



MOVE CONTRAVENES AGENDA OF GOVERNMENT, SAYS AL-MEDLEJ MPs-elect slam CSC 'merger' decision



Employees of the Employment Monitoring Department are seen during a sit-in outside the Civil Service Commission building on Thursday demanding for cancellation of the decision to merge the Employment Monitoring Department with the Legal Affairs Department.

Call to quiz officials

By Saeed Mahmoud Saleh
Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, June 15: The newly-elected MPs have reacted sharply to the decision of the Civil Service Commission (CSC) to merge the Employment Monitoring Department with the Legal Affairs Department.

MPs-elect Osama Al-Shaen, Shuaib Shaaban, Hamad Al-Medlej, Muhammad Al-Hewaila, Hamdan Al-Azmi and Badr Sayyar Al-Shemmari expressed their objection to the decision.

Al-Shemmari argued that the decision is unacceptable, stressing the Employment Monitoring Department is supposed to be affiliated with the Bureau of Financial Controllers (BFC) to strengthen oversight and monitoring.

Al-Medlej called for questioning the senior officials who issued the decision, because it contravenes the agenda of the government. He pointed out that the previous government submitted a proposal to put the Employment Monitoring Department under BFC.

He also urged HH the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah to adhere to the program of his government, which includes intensifying efforts to combat corruption.

Al-Azmi said the caretaker government has been taking many destructive decisions; such as the abovementioned decision and the referral of senior pilots for retirement. He stressed the need for HH the Prime Minister to interfere in order to stop such steps.

Al-Hewaila underscored the need to cancel the decision, which he considers suspicious as it was issued at a critical time. He confirmed support for the program of the government, because it is keen on combating corruption. He added the Employment Monitoring Department is one of the tools for implementing the program of the government.

Shaaban believes that administrative corruption is one of the major obstacles to national progress and development. He then called for cancellation of the decision in question in order to

Continued on Page 4

UNSC tackles 'human fraternity'

Pope, imam call for peace ahead of vote

UNITED NATIONS, June 15, (AP): Pope Francis and a leading Sunni imam made calls for peace as the U.N. Security Council (UNSC) met Wednesday to discuss the importance of "human fraternity" and condemn the hatreds that kindle conflicts.

The pope, who is in hospital recovering from abdominal surgery, sent a statement saying that a third world war is being fought "piecemeal" and with the potentially catastrophic effects of nuclear weapons "the time has come to say an emphatic 'no' to war."

Sheikh Ahmed al-Tayeb, the grand imam of Al-Azhar, the 1,000-year-old seat of Sunni learning in Cairo, said in a virtual briefing that human fraternity was the key to global peace, a point he and the pope had made in a joint document released in 2019.

The United Arab Emirates chose the importance of human fraternity in bringing peace as a centerpiece of its presidency of the council this month. After the appeals by the pope and grand imam and council speeches, members adopted a resolution recognizing that hate speech, racism, xenophobia, intolerance, gender discrimination and acts of extremism "can contribute to driving the outbreak, escalation and recurrence of conflict."

The resolution, co-sponsored by the UAE and the United Kingdom, urges all countries and organizations to condemn these acts and work to prevent them. It was adopted unanimously even though some of the council's 15 members have been accused of some of the same actions they are condemning.

UAE Ambassador Lana Nusseibeh told The Associated Press after the vote that it was a "landmark" resolution that for the first time brings together previous council resolutions addressing hate speech, racism, incitement and extremism in different ways. She said it promotes tolerance, equality, coexistence and dialogue.

Pope Francis lamented that the world is going backward from the dream when the United Nations was founded in 1945 on the ashes of two world wars that countries would move toward a more stable peace and "become at last a family of nations."

Instead, he said, the world is seeing "the rise of myopic, extremist, resentful and aggressive nationalisms that have kindled conflicts which are not only anachronistic and outdated but even more violent."

Newswatch

RIYADH: Crown Prince of Saudi Arabia Mohammad bin Salman is set to meet with French President Emmanuel Macron tomorrow, Friday, while on official visit to the capital, Paris.

Saudi Press Agency (SPA) mentioned the Bin Salman is heading Saudi's delegation to participate in New Global Financial Summit slated to take place on the 22nd and 23rd of this month.

The Crown Prince will also be taking part in official reception celebrating Riyadh running to host 2030 Expo on June 19.

