services.

Marafi stated, "The launch of our new digital branch comes amid the growing use of technology to complete banking transactions quickly and securely. ABK will continue to innovate services and products to meet all customers' needs by opening more digital branches, and introducing more digital offers, products, and services that enhance our position among other banks in the Kuwaiti market." She added, "We also strive to continuously develop the capabilities of our team to keep pace with the continuous change in customers' needs and consistently exceed their expectations."

ABK's new digital branch is operational during Al Khiran Mall's specified working hours from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. on weekdays and from 10 am to 11 pm on weekends. Marafi clarified that a team of the Bank's employees will be present to guide customers on how to use the self-service machines in the branch, ensuring that they are familiarized with the latest technologies and highest security measures.

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.

Supporting the project is in line with the KFH's national and societal strategy: Al Marzouq

KFH signs design & supervision contract for Al Mubarakia reconstruction project

KUWAIT CITY, June 3: Deputy Director of Kuwait Municipality, Eng. Saud Al-Dabbous, praised Kuwait Finance House (KFH)'s major role in restoring the damaged area in Al Mubarakia fire incident, reflecting the CSR strategy of the Bank.

Al-Dabbous made this statement during the signing ceremony of design and supervision contract for Al Mubarakia reconstruction project at KFH Auto- Shuwaikh, with the attendance of KFH Chairman, Hamad Al Marzouq and Chairman of Gulf Consult, Eng. Najla Alghanim.

Al-Dabbous stressed the significant role of KFH in accelerating the efforts to rebuild Al Mubarakia by donating to the project and appointing Gulf Consult for its expertise in heritage-led designs in tandem with the latest and highest global engineering standards.

KFH Chairman - Hamad Abdulmohsen Al Marzouq

KFH Chairman, Hamad Al Marzouq, confirmed that KFH is offering utmost support and harnessing all efforts for the reconstruction of Al Mubarakia as part of its societal and national strategy. He added that KFH's initiative involves restoring about 17 buildings in the affected area, in addition to the development of some adjacent buildings in the market with an estimated cost of KD 8 million.

In a press statement, Al Marzouq pointed out that KFH, in coordination with Kuwait Municipality, is keen to form a consulting team specialized in architectural heritage to preserve the authentic architecture of Kuwait, with the aim of executing the project at the required level and according to the specifications of Kuwaiti heritage that

entrench the historical legacy of this important landmark.

He went on to say that KFH is moving forward with the project as planned, commending the cooperation efforts of the Cabinet, Kuwait Municipality and the consulting team which was formed by a decision of His Excellency the Minister of State for Municipal Affairs, as well as the relevant governmental bodies.

He affirmed the continuous leadership of KFH in social responsibility, pointing out that the Bank has, through its extended journey, a solid record of social and national initiatives and has made various community contributions that cemented its leading position in sustainable development.

Al Marzouq extended his sincere appreciation to His Highness the Emir of Kuwait, Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, His Highness the Crown Prince, Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, and His Highness the Prime Minister of Kuwait Sheikh Ahmad Al-Nawaf Al-Jaber Al-Sabah for supporting KFH's initiative, which is part of its commitment towards Kuwait and its people.

KFH Executive Manager General Services - Ayman Altatabaei

KFH Executive Manager for General Services, Ayman Altatabaei, said that KFH has carried out many field-work projects related to the rebuilding of Al Mubarakia market, which included implementing the highest security and safety standards in clearing the affected area, stressing the due care that KFH takes to preserve the historical and heritage features in the damaged area.

Key oil producers to discuss pushing prices up

VIENNA, June 3, (KUNA): The two mainstream oil organizations, OPEC and OPEC+, are scheduled to hold meetings in Vienna on Saturday and Sunday to revise output policies and their impact on crude oil prices.

OPEC's 186th ministerial meeting is due to kick off later today (Saturday) at the organization's headquarters.

According to insiders, recent drop of the oil price to the level of USD 70 per barrel might prompt the organization and its allies in the OPEC+ group to cut supplies to push up the prices and maintain stability of the international market.

The stakeholders are currently holding behind-the-curtain talks in Vienna on proposals to shore up the

crude prices and trim supplies, ahead of the scheduled official sessions.

OPEC groups 13 key oil-producing states and OPEC+ comprises Russia, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Bahrain, Brunei, Malaysia, Mexico, Oman, South Sudan and Sudan. The latter's share of the global oil output accounts to 40 percent.

Last April, these oil producers agreed on cutting the production by more than one million barrels per day, impacting positively on the prices to a certain extent, however they have recently started to turn noticeably bearish.

The word abuzz within the oil quarters is that OPEC+ might decide to slash the output by one million bpd.

DUBAI, UAE, June 3, (AP): MOOSEE, a leading vape brand from China, is excited to announce its participation in the World Vape Show, taking place from June 21-23, 2023 at the Dubai World Trade Centre in the UAE. MOOSEE invites all vape enthusiasts, retailers, wholesalers, and distributors to visit Booth No. 1200, where they will showcase their latest innovative product, the ATOM BAR 8000.

"We are thrilled to be joining the World Vape Show and introducing our latest product, ATOM BAR 8000, to the international market. As a brand, MOOSEE is committed to providing high-quality, natural-based taste and healthier vaping options to vapers around the world. We hope to use this opportunity to connect with global partners and work together to make a better life for all," said Lily, Sales Director of MOOSEE.

The ATOM BAR 8000 is a game-changing fruit flavor electronic cigarette that offers a superior vaping experience with its unique design and features. Unlike most disposable vapes, the ATOM BAR 8000 boasts a generous 15mL e-Juice capacity and is powered by a 550mAh integrated rechargeable battery, providing up to 8000 puffs to maximize users' enjoyment. Its stylish, ergonomic capsule appearance is not only visually appealing but also comfortable to hold.

Equipped with a long-lasting mesh coil, the ATOM BAR 8000 delivers consistent flavor-boosting and satisfying throat hits, ensuring the same great taste from the first puff to the last. The device's rechargeable battery and Type-C port make it an economical choice for vapers looking for a high-quality, sustainable option.

The World Vape Show, which de-

buted in September 2021, has quickly become the fastest-growing vape event worldwide, with expos in the UK, UAE, South America, and Asia. This prestigious event offers global manufacturers and suppliers a valuable opportunity to showcase their products to thousands of international retailers, wholesalers, distributors, and consumers.

Since its establishment, MOOSEE has been committed to delivering superior, natural-based vaping experiences to customers across 30 countries and regions spanning North America, Latin America, Europe, Southeast Asia, and Oceania. With an unwavering emphasis on "quality first" and a dedication to continuous innovation, MOOSEE has already accomplished a number of projects, providing the global vaping community with cutting-edge technology and exceptional devices.

With the vape and e-cigarette industry projected to be worth \$182.64 billion by 2030, the World Vape Show is the perfect platform for MOOSEE to present its innovative ATOM BAR 8000 and solidify its position as a leader in the market. Don't miss the chance to experience the ATOM BAR 8000 and meet the MOOSEE team at Booth No. 1200 during the World Vape Show from June 21-23, 2023, at the Dubai World Trade Centre. Learn firsthand how MOOSEE is revolutionizing the vaping industry with its commitment to quality, innovation, and user satisfaction.

MOOSEE is a brand of vaping devices from DATATECH, a professional electronic cigarette product research and development and brand operation company. Founded in 2020, MOOSEE is dedicated to developing, producing, and selling high-quality e-cigarettes for vapers worldwide.



Hamad Al-Marzouq, sandwiched by Saud Al-Dabbous and Naglaa Al-Ghanim.

'We are thrilled to be joining the World Vape Show'

MOOSEE to showcase innovative ATOM BAR 8000

Al Mulla and Behbehani unveil the 'all-new' Grand Wagoneer at the Al Mulla Auto Show

KUWAIT CITY, June 3: Al Mulla & Behbehani Motor Company, the authorized distributor of Alfa Romeo, Chrysler, Dodge, Jeep, Ram, Fiat, Abarth and the Mopar® brands, announces the launch of the all-new Grand Wagoneer by Jeep, the most luxurious and technologically advanced SUV in the brand's history. The reveal took place as part of the Al Mulla Auto Show at the 360 Kuwait in the presence of His Excellency Mr. James Holtsnider, Deputy Chief of Mission of the U.S. Embassy in the State of Kuwait accompanied by Mr. Talal Behbehani and Mr. Imad Flayhan – Board Members of Al Mulla & Behbehani Motor Company.

Commenting on the event, Mr. Imad Flayhan said: "We are delighted to announce the launch of the all-new Grand Wagoneer by Jeep, the most luxurious and technologically advanced SUV in the Jeep brand's legendary 80-year history, during the Al Mulla Auto Show, and to celebrate this magnificent occasion in the presence of His Excellency Mr. James Holtsnider, Deputy Chief of Mission of the U.S. Embassy in the State of Kuwait. Adding, "At Al Mulla and Behbehani, we pride ourselves on being the catalysts of presenting innovative new automobiles for the car enthusiasts in Kuwait. Our partnership with American auto manufacturers goes back to many

decades, and has consistently seen us deliver Al Mulla and Behbehani's promise of Excellence, Professionalism and Innovation across our diverse portfolio of brands and taking them to new heights in the automotive industry."

With the launch of the the-all-new Grand Wagoneer by Jeep in Kuwait customers now have the opportunity to experience the car's renowned capability courtesy of three available 4x4 systems, exceptional driving dynamics, powerful performance, advanced technology, safety and a new level of comfort for up to eight passengers – all wrapped in a sophisticated and authentic new design.

Featuring three 4x4 systems and an all-new architecture that delivers exemplary on-road driving performance, the 2023 Grand Wagoneer epitomizes luxury and adventure. The bold and distinctive exterior is complimented with artisan levels of craftsmanship in the interior with opulent Palermo leather trimmed seating and a fully digital cockpit with leading-edge technologies that are exquisitely presented for ease of use.

The most technologically advanced Grand Wagoneer ever, also features next-generation innovations, including the new advanced Uconnect 5 system and 75 inches of total digital display screen area. This consists of 45 inches of



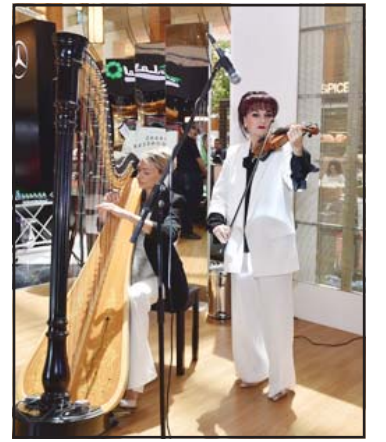
Top and above: Photos in event.

screen across the front dashboard, Fire TV integration, digital rearview mirror and exclusive Rear Seat Monitoring Camera. Over 120 leading-edge safety and security features are also a part of the 2023 Grand Wagoneer inventory including innovative applications of technologies that connect the drive, vehicle and road. These include segment-leading features that enhance a driver's field of vision, help make instrumentation easier to see and enable driver-assist capabilities that support collision avoidance. Autonomous vehicle capabilities, hand-free active driving assist, night vision with pedestrian and animal detection, intersection collision assist, drowsy driver detection, digital rearview mirror and 360-degree surround view camera are just some of the many attributes of the cutting-edge, large segment SUV.

The 2023 Grand Wagoneer has also collaborated with distinguished audio brand, McIntosh, to bring an exclusive, high-fidelity audio system to a vehicle for the very first time. For more than 70 years, McIntosh has created high-quality, handcrafted, American-made audio products and systems for homes, concert venues and iconic moments in music history across the globe. Now its signature audio performance has been perfectly tailored to the Grand Wagoneer with patented technology

that gives a sense of space and recreates a realistic ambience of a musical venue – concert or recording studio. In conjunction with the outstanding audio quality, the McIntosh logos appearing on the door speaker grills are backlit in the brand's signature blue color, adding to the ambience created by the interior's custom ambient lighting.

In another industry leading innovation, the 2023 Grand Wagoneer features the new 3.0-liter Hurricane twin-turbo, inline, six-cylinder engine, that that delivers better fuel economy and fewer emissions than larger engines while at the same time generates more horsepower and torque than many competitors' naturally aspirated V-8 engines.