As per the directives of King Salman bin Abdulaziz, the Crown Prince headed to the French capitol yesterday. (KUNA)

BAGHDAD: Iraqi Prime Minister Mohammad Al-Sudani voiced Wednesday keenness on having American corporations in the country, adding that Iraq is currently in state of security and political and social stability, qualifying it to become an attractive environment for foreign investments.

This came when Al-Sudani received delegation of US-Iraq business council headed by vice president of Middle East Affairs at the US Chamber of Commerce, Steve Lutes. (KUNA)

NEW YORK: A US Army soldier duped into thinking he was communicating online with a terrorist when it was really an FBI employee pleaded guilty Wednesday to seeking to tell terrorists how to ambush US soldiers in the Middle East.

Cole Bridges, 22, entered pleas in Manhattan federal court to trying to provide material support to terrorists and trying to murder US military service members. He could face up to 20 years in prison on each of the two charges at a Nov 2 sentencing. (AP)

WASHINGTON: The United States expressed concerns Wednesday over wasting more time by the Lebanese parliament to elect a president.

US State Department Spokesperson Matthew Miller said in a briefing he do not want to comment on any future actions they may or may not take, but "we welcome the vote, but are concerned that members of Parliament left the chamber to prevent further rounds of voting to deny a quorum." (KUNA)

Opinion

Your Highness PM... 'Where there's a will, there's a way'

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

IT was expected that His Highness Sheikh Ahmad Al-Nawaf would be reappointed as the Prime Minister once again, based on his past experience. What he presented in the absence of the National Assembly indicates a high level of supervision by the leadership over the work of the government, and the possibility to solve problems.

However, without cooperation between the two authorities - the legislative and the executive - which is necessary, it would mean returning to square one. This is what no one in the country needs.

There is no doubt that there are ministers who played a major role in some of the achievements that need to be realized. For this reason, it is expected that they will return to their positions.

There are some who have proven their inability to carry out their responsibilities. There are also those who announced their reluctance to take up the position, and requested to appoint others who perhaps are highly qualified. This is a test of whether it would be a success or failure.

Nevertheless, we are yet to benefit from past experiences, build on positive factors, and be aware of mistakes in order to avoid them. Kuwait is no longer able to afford the luxury of experiments. Today it is more in need of working a way out of its crises.

It is a known fact that there are many problems awaiting the new Cabinet. His Highness the Prime Minister is well aware of the fact that the opportunity is available in light of the broad parliamentary consensus on the general lines, and the hope to start putting logical solutions into practice, especially those that have been pending for years.

In this regard, what is required is a ministerial team with the capability to work and achieve, and to take into account the experiences of other countries that have managed to get rid of their problems with skill, and relied on two things - the first is to strive to turn problems into opportunities, and the second is to benefit from the available capabilities, devote itself to investing money in stimulating its economy and enhancing the financial cycle, and get out of the tunnel of deficit.

In all of this, it is necessary to be convinced that there is no problem without a solution. Any of it, irrespective of whether or not it is based on personal interests or the influence of a deep state or the opinion of opportunists, will be a disaster for the people. This specifically applies to the housing file that we talked about so much.

We have said over and over again that

Continued on Page 4

Email: ahmed@aljarallah.com

Follow me on:



ahmedaljarallah@gmail.com

Kuwaiti envoy assures pilgrims

'All Hajj services ready'

RIYADH, June 15, (Agencies): Kuwaiti Ambassador to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia Sheikh Sabah Nasser Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah on Wednesday said all services and preparations have been arranged for the Hajj pilgrims heading from Kuwait.

The Kuwaiti Ambassador also added the embassy is very ardent on making sure the pilgrims have all the amenities needed to make their hajj experience more fitting, as propped by His Highness the Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and His Highness Crown Prince Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah.

While also mentioning the Foreign Ministry represented by Sheikh Salem Abdullah Al-Jaber Al-Sabah is also on alert and continues communications to have their diplomatic mission prepared for the Hajj season.

All Kuwaiti's in Saudi Arabia should not get hesitant to contact the Embassy or consulate in Jeddah for emergencies, mentioned Sheikh Sabah Nasser.

He also presented gratitude and thanks to the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al-Saud and Crown Prince Mohammad bin Salman Al-Saud for what their nation has prepared for the Hajj season.

The Kuwaiti Consul General of the OIC in Jeddah, Mohammad Al-Mutairi assured the Kuwaiti Consulate in Jeddah are highly prepared for this year's season.