Gulf Bank: New Salary Account

Kuwaiti customers get one yr grace period to repay 1st loan installment

KUWAIT CITY, June 3: In addition to receiving cash gift of up to KD 1,200 Mohammed Al-Qattan: We are keen to keep pace with the requirements of customers and provide them with the best competitive advantages in the banking market.

In addition to the many benefits provided by the 'Get Cash in A Flash' offer, and in the occasion of the summer season, Gulf Bank has added a new feature for Kuwaiti customers who join the Salary Account and transfer their salaries to Gulf Bank – by offering a cash gift of up to KD 1,200, in addition to a year-long grace period to repay the first loan installment.

Hence, this means that customers who transfer their salary to Gulf Bank and apply for a loan, have a period of 12-months to payback the first installment, following the date of obtaining it.

Furthermore, Gulf Bank's salary account customers enjoy many other benefits, such as: Automatic enrollment in the best and fastest rewards program in Kuwait, discounts at leading car dealerships, a personal loan of up to KD25,000 with a repayment period of 5 years, housing loans up to KD70,000 with a repayment period of 15 years, as well as a free credit card and safety deposit box for one year.

On this occasion, Gulf Bank's General Manager of Consumer Banking, Mr. Mohammed Al-Qattan, said: "This offer applies to newly hired Kuwaiti employees with a salary of KD 350 and above, as well as those working in the government and oil sectors."

He added: "We are keen to keep pace with the requirements of cus-

tomers and provide them with the best competitive advantages in the banking market," noting that Gulf Bank's Salary Account is the only account in Kuwait that provides special offers tailored to fit the customer's needs – as part of the Bank's keenness to reward its customers and help them achieve their dreams.

Al-Qattan also indicated that customers can open an account with Gulf Bank or transfer their salaries, in just a minute, through Gulf Bank's mobile application or website – stressing that Gulf Bank constantly strives to provide a distinctive banking experience to customers by providing solutions that are simple, efficient and transparent.

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

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



Mohammad Al-Qattan – General Manager Consumer Banking.

stc concludes talent dev programme in 'collaboration' with McKinsey & Co

IBDAA Academy

KUWAIT CITY, June 3: Kuwait Telecommunications Company – stc, a world-class digital leader providing innovative services and platforms to customers, enabling the digital transformation in Kuwait, announced the successful conclusion of its talent academy program called 'IBDAA Academy', which was organized in collaboration with the global management consulting firm, McKinsey & Company. The talent development program aimed to enhance the competencies and abilities of top-performing personnel by cultivating a stimulating and supportive learning environment that emphasizes personal growth and development.

Following the conclusion of the academy, a graduation ceremony was held to celebrate and recognize participating employees for their achievements. Employees were awarded with certificates of completion in the presence of the Company's Executive management team in recognition of their hard work and effort throughout the program. IBDAA Academy was introduced by stc to enhance the skills and develop the capabilities of high-potential employees (HIPOs) in preparation of them potentially taking more senior and strategic responsibilities within the organization. Through a carefully crafted curriculum that aligned with stc's corporate objectives and strategy, the academy provided HIPOs with the necessary skills and knowledge to act as mentors to other aspiring employees. In addition to providing educational opportunities, the academy played a crucial role in enhancing employee engagement and contribution, which will in return lead to improved employee retention and reduced turnover of high-performing staff.

Commenting on the program's conclusion, Chief Human Resources Officer of stc, engineer Ahmad Al-Hammad, said, "We are proud to witness all the participants who effectively utilized



Chief Executive Officer, Mazzyad Al-Harbi, among the number of employees participating in the IBDAA Academy

the valuable experiences and learning opportunities provided through this program that was organized in collaboration with our esteemed partners, McKinsey & Company. Investing in our people is a key component in our strategy and that will in return assist us in achieving operational excellence and organizational success. That is why we are committed to providing employees with ample resources to develop their capabilities, competencies, and skills for them to achieve their objectives. Having said that, we continuously identify top talent within our organization and ensure that they have the support they need to take on more responsibilities and larger roles to maintain our pioneering position in the market."

Al-Hammad expressed his sincere gratitude to McKinsey & Company for their unwavering support throughout all stages of launching and concluding the program. He added their partnership and expertise have been instrumental in ensuring the success of the program and the growth of stc's HIPOs.

Al-Hammad, added, "At stc, we are dedicated to nurturing the growth and development of our current and future leaders, ensuring that they are well-prepared to handle diverse scenarios and achieve favorable outcomes not only for our organization but also for themselves. To achieve this, stc has introduced various programs such as the annual training programs, online learning for employees, and other platforms that educate and build competencies, providing real work experience. IBDAA Academy was a program that aligned with stc's core values and HR strategy, and we are always on the lookout for similar sustainable programs to em-

power our employees while creating a positive impact in the community."

To find out more about stc's events, promotions, and sponsorships, follow stc's official social media platforms, visit our people is a key component in our strategy and that will in return assist us in achieving operational excellence and organizational success. That is why we are committed to providing employees with ample resources to develop their capabilities, competencies, and skills for them to achieve their objectives. Having said that, we continuously identify top talent within our organization and ensure that they have the support they need to take on more responsibilities and larger roles to maintain our pioneering position in the market."

stc offers high internet speeds due to the implementation of the most advanced 5G network and deployment of the largest network nationwide. In 2021, stc was the first operator in Kuwait to launch the latest 5G Standalone technology dubbed 'FULL 5G' that brings the 5G experience to a new level with better speeds, lower latency, and improved coverage.

stc's CSR program focuses on outreach to the local community with a primary focus on health, environment, entrepreneurship, sports, and education through contributing and supporting various community-driven initiatives.



Ahmad Al Hammad

KIB is sponsor of Bonds, Loans & Sukuk Middle East 2023

Kuwait International Bank (KIB) announced that it will attend and participate as a bronze sponsor at this year's edition of the Bonds, Loans and Sukuk Middle East 2023 conference. The sponsorship of the Middle East's largest corporate and investment banking event comes as part of the Bank's commitment to actively develop the financial sector in the local and regional markets by supporting relevant events and forums in this field.

On behalf of KIB, Hesham Al-Mubarak, General Manager of Wholesale

Banking, Acting General Manager of the International Banking and Large Corporate Department; Khaled Ismael, Assistant General Manager of International Banking and Large Corporate Department; Haisam Mustafa, Head of Finance Institutions; and George Dardarian, Unit Head of Fund Management, will be attending the conference, set to be held on the 6th and 7th of June at Madinat Jumeirah Conference Centre, Dubai.

Commenting on his participation, Al-Mubarak said: "The Bonds, Loans and

Sukuk Middle East 2023 conference serves as a unique platform to discuss the latest developments of local and international bonds, syndicated financing and sukuk markets. We are pleased to participate as a bronze sponsor of this distinguished conference that will bring together the elite of the industry to focus on ESG and sustainable finance solutions for the Middle East's markets. It also marks an opportunity to highlight KIB's strategic plans that aim to diversify its financing portfolio and broaden its scope of Islamic finance activities."



Hesham Al-Mubarak (left) and Jamal Al-Barrak.

Civil case filed by original brand

Duplicate Malabar Gold & Diamonds showroom in Pakistan shut down by authorities

ISLAMABAD, June 3: The case was filed by Malabar Gold & Diamonds against Mr. Muhammad Faizan, who illegally used the Malabar Gold & Diamonds brand name to operate a jewellery store in Islamabad, Pakistan.

A civil case was filed by the brand in Pakistan, which resulted in a court order that immediately halted the illegal usage.

Malabar Gold & Diamonds clarified that it does not operate any showroom in Pakistan.

Malabar Gold & Diamonds, the 6th largest jewellery retailer globally with 317 retail outlets across the Middle East, the Far East, the USA & India, has won a major legal battle against brand impersonation in Islamabad, Pakistan. The case was filed by the brand against Mr. Muhammad Faizan, a Pakistani national, who was operating a jewellery store illegally in the name of Malabar Gold & Diamonds in Islamabad, Pakistan. In addition to using the brand name and other trademarks of Malabar Gold & Diamonds to operate his jewellery store, Mr. Faizan also managed social media pages in Pakistan using the brand name, brand ambassadors, and product images of Malabar Gold & Diamonds.

Upon the filing of the civil case by the legal team of Malabar Gold & Diamonds, the Pakistani court immediately ordered the take-down of all "Malabar Gold & Diamonds" sign boards and to stop all usage of the brand name and trademarks. As the accused refused to abide by the court orders, Malabar Gold & Diamonds filed a contempt petition in court, resulting in the accused being arrested, imprisoned, and presented in the Court. Since jail imprisonment was an assured outcome of the civil case, Mr. Faizan approached Malabar Gold & Diamonds for a settlement and subsequent agreement to the conditions put forth by the brand. This included the withdrawal of the trademark application filed by the accused for registering "Malabar Gold & Diamonds" under his name, and publishing confession and declaration in all editions of major English and Urdu newspapers chosen by Malabar Gold & Diamonds; all of which Mr. Faizan agreed to and complied.



The duplicate store being shut down after a court verdict.



Signage taken down after court verdict.

"Ours is a business that has been established on the foundation of trust. The brand value that we have painstakingly built over the years is very dear to us and any attempts to exploit the goodwill and reputation of the brand will be prevented. I sincerely assure our loyal customers that as is evident from this case, Malabar Gold & Diamonds will do all that is possible to prevent and discourage any such activities to protect the trust placed in us by our customers.", commented Malabar

Group Chairman, Mr. M.P Ahamed.

Any and all signboards carrying the Malabar Gold & Diamonds brand name and other trademark assets have since been removed by Mr. Faizan, who has admitted to exploiting Malabar Gold & Diamonds' global presence and brand recognition to mislead customers into thinking that his jewellery store was an authorized franchisee of Malabar Gold & Diamonds and draw advantage from their misconception.

Kuwait Airways launches first commercial flights to Antalya



Staff of Kuwait Airways pose for a group photo.

Flights scheduled for Mondays and Thursdays

KUWAIT CITY, June 3: As part of Kuwait Airways' continuous efforts to expand its network of destinations and develop its services to the highest levels of quality, the company announced the launch of its first scheduled commercial flights to the city of Antalya in the Republic of Turkey, with two flights a week on Mondays and Thursdays, commencing from 1 June 2023, and as part of its summer schedule for this year.

The Director of Network Planning at Kuwait Airways, Mrs. Shorouk Al-Awadhi stated, "We are pleased to announce the launch of our first scheduled flights to the city of Antalya in Turkey. Selecting Antalya as a destination complements the plans set by the company to expand its network of routes around the world, and to new destinations that will meet the requirements and preferences of its valued customers. The choice of Antalya as a destination comes after comprehensive research, taking into consideration the travel requirements of our customers. Kuwait Airways also focuses on launching other new destinations to Turkey due to the increasing demand from our valued customers, especially in the summer, the feasibility of these destinations and its benefits for the company. The Blue Bird will fly to five destinations in the Turkish Republic namely, Sabiha, Istanbul, Trabzon, Bodrum and Izmir."

Al-Awadhi added that Kuwait Airways is relentlessly striving to provide its passengers with diverse options for meeting their travel requirements with better services with the inclusion of new destinations, as well as offering them every means of comfort during their travel on board, starting from providing reservations for customers through all available channels and providing them appropriate services, from the check-in at Terminal 4, completing their travel procedures with ease and enjoying the Company's services

on board.

The Director of Corporate Communication, Public Relations, and Marketing, Mr. Khalid Al-Bustan stated, "Kuwait Airways is undergoing extensive preparations for the summer season of 2023, with new and varied summer destinations in alignment with its objectives to expand its network, linking Kuwait to the world. We expect to see a significant growth and recovery in this season in particular, with an increase of travel and boost in the tourism and hospitality sectors, as well as the commercial air transport sector in general. Today, we are pleased to announce the launch of our first flight to the city of Antalya in Turkey, which is a significant destination, based on the preferences of our valued customers due to its touristic attractions, ancient heritage as well as its historical and cultural landmarks."

Al-Bustan continued, "Kuwait Airways has made a leap in terms of launching new destinations and services, through the sincere efforts, and commitment of its dedicated employees to develop and expand the national carrier towards further growth. This is also through the implementation of its corporate strategy "Think New & Act New", which encapsulates our approach towards innovation and self-drive as we continue to drive growth and success to attain new levels of beyond excellence."

Al-Bustan indicated that Kuwait Airways has a young and diverse fleet of aircraft with the latest technology and features and the Airbus A320 was selected to facilitate the travel of passengers to and from Antalya due to its unique technological characteristics, which will enable customers to experience a comfortable and pleasant journey.

Al-Bustan concluded that Kuwait Airways had recently launched new and distinct services, in conjunction with the start of the summer season. These include the launch of Home Check-In Services for Royal and First Class passengers, complimentary Limousine services for premium class passengers, the Electronic Boarding Pass, the opening of the Elite Lounge, the BlueFi service offering text based chatting on board, and the Just Upgrade feature to upgrade travel class, which will be followed by various other services which will be launched.

It is worth noting that Kuwait Airways is dedicated to the comfort and convenience of its passengers as those traveling on Royal and First Class are allowed

to carry three pieces of baggage weighing 32 kilograms per piece. Business Class passengers can carry two pieces of baggage weighing 32 kilograms per piece and passengers on Economy Class carry two pieces of baggage weighing 23 kilograms per piece or one piece of 32 kilograms at different fare classes. Moreover, passengers travelling on Royal, First and Business classes can carry hand baggage not exceeding 11 kilograms and Economy Class passengers can carry hand baggage, that does not exceed 7 kilograms.

In addition, during the inaugural ceremony on the launching of Kuwait Airways' operations to Antalya, the Ambassador of the Republic of Turkey to the State of Kuwait, H.E. Tuba Sonmez stated, "Antalya is a very important destination for us. It is home to the most beautiful, and natural coastlines in the world with hotels to suit every preference and budget, with numerous alternatives for high-end leisure activities, available at small boutique hotels, tourist resorts and five-star hotels. Antalya with its picturesque nature, has archaeological and historical sites, museums, and conference centers. It is indeed a tourism paradise in every sense of the word."

Kuwait Airways' direct flights to Antalya will provide great convenience to our guests. The number of Kuwaitis who prefer Turkey as a holiday destination is increasing year by year. Looking at the statistics of recent years, there is a significant increase in the number of visitors from Kuwait after the pandemic. Last year, we hosted half a million Kuwaiti guests which is a record. We look forward to increasing the number this year, so increasing the number of direct flights is of great importance."

The inaugural ceremony on the launching of Kuwait Airways' operations to Antalya was attended by the Director of Network Planning at Kuwait Airways, Mrs. Shorouk Al-Awadhi and the Ambassador of the Republic of Turkey to the State of Kuwait, H.E. Tuba Sonmez and other officials. Moreover, the first flight to Antalya witnessed convenient services being provided to the passengers, from their check-in at Terminal 4, completing their travel procedures with ease and enjoying the Company's services on board its diverse fleet of aircraft. The passengers also expressed their satisfaction for the company's adherence to on time schedule of its flights and for choosing Kuwait Airways to travel to their preferred destination.

CEO, board members take part

AUB launches blood donation campaign at its headquarters

KUWAIT CITY, June 3: Ahli United Bank (AUB) has announced the launch of a Blood Donation Campaign for its employees in cooperation with the Kuwait Central Blood Bank (KCBB) on Thursday, June 1st at its headquarters, with participation of the Bank's CEO and board member, Mrs. Jehad Al-Humaidhi, and a large number of the Bank's employees.

In her comment on this initiative, Mrs. Jehad Al-Humaidhi said: This campaign was launched based on AUB's strong belief in the importance of blood donation, which serves as a vital source to enhance KCBB reserves, which constitute a lifeline for many patients and accident victims. Furthermore, this campaign is one of the initiatives of the bank CSR program to support the healthcare sector and its commitment to the development and service of the Kuwaiti community in all fronts. Whereby, the bank consistently collaborates with KCBB to support the community and raise health awareness among its members.

Al-Humaidhi added: "The employees of AUB did not hesitate for a moment to donate their blood, driven by their belief in the spirit of collective responsibility, solidarity, and giving to save the lives of others. We are extremely proud of their enthusiastic response to blood dona-

tion."

Al-Humaidhi expressed her heartfelt gratitude to KCBB staff for their cooperation and professionalism, which greatly contributed to the success of this campaign. She also urged all members of the community to come together and continue supporting awareness programs related to this vital issue.

From her part, the Head of Corporate Communications Department at AUB, Mrs. Faten Al-Tamimi said: "We are delighted to have continuous collaboration with KCBB in launching this campaign, which aims to encourage everyone to donate blood on a regular basis. In doing so, each individual contributes to maintaining an adequate blood supply."

Al-Tamimi added: The objective of AUB blood donation campaign is to instill a culture of volunteering by raising awareness and educating the local community about the importance of blood donation and its role in saving the lives of patients and the injured."

Al-Tamimi praised the importance of such significant initiatives that consistently help raise employees' awareness about the culture of blood donation. She emphasized the benefits that come from donating blood, not only for those who receive the donated blood but also for the donors themselves.



AUB launches a Blood Donation Campaign at its headquarters.

UAE in-country value projects driving billions to local firms

ABU DHABI, June 3, (Business Wire): More than \$27.23 billion has been redirected to the local economy since the UAE Ministry of Industry and Advanced Technology (MOIAT) and ADNOC launched major in-country value programs to support domestic industries.

Speaking at the Make in the Emirates Forum today, His Excellency Abdulla Al Shamsi, Assistant Undersecretary of MOIAT, said more than \$14.43 billion of investment was redirected to the local economy last year alone, an increase of 25 percent year-on-year.

"The National In-Country Value Program is a nationwide program that speaks one language across many different sectors," HE said. "It's one methodology and this is something we're very proud of because it benefits the private sector and when the private sector sees this it helps them prepare, invest, and spend."

The forum heard how the National ICV Program is "functioning well and accelerating."

The forum also heard how industrial zones are playing a critical role in the in the country's sustainable industrial development and broader economic prospects. Local industrial leaders described how they are utiliz-

ing alternative energy resources such as solar and hydrogen to reduce their carbon footprint.

The second edition of the Make it in the Emirates Forum concluded on Thursday with the UAE showcasing its unique value proposition to international investors.

Investors were invited to explore opportunities and competitive advantages, with panel discussions focusing on the National In-Country Value (ICV) Program, the role of industrial zones, competitive financing as a key enabler and local talent in the private sector.

The UAE's industrial exports reached \$47.6 billion in 2022, growing 49 on 2021. The industrial sector's contribution to GDP rose to \$49.5 billion in 2022, a 38 percent increase on 2020.

The Make it in the Emirates Forum is organized by the Ministry of Industry and Advanced Technology in partnership the Abu Dhabi Department of Economic Development (ADDED) and ADNOC.

On the first day of the forum, the UAE government announced \$2.7 billion in industrial offtake agreements, building on the \$29.9 billion of offtake agreements announced at the 2022 edition of the forum.

maker of Suboxone reaches \$102.5m settlement

The company that makes the opioid addiction treatment drug Suboxone has agreed to pay \$102.5 million to 41 states and the District of Columbia to settle claims that the company engaged in anticompetitive practices, it announced Friday.

The agreement with Indivior, based in North Chesterfield, Virginia, averts a trial that was scheduled to start later this year.

States, led by Wisconsin, claimed that the company, previously a subsidiary of Reckitt Benckiser Pharmaceuticals, made modest changes to Suboxone to extend patent protection and keep generic versions of the drug off the market.

Suboxone is a branded version of buprenorphine and naloxone. The case is distinct from claims brought by governments against other opioid makers,

claiming they helped cause or deepen a nationwide overdose crisis. Those have resulted in settlements totaling more than \$50 billion so far.

Under the terms of the deal, Indivior is to notify the states when it makes product modification or changes in corporate control.

The company said in a statement that settling the lawsuit will allow it to focus on its mission. (AP)

Roquette announces investment with Beren

Roquette, a leading provider of pharmaceutical excipients and global leader in plant-based ingredients, was pleased to announce a strategic investment with Beren Therapeutics P.B.C., and the launch of an innovation agreement to expand the full potential of Beren's cyclodextrin technologies and their medicinal applications.

Beren is a vertically integrated biopharmaceutical company focused on addressing the world's

most significant health challenges. Roquette recognizes the revolutionary potential of Beren's research to transform the market and the lives of millions of patients worldwide.

"Our refusal to stand still has helped us establish a leading market position and identify where the next big development in the pharma space is likely to emerge – and that's what we see in our new relationship with

Beren Therapeutics," comments Paul Smaltz, Vice President of Pharmaceutical Solutions at Roquette. "We've been impressed by Beren's work as a Public Benefit Corporation and their innovations in manufacturing and drug development. Beren's research indicates incredible untapped horizons in the cyclodextrin market that enable tackling the world's greatest health challenges. (AP)

New tools can expedite cancer diagnosis, avoid costly investigations

Grail's multi-cancer early detection test shows positive result

MENLO PARK, Calif, June 3: Grail, LLC, a healthcare company whose mission is to detect cancer early when it can be cured, and the University of Oxford have announced results from the prospective Symplify study was to be presented during an oral session on Saturday, June 3, at the 2023 American Society of Clinical Oncology (ASCO) Annual Meeting in Chicago. Symplify is the first large-scale evaluation of a multi-cancer early detection (MCED) test in individuals who presented to primary care and were referred for diagnostic follow-up for suspicion of cancer. The analysis showed strong performance of Grail's MCED methylation-based platform in the symptomatic population of more than 6,000 patients and demonstrated the feasibility of using an MCED test to assist clinicians with decisions around the route of referral from primary care. These results are in press for publication in The Lancet Oncology.

The most common cancer diagnoses were colorectal (37.2%), lung (22.0%), uterine (8.2%), oesophago-gastric (6.0%) and ovarian (3.8%).

Grail's MCED test detected a cancer signal in 323 people, 244 in whom cancer was diagnosed, resulting in a positive predictive value (PPV) of 75.5%, negative predictive value (NPV) of 97.6%, and specificity of 98.4%. The overall sensitivity of the MCED test was 66.3%, ranging from 24.2% in stage I cancers to 95.3% in stage IV, and increased with age and later cancer stage. The overall accuracy of the top CSO prediction after a positive MCED test was 85.2%. The mean age of patients in the study was 62.1 years old.

"Grail's earlier Pathfinder study previously demonstrated that adding Grail's MCED testing to standard of care screening more than doubled the number of cancers detected compared with standard screening alone in adults with no symptoms or suspicion of cancer. Now, the Symplify data confirm the potential benefit of methylation-based MCED blood tests as a diagnostic aid for use in the symptomatic patient population," said Sir Harpal Kumar, President of Grail Europe. "These exciting results will inform our development of an optimized classifier for use in symptomatic patients with a suspicion of cancer."

Responsible

The University of Oxford sponsored the Symplify study and was responsible for data collection, analysis and interpretation. The study was funded by Grail with support from National Health Service (NHS) England, NHS Wales, the National Institute for Health and Care Research (NIHR) and NIHR Oxford Biomedical Research Centre.

"This is a fantastic example of how academia and industry can work together for patient benefit, recruiting over 6,000 patients to Symplify in under six months and within less than a year of launching the project," said Professor Helen McShane, Director of the NIHR Oxford Biomedical Research Centre. "We are committed to diagnosing cancers earlier, when they can be cured, and this study is an important step on that journey. Symplify also shows that we can run trials at scale using digital systems to deliver research quickly and cost effectively, with the help of the NIHR's Clinical Research Network."

The National Institute for Health and Care Research (NIHR) Oxford Biomedical Research Centre (BRC) is based at the Oxford University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust and run in partnership with the University of Oxford.

GRAIL is a healthcare company whose mission is to detect cancer early, when it can be cured. GRAIL is focused on alleviating the global burden of cancer by using the power of next-generation sequencing, population-scale clinical studies, and state-of-the-art machine learning, software, and automation to detect and identify multiple deadly cancer types in earlier stages. Grail's targeted methylation-based platform can support the continuum of care for screening and precision oncology, including multi-cancer early detection in symptomatic patients, risk stratification, minimal residual disease detection, biomarker subtyping, treatment and recurrence monitoring.