In his statement to KUNA, Al-Mutairi mentioned the efforts put forth by all committees devising the Hajj mission, headed by the Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs have prepared all necessary measures and facilities needed for the pilgrims, with an additional service commission available 24-hour.

The consulate has also set-up an office in Makkah and another at the King Abdulaziz

International Airport to help facilitate a post for those facing any difficulties during their Hajj ceremony coinciding with the consulates services.

Al-Mutairi also mentioned the need for Pilgrims to follow Local laws and guidelines issued by the Kingdom and to only adhere to the Hajj rituals during their travel.

The Consulate service number for all emergencies that pilgrims may face during the Hajj season is 00966535571133.

Meanwhile, the Superintendent of the Affairs of the Supreme Committee for Hajj and Umrah, Muhammad Shabab Al-Saeedi, announced the closure of the registration platform for bedoun pilgrims yesterday, saying a total of 4,400 pilgrims have registered to perform the Hajj, reports Al-Qabas daily.

Al-Saeedi said the names of those who will be granted visas to perform the pilgrimage is being sorted out and that priority will be given for the elderly and their companions, and those who have not previously performed Hajj.

He added text messages are being sent to those who are accepted and whoever receives the acceptance message must complete the procedures with the Kuwaiti Hajj caravans, explaining that only 1,000 bedoun pilgrims will be accepted, and they must complete the procedures within 48 hours.

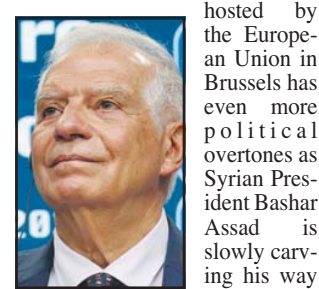
Al-Saeedi revealed that the Kuwaiti Hajj caravans have begun issuing permits for pilgrims after linking the permit to all services provided through the Saudi Path Program.

Earlier, The Director of the Hajj and Umrah Department at the Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs, Sattam Al-Muzayen, said until yesterday 4,000 bedoun had registered through the Ministry of Awqaf's website to perform Hajj out of whom only 1,000 will be issued visas, reports Al-Jarida daily.

\$11.1bn more for Syria: UN

BRUSSELS, June 15, (AP): Donor nations from across the globe were scrambling Thursday to find billions of dollars to extend their aid commitment to millions of Syrians who have been battered by hunger, poverty, civil war and a massive earthquake.

Amid pressing needs across the globe from Ukraine to Sudan, the annual donor conference



Borrell

hosted by the European Union in Brussels has even more political overtones as Syrian President Bashar Assad is slowly carving his way back from being an international pariah to the regional mainstream. Finding hard cash, though, remains key.

"My appeal is simple: Help us help the Syrian people. We are asking for \$11.1 billion, our largest appeal worldwide," U.N. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres said. "We have no time to spare."

Funding from the conference will help provide aid to Syrians in the war-torn country and to some 5.7 million Syrian refugees living in neighboring countries, particularly Turkey, Lebanon and Jordan.

But for nations hit by economic difficulties, a surge in inflation that has hurt the poor in even the wealthiest nations and the seemingly hopeless situation that drags on in Syria's 13-year conflict, money is increasingly hard to come by.

Guterres said that because of the funding crisis, there would need to be drastic aid cuts for the 5.5 million people in Syria who have been receiving food assistance.

"Our cash assistance will run out for two and a half million Syrians next month alone," Guterres said, calling it "priority number one."

However, Josep Borrell, foreign policy chief of the 27-nation EU, insisted that the bloc would not change its policies toward Assad, including maintaining sanctions against his regime. "We are not on the same line as the Arab League. That's clear," Borrell said. He added, however, that he would be interested in what the league could achieve with its new position.

The conference comes after a deadly 7.8 magnitude earthquake rocked large swaths of Syria in February, further compounding its misery. The World Bank estimated over \$5 billion in damage as the quake destroyed homes and hospitals and further crippled Syria's poor power and water infrastructure.



Huda Zaqqout reads from a large copy of the Muslim holy book at her home a few weeks before she is slated to travel to Makkah for the Muslim pilgrimage in Gaza City on May 31, 2023. (AP)



Nisreen Rbaiaan, the UNHCR representative in Kuwait honors competition winners.