"Earlier cancer detection and subsequent intervention has the potential to greatly improve patient outcomes. Most patients diagnosed with cancer first see a primary care physician for the investigation of symptoms suggestive of cancer, like weight loss, anemia, or abdominal pain, which can be complex as there are multiple potential causes. New tools that can both expedite cancer diagnosis and potentially avoid invasive and costly investigations are needed to more accurately triage patients who present with non-specific cancer symptoms," said Brian D. Nicholson, MRCGP, DPhil, Associate Professor at the Nuffield Department of Primary Care Health Sciences, University of Oxford, United Kingdom and co-lead investigator of the study. "The high overall specificity, positive predictive value, and accuracy of the cancer signal detected and cancer signal origin prediction that was reported across cancer types in the Symplify study indicate that a positive MCED test could be used to confirm that symptomatic patients should be evaluated for cancer before pursuing other diagnoses."

Urgent

The Symplify study enrolled 6,238 patients, aged 18 and older, in England and Wales who were referred for urgent imaging, endoscopy or other diagnostic modalities to investigate symptoms suspicious for possible gynecological, lung, lower GI or upper GI cancer, or who had presented with non-specific symptoms. Participants provided a blood sample, from which cell-free DNA was isolated and stored until Grail's MCED test was performed in batches, blinded to clinical outcome. Grail's MCED test's predictions (cancer signal detected, and if so, cancer signal origin (CSO)) were compared with the diagnosis obtained by standard of care to assess the test's performance. The most commonly reported symptoms leading to referral were unexpected weight loss (24.1%), change in bowel habit (22.0%), postmenopausal bleeding (16.0%), rectal bleeding (15.7%), abdominal pain (14.5%), pain (10.6%), difficulty swallowing (8.8%) and anemia (7.1%).

Within the study, 368 (6.7%) of the 5,461 evaluable patients were diagnosed with cancer through standard of

Feinstein researchers stimulate vagus nerve to cut bleeding in 'hemophilia'

Hemophilia A affects more than 30,000 people in US

'Reduce burden on patients and healthcare systems'

PCC uses AI analytics to enhance clinical trial matching for global cancer patients

MANHASSET, NY, June 3: Hemophilia A, a bleeding disorder that prevents blood from clotting, affects more than 30,000 people in the United States and, in high-risk situations, can lead to death. Researchers at The Feinstein Institutes for Medical Research have shown that electrically stimulating the vagus nerve can reduce bleeding in preclinical hemophilic mice models – a finding that could translate into human patients. The study, published in Nature Communications, builds on years of research into harnessing the vagus nerve through electrical stimulation, a foundation of bioelectronic medicine.

Led by Jared Huston, MD, associate professor of surgery and science education at the Donald and Barbara Zucker School of Medicine at Hofstra/Northwell and the Institute of Bioelectronic Medicine at the Feinstein Institutes, the research shows that vagus nerve stimulation reduces bleeding in hemophilia A mice to the same degree as replacing missing clotting factor – the current gold-standard therapy for patients living with hemophilia. Dr. Huston and team have dubbed the effects a "neural tourniquet" to help curb excessive bleeding.

"From the delivery room to the operating room and the military battlefield, bleeding is too often fatal, and we do not have one universal therapy or technology to help reduce it, or even better, prevent it from occurring," said Dr. Huston. "This research is an important step toward discovering improvements in patient care, not only for those living with hemophilia, but also for any patient or individual facing a high-bleeding risk scenario."

Develop

The vagus nerve runs from the brain to the periphery and communicates with all major organs. It helps control essential functions, like heart rate and breathing, and is the main conduit for the body's inflammatory immune response to disease, bacteria and viruses. By stimulating the nerve with electrical impulses, you can control inflammation and organ function. Dr. Huston's research shows that the vagus nerve targets the spleen, which stores one-third of our platelets, the primary cell that controls bleeding throughout the body. The paper shows that after stimulation primed platelets travel in the bloodstream to sites of injury where they trigger more effective blood clotting, in some circumstances decreasing traumatic blood loss by 75 percent.

"To develop better treatments for complex disorders, like hemophilia, we must first understand its molecular mechanisms," said Carlos E. Bravo-

NEW YORK, June 3: Massive Bio, a leading artificial intelligence (AI) analytics company specializing in precision oncology, has been selected by the Precision Cancer Consortium (PCC), a collaboration of several global biopharmaceutical companies, to optimize clinical trial matching through their innovative AI analytics tools. PCC was established in 2022 with a shared vision of enabling access to comprehensive testing for all cancer patients globally, and is currently comprised of AstraZeneca, Bayer, Eli Lilly & Company, GSK, Johnson & Johnson/Janssen, Novartis, and Roche. The partnership will incorporate PCC member clinical trial protocols and patient inclusion and exclusion criteria into existing machine learning matching algorithms in SYNERGY-AI leveraged within Massive Bio's Deep Learning Clinical Trial Matching System (DLCTMS). This will optimize the quality and efficiency of matching patients to trials across sponsor programs and improve patient access to targeted Next Generation Sequencing (NGS) testing and tailored interventions.

Selin Kurmaz PhD, Founder and CEO of Massive Bio, commented, "We are thrilled to be working with the Precision Cancer Consortium to advance precision oncology through our innovative AI analytics tools. With this partnership, we can streamline the process of clinical trial matching and reduce the burden on patients and

healthcare systems."

The PCC is a collaborative initiative to make data-driven precision oncology the new normal for all cancer patients globally, focusing on increasing patient access to targeted NGS testing and tailored interventions. The program sponsored by PCC will generate combined data and insights to optimize the allocation of patients to available ("local") clinical trials based on NGS testing or Comprehensive Genomic Profiling, clinical and patient characteristics, and relevant trial eligibility criteria.

Testing

Dr. Arturo Loaiza-Bonilla, Co-Founder and Chief Medical Officer of Massive Bio, said, "We are proud to partner with the Precision Cancer Consortium and bring our AI analytics tools to the forefront of precision oncology. Our technology utilizes genomics and clinical data from various platforms to present available intervention options for each patient in order to optimize clinical trial matching by reducing inefficiencies and multiple screenings. Together, we can help more patients access the right treatment options and improve outcomes."

Through this partnership, Massive Bio will design and pilot a trial matching tool for prospectively matching patients through genomic testing and clinical data to a set of selected ongoing biomarker-driven clinical trials

within previously defined locations (i.e. site, Health Care Organization, country). The companies will also explore considerations for larger scale or real-world application for further development.

Yinghui Zhou PhD, PCC Project Lead and Sr. Director, Bayer Translational Sciences Oncology, added, "This collaboration has the potential to address a major challenge in precision oncology and improve patient outcomes. By working together and utilizing a collection of genomics data from multiple sources centralized with the assistance of AI, we can create a valuable scientific resource and optimize the efficiency of clinical trial matching globally and scale."

The Precision Cancer Consortium is composed of pharmaceutical and biotechnology companies focused on fostering collaboration on issues and opportunities related to precision oncology with the goal of improving patient outcomes by increasing cancer patient access to comprehensive genomic testing, including next generation sequencing, and addressing major gaps in precision diagnostics availability.

Massive Bio empowers cancer patients to find their best treatment options, using artificial intelligence to improve equitable access and precision targeting for clinical trial matching, drug matching, and drug development.

Iniguez, MD, an Elmezzzi Graduate School of Molecular Medicine 2023 graduate, and the first author on the paper. "These results support future clinical research to help advance technology and bioelectronic medicine."

As part of Dr. Huston's research program investigating vagus nerve stimulation in post-traumatic hemorrhage, he was also a winner of Northwell Health's 2021 Innovation Challenge. The challenge awards four employees from the health system funding that totals \$1.3 million towards their driven projects that have the potential to transform the future of medicine.

"The vagus nerve is the main communication line between the brain and the body's organs, but no one

before suspected it can control blood clotting," said Kevin J. Tracey, MD, president and CEO of the Feinstein Institutes, Karches Family Distinguished Chair in Medical Research. "Dr. Huston's new findings indicate it may be possible to stop life-threatening bleeding by stimulating the vagus nerve."

The Feinstein Institutes is known as the global scientific home of bioelectronic medicine because of early discoveries in its labs. Decades ago, Dr. Tracey and his colleagues identified the role the vagus nerve plays in controlling our body's immune response, defining it as the inflammatory reflex. Researchers continue to build off that work worldwide to develop devices to cure disease.

Built on years of research in molecular mechanisms of disease and the link between the nervous and immune systems, our researchers have uncovered neural targets that can be activated or inhibited with neuromodulation devices like vagus nerve implants to regulate the body's immune response and inflammation. If inflammation is successfully controlled, diseases – such as arthritis, pulmonary hypertension, Crohn's disease, inflammatory bowel diseases, diabetes, cancer and autoimmune diseases – can be treated more effectively. By producing bioelectronic medicine knowledge, disease and injury could one day be treated with our own nerves without costly and potentially harmful pharmaceuticals.

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Sweeney's 'Reality' based on true story of NSA whistleblower

'Reality,' a new movie starring Sydney Sweeney, is largely set in one empty room. There is nothing on the walls. There are no chairs or rugs, just a stark and ugly room in a nondescript rental property in a downtrodden neighborhood. Its script is as minimalist - lifted directly from the transcript of one long conversation between two FBI agents and a young woman they suspect has leaked classified documents. The dialogue has all the ums and ahs, botched sentences and awkward small talk one might expect from actual human beings, not slickly intelligent Aaron Sorkin creations. And it's one of the most tense and exciting films of the year.

It's based on the actual FBI interrogation of the unbelievably named Reality Winner, a former Air Force translator who worked as a contractor at a National Security Agency office in Augusta, Georgia. One day in May 2017, she printed a classified report, tucked it into her pantyhose, walked out of the office and mailed it to an online news outlet. The next month, the FBI was at her door to interrogate her. The film starts as she pulls up into her driveway, an agent knocks on her car window and starts the recording on his handheld device.

The film comes from Tina Satter, a noted playwright who first conceived of this idea for the stage. The show, called "Is This a Room," was acclaimed in its off-Broadway run and the film ver-

sion, which debuted at the Berlin Film Festival earlier this year and is currently streaming on Max, is her directorial debut. It's easy and lazy to ding a movie for being too much like a play, as though there is some bright line of demarcation between the formats aside from how audiences see them. But the point is that Satter has, in adapting "Reality" for the screen, turned limitations into opportunities. The smallness of the room starts to feel suffocating, especially as the questions get more specific and accusatory.

Questions

There is a dread to the whole endeavor from the first shot, even if you don't remember how this story played out in the news. Though it takes some time for Agent Taylor (Marchant Davis) and Agent Garrick (Josh Hamilton) to get to the real questions, the real reason why they're there, the small stresses and indignities start to build. Reality (Sweeney) has come home with a car full of groceries. She has a cat in the house and a dog, a rescue who doesn't like men. Her life has been put on pause and there's nothing she can do about it.

The agents tell her they have a search warrant for her home and her car and promptly tape off her modest yard with "crime scene" ribbon, take her phone and force her to stay outside as they search. She's worried about the perishables, her cat escaping through the

open door and her dog scaring people. Meanwhile, one of the agents is asking about her CrossFit routine and her life as a single person in Augusta.

Reality, wearing jean shorts and sneakers, does not seem aware that she has the right to not answer their questions and has the right to an attorney - and the agents certainly aren't offering this information either. Instead, she is deferential and even helpful to these uninvited strangers, as though being nice might help things. Any woman or member of a marginalized group can surely relate.

Much credit goes to the actors. Hamilton walks a very delicate line in his performance. He looks like an innocuous IT guy and seems friendly enough, but his questions, even the smallest ones, feel double edged. Small talk has never been so stressful. Davis meanwhile keeps Reality on edge with small displays of power and authority, like now allowing her to touch her phone. But the show belongs to Sweeney, whose range continues to astonish - from "Euphoria" to "The White Lotus" and now this. She draws you in and you feel her stress and panic escalate.

It's a true triumph of storytelling and performance and a reminder that films don't need to be flashy or big to be great.

"Reality," a Max release currently streaming, is rated TV-MA. Running time: 83 minutes. Three stars out of four. (AP)

Film

Variety



This image released by Sony Pictures Animation shows Miles Morales as Spider-Man, voiced by Shameik Moore, in a scene from Columbia Pictures and Sony Pictures Animation's 'Spider-Man: Across the Spider-Verse.' (AP)

Film

A rare sequel that dazzles as much as the original

Giddy splendor in 'Across the Spider-Verse'

By Jake Coyle

Let's get this upfront: "Spider-Man: Into the Spider-Verse" was the best comic-book film of the last decade.

With an animation blizzard blown straight in from the pages of comics, "Into the Spider-Verse" took a supercollider to all the conventions of the superhero movie. Solemnity was out. Gone, too, was the idea of a chosen one. Spider-Man could be anyone, including a graffiti-tagging kid from Brooklyn, including a pig named Spider-Ham. The possibilities of the comic book movie were suddenly limitless. With Post Malone and Swae Lee's "Sunflower" thumping, the vibes were, as they say, immaculate.

So a lot to live up to. Yet five years later, the Spider-verse is still expanding in thrilling ways. "Spider-Man: Across the Spider-Verse" is the rare sequel that dazzles as much as the original did. It's something to behold. Colors drip, invert and splatter in a shimmering pop-art swirl.

If "Into the Spider-Verse" reveled in the head-spinning collision of universes, "Across the Spider-Verse" turns the multiverse blender up a notch, or 10. Worlds bump into each other like shoppers in a crowded bodega. Spider-Men and Spider-Women tumble forth like unloaded clown cars. In this frenetic, free-wheeling thing that dares you keep up with its web-slinging pace, the sheer muckiness of what's in the frame can be almost overwhelming.

But despite all that's going on, "Across the Spider-Verse" is remarkably grounded as a coming-of-age tale. The masterful flair of writers-producers Phil Lord and Christopher Miller, who penned the script with David Callaham, lies in how they detonate convention and then assemble the leftover, splintered shards to build something deceptively sweet and simple.

The directing team has been entirely swapped out. Joaquim Dos Santos, Kemp Powers and Justin K. Thompson take the reins in this second chapter, which finds Miles Morales (voiced by Shameik Moore) now a 15-year-old with a better handle on

his crime-fighting powers. He's less adept, though, at communicating with his parents, Jefferson (Brian Tyree Henry) and Rio (Luna Lauren Vélez), who still don't know their son's secret identity and are growing increasingly concerned about his strange behavior.

Similar issues bedevil Gwen Stacy (Hailee Steinfeld), who by revealing to her police captain father (Shea Whigham) that she's Spider-Woman has caused a huge rift in their relationship. (He blames her for Peter Parker's death.)

When Miles and Gwen, stuck in worlds apart, meet again and swing in tandem through New York, they're less a romantically linked Spidey pair than they are a couple of teenagers whose parents just don't understand. When they sit together, on the underside of a ledge on the Williamsburg Savings Bank Tower, gazing at an upside down Manhattan, hazy and blue in the distance, the lingering image perfectly encapsulates an electrifyingly downside-up movie franchise.

Superhero

In its chaotic and jumbled way, "Across the Spider-Verse" keeps playing with these notions. Miles and Gwen, rightly, feel exceptional - that their problems are unique to being enormously gifted kids. But the movie again and again reinforced that, yes, they're supremely talented, but, no, they're far from alone. "I'm Spider-Woman," Gwen says when a pregnant superhero (Issa Rae) peels in on a motorbike. "Me, too," she replies.

This being a "Spider-Verse" movie, though, there more than just a few Spider-Men lurking about. There are actually gobs of them, each from some parallel world. (Among those here are a Mumbai-like New York, a Lego land and a nightmarish alternate reality.) The portals start opening thanks to The Spot (Jason Schwartzman), a supervillain-in-training who looks like a splotchy blank page with ink drops on him.

But Spot's powers grow, bringing the attention of

the Spider-Society, a gaggle of Spider-People who guard over order in the multiverse. Some of them are pretty cool - most notably Daniel Kaluuya's Spider-Punk, a British rocker who looks like he dropped out of The Clash. Others, like the leader Miguel O'Hara (Oscar Isaac), are more serious and haunted.

When worlds start colliding, prescribed storylines get upset. Seemingly anything goes in these multiverse realms, but, Miguel informs us, there is Canon that needs to be obeyed. Certain foundational narrative beats must occur, in some form, for every Spider-Man, including the sacrifice of a loved one.

When Miles tests these tenets, he brings about a cataclysmic battle across the Spider-Verse, and a movie series hellbent on deconstruction faces-off against formula. For Lord and Miller, the post-modern makers of "The Lego Movie" and "The Mitchells vs. The Machines," it's a battle they've been girding for their whole lives.

The danger in all these crisscrossing dimensions is that no reality seems to mean all that much. By exponentially multiplying worlds and Spider-Men, "Across the Spider-Verse" risks making itself dizzy. Yet it surprisingly, even movingly, stays true to the teenage emotions at its core and the parent-kid relationships driving all these multiverse convulsions.

It's the first Marvel movie that I felt in the theater a palpable disappointment that it was over. ("Across the Spider-Verse" is a sequel in two parts, and ends here in full-on cliffhanger fashion.) That "Across the Spider-Verse" earned that response is surely partly due to its giddy design just as it is to its conviction that we all contain multitudes. As Rachel Dratch's principal says in the film: "Every person is a universe."

"Spider-Man: Across the Spider-Verse," a Sony Pictures Animation release, is rated PG by the Motion Picture Association for sequences of animated action violence, some language and thematic elements. Running time: 117 minutes. Three and a half stars out of four. (AP)

Features

ARABIC TIMES

SUNDAY, JUNE 4, 2023

NEW YORK: Three women who claim Cuba Gooding Jr sexually abused them — including one upset she never got her day in court when Gooding resolved criminal charges without trial or jail — can testify at a federal civil trial next week to support a woman's claim that the actor raped her in 2013, a judge ruled Friday.

Judge Paul A. Crotty said the allegations by the women were relevant for a jury deciding if the Oscar-winning "Jerry Maguire" star raped a woman in a Manhattan hotel room after they met at a bar. He also ruled in a separate order that the plaintiff, identified only as Jane Doe in the lawsuit seeking \$6 million in damages, must reveal her name at trial.

He said the claims by the three women who can testify "are sufficiently similar" to the claims at stake in the trial because "all involve sudden sexual assaults or attempted sexual assaults" connected to Gooding and stemmed from the presence of the women and Gooding in social settings such as festivals, bars, nightclubs and restaurants.

Lawyers for Gooding, a #Me-Too defendant in multiple courts, have said Gooding had consensual ... with the woman who accused him of rape after they met in the VIP lounge of a Greenwich Village restaurant and she joined him at a nearby hotel bar, agreeing to proceed to his hotel room so the actor could change his clothing. The lawyers did not respond to an email request for comment Friday.

The three women include Kelsey Harbert, who said in tears after Gooding pleaded guilty last year that never getting her day in court was "more disappointing than words can say."

Harbert told police Gooding fondled her without her consent at Magic Hour Rooftop Bar & Lounge near Times Square in 2019.

The Associated Press does not typically identify people who say they are victims of sexual assault unless they grant permission, as Harbert has done. (AP)

LOS ANGELES: Actor Armie Hammer will not be charged after a long investigation of a woman's allegation that he sexually assaulted her in 2017, Los Angeles prosecutors said.

Hammer said on Instagram after

a long public silence that "I look forward to beginning what will be a long, difficult process of putting my life back together now that my name has been cleared."

Police began investigating Hammer in 2021, and turned the results over to the Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office earlier this year.



Hammer



Gooding

"In this case, those prosecutors conducted an extremely thorough review, but determined that at this time, there is insufficient evidence to charge Mr Hammer with a crime," Tiffany Blacknell, director of communications for the district attorney, said in a statement. "Due to the complexity of the relationship and inability to prove a non-

consensual, forcible sexual encounter we are unable to prove the case beyond a reasonable doubt."

The 36-year-old Hammer said in his post that "I am very grateful to the District Attorney for conducting a thorough investigation and coming to the conclusion that I have stood by this entire time, that no crime was committed."

Allegations of sexual violence from women early in 2021 derailed Hammer's career, and he has not worked in Hollywood since. He departed the comedy "Shotgun Wedding" that he was shooting with Jennifer Lopez, left the Paramount+ series "The Offer," about the making of "The Godfather," and was dropped by his agency, WME. (AP)

People & Places

Television

Disguise & deception

Eric Andre Show host keeps getting guests

LOS ANGELES, June 3, (AP): "The Eric Andre Show" is ostensibly not a series that lends itself to longevity. Its titular star, who plays a version of himself and satirizes talk shows by putting unsuspecting celebrity guests through hellish interviews, has become considerably more famous since the series first aired over a decade ago.

But through a combination of disguises and an artfully deceptive booking team, Andre is gearing up for the premiere of the sixth season this Sunday on Adult Swim, boasting a star-studded list of guests in the episodes to come, including Lil Nas X, Natasha Lyonne and Jon Hamm.

"We used to worry about, like, 'Oh, am I going to be more recognizable?'" Andre said of his increasing fame, eventually realizing it doesn't take much to fool people. "I disguised myself a lot this season. I rocked the ponytail and the glasses, and I would wear COVID masks sometimes."

There is a kind of poetic, albeit sadistic, justice that comes from watching the cult show make the most envied in society the butt of its joke, including high-profile names over the years like Seth Rogen, Demi Lovato, Dennis Rodman and Judy Greer.

A few - including Lauren Conrad and T.I. - have walked off in disgust or indignation. But that number is surprisingly low given that Andre often keeps guests in emotional and physical discomfort for an hour or more, only to edit interviews down to mere minutes.

"I'm in character," Andre explained. "I'm trying to just be the most absurd and incompetent talk show host of all time."

Once celebrities are brought on the "talk show," their egos are subjected to all kinds of abasements, both through Andre's absurd line of questioning and through physical pranks - some unbeknownst to viewers and only revealed later by former guests.

Pranks

"It's a break from the kind of fictitious propaganda of traditional press, I think," he theorized, mocking actors and the stories they share on actual late-night talk shows. "They're like, 'Hey, you know, on set, George Clooney played a prank on me,' or whatever. They have some anecdote from set. It feels - people can smell it's a little inauthentic."

Part of what makes the pranks so impressive is Andre's ability to pull them off, even when guests become visibly angry and sometimes threatening toward him.

"I'm calculating every next step," the comedian said of what goes through his mind during the interviews. "I don't want to laugh. I've done so much work and so much prep has gone into bringing that prank into production that I don't want to be the one that blows it."

Despite the fact that even he is not particularly comfortable with it, Andre's antics often at some point involve nudity - either by him or the show's infamous "naked PA" - a move that frequently pushes guests over the edge.

"You gotta do what it takes," Andre, ever the showman, explained. "There's not a lot of things that are like completely jaw-dropping shocking. So, nudity is just kind of like a guaranteed reaction."

Although he denies outright lying to get people on the show, he concedes he and the bookers frequently "bend the truth," and then come up with elaborate schemes to prevent publicists from seeing the torturous pranks they unknowingly walked their clients into.

"We don't let publicists into where the stage is and we'll show them like fake monitor feeds and stuff," he explained, adding they are sometimes sent on a "wild goose chase" when they get an inkling of what is going on.

He recalled having actor Robin Givens on the show last season, saying her publicist at one point demanded the interview be stopped. In an effort to buy Andre more time, the show's assistant director allegedly led the publicist down a series of wrong turns throughout the building.

Conviction

"Outside, back in, pretending he didn't know where we were," Andre said, bursting into laughter.

His stunts might lead some to believe that Andre is a simple clown. But the comedian, who studied upright bass at the Berklee College of Music, will often give glimpses into the more learned corners of his brain, inexplicably dropping commentary on things like capitalism or militarism amid the chaos of his interviews.

"What can I say, man? Patriotism is the conviction that your country is superior to all others because you were born in it," he says abruptly in one interview with NBA player Blake Griffin last season.

The fact that Andre keeps coming back for more has been of late a pleasant surprise for fans, given that he at times seems ready to move on from the show, as well as his recent involvement in other projects.

He fittingly stars in a sort of spoof on reality competition shows called "The Prank Panel" alongside his "Jackass Forever" co-star Johnny Knoxville and Gabourey Sidibe.