KUNA photo

UNHCR holds competition for designing refugees' shelters

KUWAIT CITY, June 15, (KUNA): United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees has wrapped up a competition in architectural designs of shelters for Bangladeshi refugees engaging young Kuwaiti architects and freshly graduated engineers.

The competition was held in coordination with the Kuwait University College of Architecture, Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development and the Arab Consulting Engineering Office.

Nisreen Rbaiaan, the UNHCR representative in Kuwait, said in a statement that the holding of the competition, capped with awards' distribution to winners, coincided with the forthcoming World Refugee Day (June 20), indicating that the UNHCR report, regularly issued on this occasion, revealed that number of compulsory refugees worldwide exceeded 110 million.

Rbaiaan said the competition was held for engaging the youth for innovating solutions for mounting and complex challenges facing stakeholders seek-

ing to secure housing for people who had to flee their homes.

Walid Al-Bahr, KFAED acting director general, affirmed support for the young Kuwaitis, praising the distinctive partnership bonding the fund with the UNHCR, indicating at joint efforts for overhauling refugee camps' infrastructures and backing up host communities.

Al-Bahr has added that the fund participation in the contest has come in line with its belief that the Kuwait youngsters are the basis for sustainable development.

For her part, Dr. Sheikha Al-Mubarak, the acting dean of the KU Architecture faculty, said the college participation in the activities was intended to boost engagement in architecture and merge the sector with humanitarian tasks.

CEO of Pace Architecture Engineering and Planning (Pan Arab Consulting Engineers) Tareq Shuaib said the competition constituted an opportunity to present new ideas for drawing sketches of the refugees' dwellings.

Agreement with US Federal Highway Authority to supervise road projects

Bidding extended from June 15 to July 3

KUWAIT CITY, June 15: At a time when attention is drawn to the Ministry of Public Works' plan to maintain and radically rehabilitate roads, sources revealed a tendency to sign an agreement with the US Federal Highway Authority to supervise contracts expected to be signed with international companies, reports Al-Qabas daily.

The sources explained that this step is aimed to ensure efficient supervision and oversight of projects by a global expert. This authority had previously worked in the country in 1968 under the name "Office of Public Roads in the US Department of

Transportation". During that period, the country's roads were of a high level of quality.

The closing date for road maintenance tenders for international companies has been extended from June 15 to July 3 based on the request of the bidding companies for further study and scrutiny.

The ministry insisted on closing the door for submitting bids immediately after the Eid al-Adha holidays in order to ensure the implementation based on the previously announced timetable, and to start road maintenance work in early August.

Starting during that period allows the ministry to take advantage of the summer vacation period and the travel of many citizens and residents, which facilitates the closure of some highway roads when working on them, especially during night times, as was the norm during the previous laying works.

KRCS signs agreement to renovate Lebanese Hospital maternity ward

BEIRUT, June 15, (KUNA): Kuwait Red Crescent Society (KRCS) on Thursday inked an agreement with Al-Makased association to renovate the society's hospital maternity ward -- with funding from the Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development.

The accord was inked at a ceremony held at the hospital by the KRCS Secretary General, Maha Al-Barjas, and the hospital deputy director general Dr. Mohammad Hamandi. It was attended the society president Faisal Sinno and the KRCS delegate to Lebanon, Dr. Musaed al-Enezi.

Al-Barjas said in a statement to

KUNA that the support came as part of the Kuwaiti aid for the Lebanese hospitals and repairing damage inflicted in the August 2020 port bombing.

The KRCS will oversee renovation and equipping the maternity ward with generous financial allocations from the fund.

For his part, Dr. Sinno said Al-Makased Hospital was under pressure, particularly in the maternity ward, due to its location close to the Palestinian refugee camp, Sabra, mounting numbers of Syrian refugee patients in addition to Lebanese in need for treatment.



Ministry of Public Works plans to maintain and radically rehabilitate roads.

A total of 11 international companies have acquired the documents, including four Chinese companies, two Indian companies, and one each from Japan, Turkey, Germany, America and South Korea.

The technical committee composed of five government agencies will start examining the offers after the closing of the door for submission.

Regarding the expected signing of an agreement with the Federal Highway Administration in the United States (FHWA) to supervise road maintenance contracts, the sources said the step that is currently being worked on is based on the guidance of Minister Dr. Amani Bouqmaz. It is aimed to ensure efficient supervision and oversight of projects from an international body that enjoys experience and a good reputation in particular. The Federal Authority had previously worked in the country from 1968 under the name "Office Public Roads in the US Department of Transportation."