And in 2021, after years of delays and back and forth with different studios, Netflix finally released "Bad Trip," a narrative film with pranks on real people that stars Andre, Tiffany Haddish and Lil Rel Howery.

"I was going to end the show after five seasons and then I didn't make any money on 'Bad Trip,'" he laughed, though he acknowledged his motivations for coming back to "The Eric Andre Show" were not just financial.

"Why permanently close the door on a show where I have full creative freedom?" he said, hinting that door is still open for more after this season.

Despite Andre's claim that "Bad Trip" didn't make him any money, the film's success once it hit Netflix seems to have engendered future opportunities for the comedian, though he is reluctant to say more about what those projects are.

"It's not even my corporate overlords. It's superstition. So, I'll tell you when the time is right," he teased.



Andre



In this image released by Shochiku, Maholo Onoe, front center, performs as he makes his official stage debut at the Kabuki Theater in Tokyo, on May 2, 2023. He is one of the biggest emerging stars in Japan's 420-year-old Kabuki theater. (AP)

Stage

For Maholo, art imitates life

Kabuki actor's debut breaks traditions

TOKYO, June 3, (AP): Ten-year-old Maholo Terajima Ghnassia loves watching anime and playing baseball. He likes making beats and whisper ASMR. And he's breaking conventions in Japan's 420-year-old Kabuki theater tradition.

In Kabuki, all the roles are played by men, including beautiful princesses - a role Maholo accomplishes stunningly in his official stage debut as Maholo Onoe at the Kabuki Theater in downtown Tokyo. In the performance, which ran May 2 through 27 to full audiences, he starts out disguised as a woman, dancing gracefully, before transforming into sword-wielding warrior Iwami Jutaro. He then makes a quick costume change right there on the stage, all while delivering singsong lines in a clear resonating voice unaided by a microphone.

Out to avenge his father's death, striking spectacular poses, Maholo performs swashbuckling fight scenes and slays a furry baboon.

"I like 'tachimawari' (fight scenes). It feels good, and people who are watching it think it's cool," said Maholo.

In a touching moment of art imitating life, Maholo's grandfather, Kikugoro Onoe, appears as the God of War. He praises Maholo's character, Iwami, and tells him to keep at his art, promising to always be at his side and help him attain his goals.

Kabuki is typically passed from father to son, the artform largely limited to Japanese men. But Kikugoro Onoe is Maholo's maternal grandfather; the young Kabuki performer's father, Laurent Ghnassia, is French.

The special Maholo Memorial Lunch served during intermission includes cheese and tomatoes, chips with avocado dip and roast beef - some of the young actor's favorite dishes, and a stark change from the usual cuisine of fish and rice served at the theater.

The huge curtain for the stage, which also works as advertising space, is speckled with fluttering dots of purple and orange, designed by French artist Xavier Veilhan of fashion house Chanel. This was Ghnassia's idea - as an art director, he designs venues, installations, shops and events to market fashion brands, contemporary art and film ventures.

"It's a privilege," Ghnassia said, shrugging off concerns about putting his son through the rigorous demands of Kabuki acting.

Philosophy

"Worry is not an emotion that's part of my philosophy," he said. "I always believe tomorrow will be better than today. If tomorrow is not better than today, then the day after tomorrow will be better than tomorrow."

Maholo himself isn't sure yet if he will stick with the strict, demanding artform and someday adopt his grandfather's stage name, Kikugoro - a prized name in Kabuki passed down through generations of Onoe men.

Child Kabuki actors go through a difficult transitional period when their voices change with puberty but they aren't yet mature enough to take adult roles. Only the truly determined ones pull through that stretch to succeed.

"Unless he is recognized and in demand, he won't get any roles. He must

have the passion. It's not easy. It's up to him," said Maholo's mother, renowned actor Shinobu Terajima. She won the Silver Bear for Best Actress at the Berlin International Film Festival for her poignant performance in the 2010 film "Caterpillar."

"It's not easy, but choosing the harder path makes life more worthwhile. The more hurdles there are, the climb becomes worth it," Terajima said.

Kabuki performances feature stylized dancing and makeup, powerful live music, and elaborate costumes and sets. Many popular storylines include star-crossed lovers, suicides and the pursuit of revenge. There is action as well, involving intricate stagecraft like revolving platforms and trapdoors. In some scenes, ropes are used so actors "fly" above the spectators.

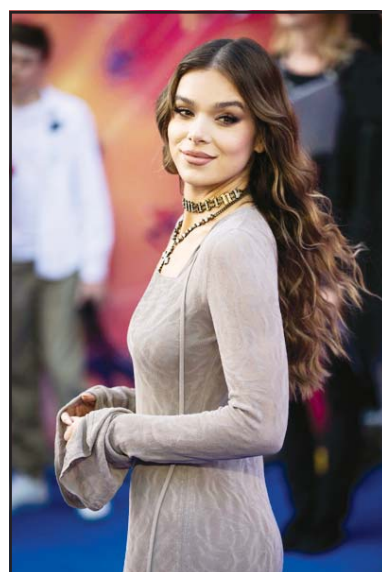
Although Japan has been known for discriminatory attitudes toward foreigners and outsiders, Terajima hopes her son's French cultural background will give Maholo a unique edge in the world of Kabuki.

But he may become a film actor like herself, Terajima said.

"It must be felt. It's not just the lines you speak," she said. "I want him to act by digesting within what's received from the other, and then return that, changing one's heart with that received energy. That's fundamental to acting."

Maholo hasn't committed either way, though he'll readily admit that delicious saucisson French salami is a driving factor for why he likes France - though not the only one.

"There is more freedom in France," he said, giving his dad a high-five.



Hailee Steinfeld poses for photographers upon arrival for the Gala Screening of the film 'Spider-Man: Across the Spider-Verse' in London, June 1. (AP) — Details Page 11



Shah



Saariaho

Variety

PARIS: Kaija Saariaho, who wrote acclaimed works that made her the among the most prominent composers of the 21st century, died Friday. She was 70. Saariaho died at her apartment in Paris, her family said in a statement posted on her Facebook page. She had been diagnosed in February 2021 with glioblastoma, an aggressive and incurable brain tumor.

"The multiplying tumors did not affect her cognitive faculties until the terminal phase of her illness," the statement said. Her family said Saariaho had undergone experimental treatment at Pitié-Salpêtrière Hospital in Paris.

"Kaija's appearance in a wheelchair or walking with a cane have prompted many questions, to which she answered elusively," the family said. "Following her physician's advice, she kept her illness a private matter, in order to maintain a positive mindset and keep the focus of her work."

Her "L'Amour de Loin (Love from Afar)" premiered at the Salzburg Festival in 2000 and made its U.S. debut at the Santa Fe Opera two years later. In 2016, it became the first staged work by a female composer at the Metropolitan Opera since Ethel M. Smyth's "Der Wald" in 1903.

"She was one of the most original voices and enjoyed enormous success," Met general manager Peter Gelb said. "It had impact on one's intellect as well as one's emotions. It was music that really moves people's hearts. She was truly one of the great, great artists."

Saariaho did not like to be thought of as a female composer, rather a woman who was a composer.

"I would not even like to speak about it," she said during an interview with The Associated Press after a piano rehearsal

at the Met. "It should be a shame." (AP)

OXON HILL, Md: Fifteen months ago, Dev Shah spent a miserable five hours spelling outdoors in chilly, windy, damp conditions at a supesize regional competition in **Orlando, Florida**, only to

fall short of his dream of returning to the Scripps National Spelling Bee.

"Despondent is the right word," Dev said. "I just didn't know if I wanted to keep continuing."

Look at him now. Soft-spoken but brimming with confidence, Dev asked precise questions about



This image released by HBO shows Sydney Sweeney in a scene from 'Reality.' (AP) — Details Page 11

obscurer Greek roots, rushed through his second-to-last word and rolled to the National Spelling Bee title Thursday night.

Dev, a 14-year-old from **Largo, Florida**, in the **Tampa Bay** area, first competed at the national bee in 2019, then had his spelling career interrupted. The 2020 bee was canceled because of COVID-19, and in the mostly virtual 2021 bee, he didn't make it to the in-person finals, held in his home state on ESPN's campus at Walt Disney World.

Then came the disaster of last year, when he was forced to compete in the Orlando region because his previous regional sponsor didn't come back after the pandemic.

"It took me four months to get him back on track because he was quite a bit disturbed and he didn't want to do it," said Dev's mother, **Nilam Shah**.

When he decided to try again, he added an exercise routine to help sharpen his focus and lost about 15 pounds, she said. Dev got through his region. He flexed his knowledge in Wednesday's early rounds by asking questions that proved he knew every relevant detail the bee's pronouncers and judges had on their computer screens. And when it was all over, he held the trophy over his head as confetti fell.

"He appreciated that this is a journey, which sounds very true but it's really quite true," said Dev's coach, **Scott Remer**, a former speller and study guide author. (AP)

Space

Boeing capsule delay

ESA Mars livestream interrupted by 'rain'

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla., June 3, (AP) — A European spacecraft around Mars sent its first livestream from the red planet to Earth on Friday to mark the 20th anniversary of its launch, but rain in Spain interfered at times.

The European Space Agency broadcast the livestream with views courtesy of its Mars Express, launched by a Russian rocket from Kazakhstan in 2003.

It took nearly 17 minutes for each picture to reach Earth, nearly 200 million miles (300 million kilometers) away, and another minute to get through the ground stations.

The transmission was disrupted at times by rainy weather at the deep space-relay antenna in Spain.

Still, enough images made it through to delight the European space officials hosting the hourlong livestream. The initial views showed about one-third of Mars, which gradually grew bigger in the frames before shrinking again as the spacecraft circled the planet. White clouds could clearly be seen in some of the shots.

"If you were currently sitting on board Mars Express ... this is what you would be seeing," said **Simon Wood**, the mission's spacecraft operations engineer. "We typically don't normally get images in this way."

Pictures and other data usually are stored aboard the spacecraft and later transmitted to Earth, according to Wood, when the spacecraft's antenna can be pointed this way.

Near real-time footage from so far away is "rather rare," according to ESA. The agency pointed to the live broadcasts by the Apollo moonwalkers more than a half-century ago and, more recently, live snippets from spacecraft deliberately crashing into the moon and an asteroid.

"These missions were all pretty close to home and others farther away sent perhaps an image or two in near real-time. When it comes to a lengthy livestream from deep space, this is a first," ESA said in a statement before the event.



Wood

Pictures

The rain on the plains in Spain cut into the number of pictures shown. ESA devoted only an hour to the livestream because it did not want to overload the spacecraft's batteries.

Mars Express traveled to the red planet with a lander, dubbed Beagle-2, which lost contact with Earth as it attempted to touch down on the Martian surface.

More than a decade later, NASA's Mars Reconnaissance Orbiter captured pictures of Beagle-2. Although it made it to the surface, the lander's solar panels didn't fully unfurl.



Boeing's astronaut capsule faces more launch delays after the discovery of problems that should have been caught earlier, officials said.

Boeing and NASA announced the latest setback Thursday.

Until recently, the Starliner capsule was on track for a July test flight with two astronauts to the International Space Station, a planned trip that was already well behind schedule.

But final reviews uncovered issues with the parachute lines and other problems that were present on last year's test flight with no one on board and, officials said, should have been caught years ago.

As for whether Starliner might fly by year's end, Boeing program manager **Mark Nappi** said, "I think it's feasible, but I certainly don't want to commit to any dates or time frames" until the problems are fixed.

The capsule is full of wire harnesses wrapped in white tape that's flammable, according to Nappi. Rather than trying to remove the hundreds of feet of tape, which was supposed to protect against scuffing, the company may cover it with a safer material.

The parachute lines also were not designed to be strong enough to meet safety standards.

"These tests were run many years ago. We reviewed those results. We missed those results, and this could have been caught sooner," Nappi said.

Following the retirement of the space shuttles more than a decade ago, NASA hired Boeing and SpaceX to transport astronauts to and from the space station. SpaceX has now completed 10 crew flights, three of them private. Boeing had to repeat its 2019 test flight without a crew because of software and other issues.

"NASA desperately needs a second provider for crew transportation," said **Steve Stich**, the space agency's commercial crew program manager.

The goal is to have one SpaceX and one Boeing taxi flight to the station each year.

Also:

NEW YORK: A new work by US Poet Laureate **Ada Limón**, written for an upcoming NASA mission to Jupiter's moon Europa, is a glance at outer space that returns back to Earth.

Limón's "In Praise of Mystery: A Poem for Europa," which she read Thursday night during a ceremony at the Library of Congress, is part of NASA's "Message In a Bottle Campaign" as the aeronautics and space administration prepares for a years-long journey. The Europa Clipper is expected to launch in October 2024, with "In Praise of Mystery" engraved on the spacecraft.

"Writing this poem was one of the greatest honors of my life, but also one of the most difficult tasks I've ever been assigned," Limón said in a statement released through the Library of Congress. "Eventually, what made the poem come together was realizing that in pointing toward other planets, stars and moons, we are also recognizing the enormous gift that is our planet Earth. To point outward is also to point inward."

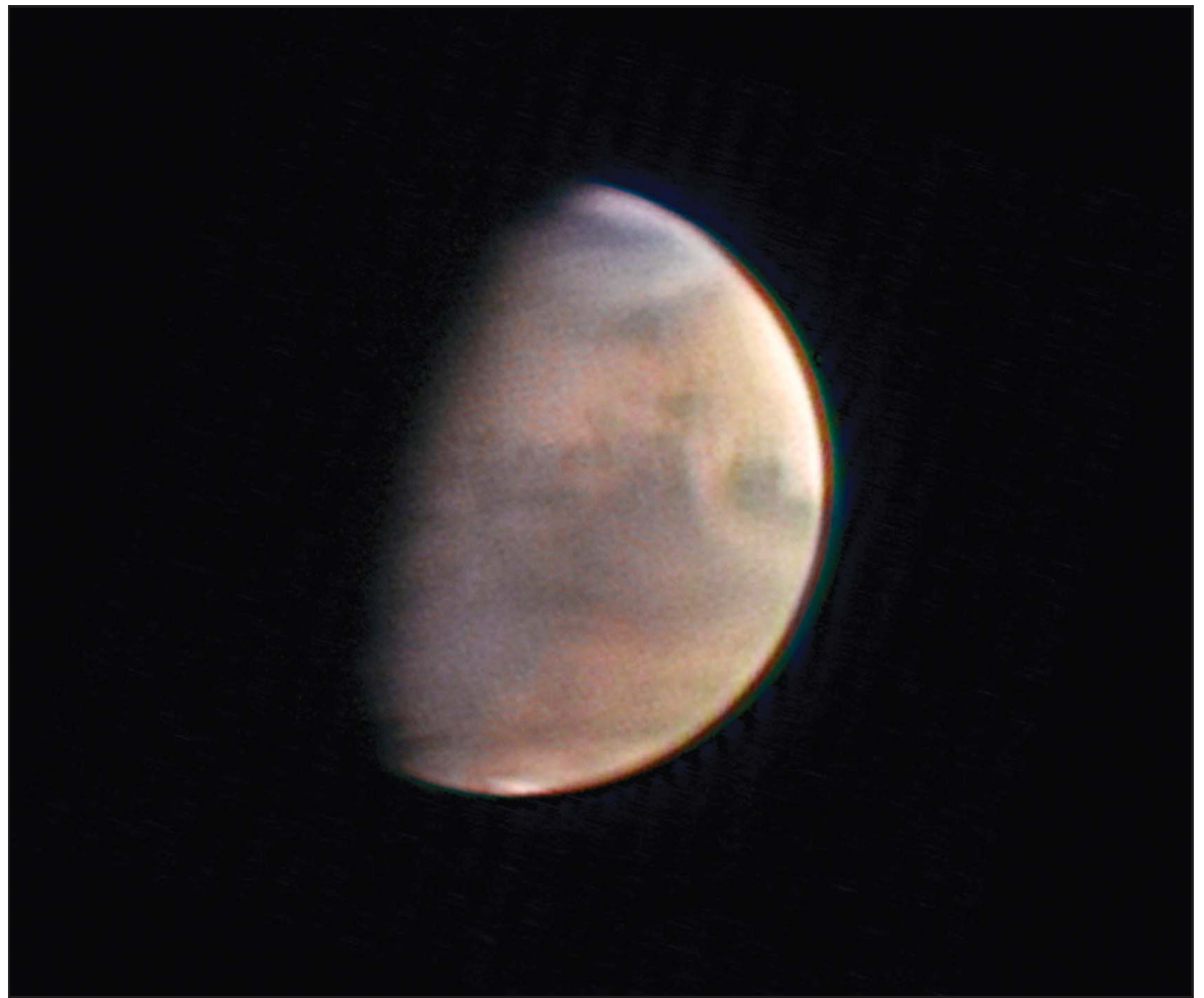
During a recent interview with The Associated Press, Limón said she struggled at first with the poem, explaining that because of its official nature she couldn't rely on her usual instincts. After working on more than a dozen drafts, she received invaluable advice from her husband, **Lucas Marquardt**, who urged her to write the poem as if it were personal, a "poem that you would write anyway."

"I think of all the times as a child that I would look down and find a whole universe in the grass, or in a small, watery wedge from the creek across the street from my house," she said. "But then I also think that that was in tandem with looking up at the moon."

The 7-stanza poem begins as a tribute to "the night sky inky/with black expansiveness," a sky we read as an "unerring book of the universe." But, Limón adds, treasures can be found below the sky.

"O second moon, we, too, are made of water, of vast and beckoning seas. We, too, are made of wonders, of great and ordinary loves, of small invisible worlds, of a need to call out through the dark."

Limón, 47, has been poet laureate since 2022 and was recently appointed by Librarian of Congress Carla Hayden to a second term, lasting two years. Her books include "Bright Dead Things" and "The Carrying."



This image provided by the European Space Agency and taken with the ESA's High Resolution Stereo Camera (HRSC) aboard the Mars Express spacecraft shows Mars as the spacecraft approaches the planet from a distance of 5.5 million kilometers. Launched in 2003, the spacecraft marked its 20th anniversary, June 2. (AP)



This May 26, 2023, photo provided by the Jennifer Schuh shows a Mastodon Tooth in the sand at an Aptos, Calif., beach. A Northern California woman taking a Memorial Day weekend stroll on the beach has discovered a mastodon tooth that's at least 5,000 years old. Schuh found the foot-long (.30-meter) tooth sticking out of the sand on Friday at the mouth of Aptos Creek on Rio Del Mar State Beach, located off Monterey Bay in Santa Cruz County. (AP)

Discovery

Mastodon tooth found: A woman taking a Memorial Day weekend stroll on a California beach found something unusual sticking out of the sand: a tooth from an ancient mastodon.

But then the fossil vanished, and it took a media blitz and a kind-hearted jogger to find it again.

Jennifer Schuh found the foot-long (.30-meter) tooth sticking out of the sand on Friday at the mouth of Aptos Creek on Rio Del Mar State Beach, located off Monterey Bay in Santa Cruz County on California's central coast.

"I was on one side of the creek and this lady was talking to me on the other side and she said what's that at your feet," Schuh recounted. "It looked kind of weird, like burnt almost."

Schuh wasn't sure what she had found. So she snapped some photos and posted them on Facebook, asking for help.

The answer came from Wayne Thompson, paleontology collections advisor for the Santa Cruz Museum of Natural History.

Thompson determined that the object was a worn molar from an adult Pacific mastodon, an extinct elephant-like species.

"This is an extremely important find," Thompson wrote, and he urged Schuh to call him.

But when they went back to the beach, the tooth was gone.

"I was so excited to get that call," said **Liz Broughton**, the museum's visitor experience manager. "Jim told us that he had stumbled upon it during one of his regular jogs along the beach, but wasn't sure of what he had found until he saw a picture of the tooth on the news."

"We are thrilled about this exciting discovery and the implications it holds for our understanding of ancient life in our region," museum Executive Director **Felicia B. Van Stolk** said in a statement. (AP)



Spinosaurus exhibit unveiled: The newest addition to the Field Museum on Chicago's lakefront will give visitors a glimpse of the largest predatory dinosaur yet discovered via a 46-foot (14.02 meter) cast of a Spinosaurus skeleton suspended high above the museum's main hall.

Field Museum officials unveiled the cast with its distinctive fin and crocodile-like jaws on Friday. It will be available for visitors starting Saturday.

Scientists have long struggled to interpret Spinosaurus fossils to determine the animal's behavior in life, uncertain whether it swam while hunting or simply waded into water in search of prey. Field

The Conversation

Weight-loss pills still pose more questions than answers

3 drugs key tools against obesity

By Wesley Dudgeon
College of Charleston

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



In the past five years, several new drugs have been brought to market that could lead to a profound, if not revolutionary, change in how health care providers - and the public - view weight loss.

Three drugs in particular - sold under the brand names Wegovy, Ozempic and Mounjaro - have shown remarkable effects on weight loss in clinical trials.

While Wegovy is approved by the Food and Drug Administration for weight loss, the other two medications are only approved as treatment for type 2 diabetes, though they do also contribute to significant weight loss. This has led to increased demand for these drugs, causing a shortage of Ozempic and Mounjaro in early 2023 that threatened the availability of these drugs for diabetes patients.

Globally, more than 650 million people are obese, and by 2030, an estimated 1 billion adults will be obese. This makes obesity the most prevalent chronic disease in the world.

As an exercise science scholar, I have spent more than 15 years studying the effects of diet and exercise on the human body, primarily focused on body composition changes such as gaining skeletal muscle or losing body fat, or both. In my lectures, I present data on the detrimental impacts on personal health of being overweight or obese. Then I show that, aside from surgical intervention, the best way to lower body fat is with starting an exercise program and improving dietary habits.

Diabetes

These new drugs have now altered what I teach in the classroom, and as a researcher I believe they raise many questions about the current approach to weight management and health. While these medications hold promise, they are not wonder drugs. In my view, they warrant much more research before they become the basis for a new weight management protocol.

Ozempic and Mounjaro are FDA-approved for the treatment of type 2 diabetes, which affects more than 37 million people in the US. On top of that, nearly 100 million people are considered prediabetic, meaning that together over 40% of the US population suffers from an inability to properly manage blood sugar.

Obesity and type 2 diabetes are closely related conditions, so much so that some experts are now calling the two conditions "diabesity." These dire

figures are what prompted pharmaceutical companies to search for new weight loss treatments.

Type 2 diabetes is a condition in which your body no longer responds to the hormone insulin, which in healthy people regulates glucose, or sugar, levels in the blood. Prolonged elevated blood sugar, if left untreated, can lead to heart disease, vision loss and even death.

Wegovy and Ozempic are a class of drug known as a semaglutide. Since people with type 2 diabetes are unable to properly manage blood sugar, injections with this class of drug help the body release the proper amount of insulin after eating by mimicking a naturally occurring hormone called GLP-1.

At the same time, semaglutides also reduce the release of the hormone glucagon, which works opposite of insulin to increase blood sugar. In non-diabetics, these two hormones work together to maintain normal blood sugar levels. But since this mechanism is not functioning properly in diabetics, which leads to high blood sugar, semaglutides help to control blood sugar and also reduce appetite.

Treatment

For this reason, Ozempic received approval from the FDA in 2017 as a treatment for type 2 diabetes. But during the clinical trials for type 2 diabetes, pharmaceutical companies quickly recognized Ozempic's potential as a weight loss tool.

This led to the release of a new drug, Wegovy, which has a higher dose of semaglutide. A 2021 study showed that once-weekly injections of Wegovy over the course of 68 weeks resulted in about a 15% loss of body weight in adult participants with obesity.

The other novel medication in the news lately, Mounjaro, acts like a semaglutide, stimulating GLP-1, but it also mimics a second hormone called glucose-dependent insulinotropic polypeptide. This dual-hormone action works to not only lower blood sugar levels and increase insulin sensitivity, but also slows the digestive system and decreases appetite.

In early 2021, scientists began analyzing the data from a clinical trial program focused on using semaglutide treatments in people with obesity, which included more than 4,000 patients. Over 80% of participants lost more than 5% of their body weight, with the most common side effects being nausea, diarrhea, vomiting and constipation.

This data on effectiveness and efficacy led the FDA to officially approve Wegovy as a weight loss drug in the summer of 2021. The huge demand that ensued led to the recent shortages

of Wegovy, forcing many physicians to look for other options. That's when Ozempic and Mounjaro entered the picture as off-label weight loss medications, even though they are only FDA-approved to treat type 2 diabetes.

In April 2023, the pharmaceutical company Eli Lilly released the results of the second phase 3 clinical trial of Mounjaro. The results were, quite frankly, amazing: Compared to a placebo, the 938 obese or overweight adults with type 2 diabetes lost more than 34 pounds, or roughly 15% of their body weight, with no required fitness and nutrition program.

This most recent study tracked with the first clinical trial of Mounjaro, published in July 2022, that resulted in more than a 20% reduction in body weight in 2,539 adults. Similar to Wegovy and Ozempic, Mounjaro's most commonly reported side effects are general gastrointestinal distress such as nausea, vomiting and diarrhea.

The latest data from the National Institutes of Health estimates that more than 40% of US adults are obese and another 30% are overweight, meaning that 7 in 10 adults need to lose weight. The World Health Organization estimates that, based on a 2017 global burden of disease study, more than 4 million people across the world are dying every year due to being overweight or obese, a trend that is also growing rapidly in children.

The WHO defines obesity as when an adult or child has a body mass index, or BMI, over 30; a BMI over 25 is considered overweight. In children, doctors often rely on percentiles, rather than an absolute number.

BMI is calculated by taking a person's weight and dividing it by the square of their height - a technique that isn't the most accurate for assessing body composition. But it is valuable for classifying millions of people where more accurate techniques such as skinfold measurements are not feasible.

Being overweight or obese greatly increases risks for other significant health complications, such as heart disease, type 2 diabetes, hypertension, osteoarthritis, stroke and asthma. In fact, obesity is responsible for nearly half of the total cost of chronic disease in the U.S. Studies show that obesity also leads to a decrease in life expectancy.

Recent data suggests that the direct medical costs of a person being obese in the US is more than US\$2,500 annually. And researchers estimate that the total cost of chronic diseases due to obesity in the US is more than \$1.7 trillion annually, which is 9.3% of the country's gross domestic product. Predictions show the annual cost of obesity will be more than \$4.3 trillion worldwide by 2030. (AP)



Van Stolk



Broughton

Museum researcher Matteo Fabbri said the cast is about 60% of a skeleton, the most complete specimen of the species.

"Spinosaurus is a very weird animal," Fabbri said. "The proportions of the entire body are incredibly weird in comparison to any other dinosaur. The tail is extremely long, the legs are incredibly short, and the skull reminds (us) of the ones we find in modern crocodiles."

Fabbri is among a team of researchers

who in March published an article concluding that the density of Spinosaurus fossils means they likely did go underwater to hunt.

The team compared fossils with other dinosaurs, extinct marine reptiles and living animals including seals and whales - knowing that animals that swim underwater for food have bones that are nearly solid compared to those that remain on land. (AP)



Coco Gauff of the U.S. plays a shot against Russia's Mirra Andreeva during their third round match of the French Open tennis tournament at the Roland Garros stadium in Paris. (AP)

Sports

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

City complete second leg of treble bid



Manchester City's players celebrate winning the FA Cup following the Emirates FA Cup final at Wembley Stadium, London. (AP)

Reigning Wimbledon champion Rybakina pulls out of French Open

Gauff wins in all-teen showdown at French Open

PARIS, June 3, (AP): American Coco Gauff rallied from a tough opening set to beat Mirra Andreeva of Russia in an all-teen showdown in the third round of the French Open on Saturday.

Experience eventually told as the 19-year-old Gauff, who was the runner-up at Roland Garros last year, prevailed 6-7 (5), 6-1, 6-1, sealing the result with a cross-court backhand winner.

That ended an impressive Grand Slam debut for the 16-year-old Andreeva, who earlier this week became the youngest player to win a match in the women's main draw at the French Open since 2005.

Top-ranked Iga Swiatek continued her impressive run as she took just 51 minutes to beat Xinyu Wang 6-0, 6-0. Swiatek has dropped just eight games through three rounds.

However, reigning Wimbledon champion Elena Rybakina pulled out of the French Open before her third-round match against Sara Sorribes Tormo because she is sick.

Elsewhere in the women's draw, Bernarda Pera, Beatriz Haddad Maia and Anna Karolina Schmiedlova reached the second week of a Grand Slam for the first time in their careers.

Last year's men's finalist Casper Ruud recovered from losing the opening set to beat Zhang Zhizhen, ending a strong run by the Chinese player.

The fourth-seeded Ruud, who lost to Rafael Nadal in last year's final, won 4-6, 6-4, 6-1, 6-4.

"I'm very happy with being through the first three matches. It's tough," Ruud said. "It's been much more pressure, obviously, playing

TENNIS

this year compared to last year. "Last year, I could sort of just do my work in the shadow. This year it's a little more eyes on me ... I feel the pressure a bit different this year."

Zhang was the first Chinese man to reach the third round at Roland Garros since Kho Sin-Khie in 1937. Kho also reached the fourth round in 1936 but that proved a step too far for Zhang, despite a lightning start on Court Suzanne Lenglen.

Zhang broke Ruud in the opening game and went on to take the set as the Norwegian player grew more and more frustrated.

Matters grew worse for Ruud as he found himself 0-40 down on his serve early in the second set but he collected his emotions and - after a topsy-turvy set - went on to level the match at his first opportunity.

Ruud then improved in the last two sets and sealed the match with a forehand down the line on the first of two match points.

Sixth-seeded Holger Rune opened play on Court Philippe Chatrier and he comfortably dispatched qualifier Genaro Alberto Olivieri, who - at 231 - was the lowest-ranked player to reach the third round this year. Rune won 6-4, 6-1, 6-3 in less than



Barcelona's captain Alexia Putellas lifts the trophy after winning the Women's Champions League final soccer match between FC Barcelona and VfL Wolfsburg at the PSV Stadion in Eindhoven, Netherlands. (AP)

Barcelona win Women's Champions League

Patricia Guijarro scored twice inside three minutes as Barcelona staged a stunning second-half comeback to beat Wolfsburg 3-2 in the Women's Champions League final on Saturday at PSV Stadium.

Fridolina Rolfö capped the Barcelona fightback by calmly firing into the far corner of the net after a mix-up in

the Wolfsburg defense to make it 3-2 in the 70th minute. Wolfsburg led 2-0 at the break thanks to goals from Ewa Pajor and Alexandra Popp.

The victory in front of a record crowd for a women's game in the Netherlands was a second European title for the Catalan team. (AP)

two hours.

It was harder work for Yoshihito Nishioka in his 3-6, 7-6 (8), 2-6, 6-4, 6-0 victory over Thiago Seyboth Wild. That was the 30th match at this year's French Open that has gone to five sets.

Also, Tomas Martin Etcheverry upset 15th-seeded Borna Coric, and Nicolas Jarry beat Marcos Giron.

Reigning Wimbledon champion Elena Rybakina pulled out of the French Open before her third-round match on Saturday because she is sick.

"I just wanted to give 100%, and obviously I'm far from being 100%," Rybakina said. "If I cannot breathe, there is no chance I can even run and try to compete."

The No. 4-seeded Rybakina was supposed to face 132nd-ranked Sara Sorribes Tormo in the day's opening contest on Court Philippe Chatrier.

They were scheduled to begin playing at 11:45 a.m. local time, but instead, at that very moment, Rybakina sat down behind the microphone at a news conference to explain why she was withdrawing from the year's second Grand Slam tournament.

Sounding stuffed up, Rybakina explained that she has been running a fever, didn't sleep well the past two nights and had difficulty breathing during a warmup session Saturday ahead of her match. She said a doctor told her there is a virus going around

"here in Paris."

Rybakina, who won each of her first two matches this week in straight sets, was considered among the top contenders for the championship at Roland Garros. She has won her past 10 matches, including a tuneup title on red clay at the Italian Open last month.

She plays a power-built game based in part on one of the best serves on the WTA Tour, which she leads in across this season.

Last July, Rybakina won her first



Japan's Yoshihito Nishioka celebrates winning his third round match of the French Open tennis tournament against Brazil's Thiago Seyboth Wild at the Roland Garros stadium in Paris. (AP)

major trophy, defeating Ons Jabeur in the final at Wimbledon.

Rybakina is a 23-year-old who was born in Moscow and has represented Kazakhstan since 2018, when that country offered her funding to support her tennis career. The switch was a topic of conversation during Wimbledon, because the All England Club barred athletes who represent Russia or Belarus from entering the tournament in 2022 due to the war in Ukraine.

The walkover allows the 26-year-old Sorribes Tormo to advance to the fourth round of a Grand Slam tournament for the first time in her career.

Rafael Nadal is expected to need about five months to recover from arthroscopic surgery on his left hip, a timeline that likely would keep him out for the rest of this season.

Nadal's spokesman, Benito Perez-Barbadillo, said on Saturday - the 22-time Grand Slam champion's 37th birthday - that two procedures were performed Friday night by a trio of doctors at a clinic in Barcelona. One portion of the operation was for a tendon, the other for an old labrum injury.

When Nadal announced last month that he would be missing the French Open because of the hip problem that has sidelined him since January, he said he hoped to be able to return at some point in 2023 but that he expected next year to be the last of his career.

Citizens edge United in FA Cup final

LONDON, June 3, (AP): Manchester City's mission to win a treble of major trophies stayed on track after beating Manchester United 2-1 in the FA Cup final on Saturday, with the first of Ilkay Gundogan's two goals coming after a record 13 seconds.

With City having already retained the Premier League, now only a first-ever Champions League title stands between Pep Guardiola's team and immortality in English soccer.

Gundogan, City's captain, scored the quickest goal in an FA Cup final - timed by British broadcaster BBC at 12.91 seconds - only for United midfielder Bruno Fernandes to convert a 33rd-minute penalty against the run of play after Jack Grealish was adjudged to have handled the ball.

SOCCER

If Gundogan's opener was probably his best goal for City, his 51st-minute winning goal might be one of his scrappiest as he met a cross from Kevin De Bruyne from a free kick with a left-foot volley that bobbed between two United defenders and past goalkeeper David De Gea.

United was looking to protect its proud status as the only team to win the league-FA Cup-European Cup treble, in 1999, but needs a favor from Inter Milan in the Champions League final in Istanbul on June 10.

It was the 142nd FA Cup final and the first between the two Manchester clubs, with Prince William and United great David Beckham among those in attendance at England's national stadium.

City's class of 2023 became the 13th team in English soccer history to clinch a league-and-cup double while the Abu Dhabi-controlled team won a 16th trophy since 2011, when City ended its 35-year title drought by winning the FA Cup.

It was the 13th trophy in Guardiola's seven years at the club and the 34th of his managerial career.

The latest haul of trophies comes in the same season that the club was charged by the Premier League with more than 100 breaches of financial rules. City denies the charges.

After the final whistle, City's players ran from the halfway line and jumped for joy in front of their fans waving blue and white flags.

Right at the heart of the celebrations was Gundogan, who might leave City after the Champions League final because he is out of contract. He would depart as a club great.

In City's final game of last sea-



Manchester City's Kevin De Bruyne controls the ball during the English FA Cup final soccer match between Manchester City and Manchester United at Wembley Stadium in London. (AP)



Manchester United's Casemiro, (left), and Manchester City's Kalvin Phillips challenge for the ball during the English FA Cup final soccer match between Manchester City and Manchester United at Wembley Stadium in London. (AP)

son, he scored two late goals to complete a turnaround from 2-0 down against Aston Villa and clinch the Premier League with a 3-2 win.

The Germany midfielder has been arguably City's star performer in the final stretch of this season, too, and gave City that stunning start after taking the kickoff himself.

He passed the ball back to goalkeeper Stefan Ortega, who booted it forward for Erling Haaland to flick on. United defender Victor Lindelof could only partially clear to Gundogan, who volleyed in right-footed from the edge of the area.

United was looking to clinch a double of domestic trophies in Erik ten Hag's first year in charge, having won the League Cup in February, but more importantly ensure its class of 1999's legacy was preserved.

Ten Hag's team was dominated, though, until the last 10 minutes when substitute Alejandro Garnacho caused havoc down United's left wing. He instigated a chance in stoppage time that saw Raphael Varane bundle the ball onto the top of the crossbar before City cleared.