In 2005, the Ministry of Public Works tried to re-cooperate with the authority and an agreement was already signed, but it was not activated for unknown reasons.

The ministry considers the presence of an international consultant to supervise tenders as necessary to ensure the efficiency and quality of implementation.

Regarding the submission extension, the extension came at the request of international companies, during the preliminary meeting that was held with the companies on June 1. Some companies requested an extension of up to two additional months for further technical study so that they could submit offers optimally. Some others submitted proposals that are currently being studied.

The sources also highlighted the great positive interaction by the companies, represented in submitting inquiries within the

legal period specified for that, as the ministry in turn responded to them.

The ministry insisted that the door for bidding be closed immediately after the Eid holidays, based on its keenness on the timetable which was previously announced, provided that the implementation of the contracts will start in early August.

The sources affirmed the ministry's full keenness to follow up with transparency and clarity, and keep the public informed of the new plan, as it is committed to what was previously announced regarding signing practices with the parent company and dealing directly with it.

They said the authorities scheduled to participate in the technical committee to examine the offers submitted by the companies include the Ministry of Electricity and Water, Ministry of Finance, the Public Authority for Housing Welfare and the Fatwa and Legislation Department, and the Ministry of Public Works.

They informed the ministry of their nominations, and the committee is scheduled to start its work to vet offers right after closing.

The sources indicated that the ministry, during the coming period, will allocate offices for the companies that will be signed with inside the headquarters of the Ministry of Public Works in order to facilitate the process of finalizing all procedures and correspondences related to tenders with the various state agencies under the direct supervision of the ministry.

They revealed that the ministry had addressed the Municipal Council to allocate sites in the six governorates of the country to establish offices and housing for workers of global road maintenance contracts, adding that the request was referred to the technical committees in the council, which are currently working in coordination with the governorates to allocate those sites.

Your Highness

Continued from Page 1

the Kuwait Credit Bank has debts worth more than three billion dinars owed by citizens. It collects part of it on a monthly basis. This means that it can borrow from local banks. By guaranteeing these loans, housing cities can be built with integrated services, based on vertical construction and not horizontal, in order to save land areas, and because the public taste has changed from what it was before.

One among the crises is the diversification of sources of income. This requires a sound vision based on a state project, and acceleration of the process for weaning off oil like the way many countries in the world have done, including several Gulf countries and others who no longer depend on oil.

Among the problems that must be resolved quickly is the Bedoun issue, which, as we mentioned yesterday, continues to snowball. Neighboring countries, such as the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, managed to quickly resolve this issue. Others did the same, and turned it from a threat into a development opportunity.

As for loans, this is a problem that is easy to solve. All you need is a decision, as it is possible to extend the repayment period, drop interests, and stop physical coercion.

These are some of the problems; the rest of them will be discussed at length. However, where there's a will, there's a way, and most of the crises can then be solved. But if personal interests continue to be prioritized, Kuwait will continue to revolve in a vicious circle.

This is why the will and determination to make decisions are important. We say it again - a government that was able to achieve in the absence of the National Assembly is able to work under the most difficult circumstances. This is what Kuwaitis are waiting for today.

MPs-elect

Continued from Page 1

guarantee integrity and address administrative shortcomings.

Al-Shaheen asserted that the Employment Monitoring Department must be autonomous to be more effective, instead of merging it with another department.

In a related development, employees of the Employment Monitoring Department organized a sit-in on Thursday, demanding for cancellation of the decision.

Head of the department Sabaa Al-Sajari pointed out that the department plays a major role in the appointment, delegation and reshuffling of employees in public institutions. She confirmed that many violations were uncovered due to the tremendous efforts exerted by the department. She added the sit-in will continue until the decision is cancelled.

On the other hand, Constitutional expert Professor Ibrahim Al-Homoud clarified that in case none of the MPs-elect accepts any ministerial post; HH the Prime Minister will submit a letter to the political leadership to take a decision in this regard. He disclosed that the options stipulated in Article 56 of the Constitution include replacing HH the Prime Minister for the lawmakers to accept ministerial posts or dissolution of the Parliament.

So far, none of the newly elected MPs have affirmed willingness to accept ministerial positions.

Meanwhile, former MP and 2023 parliamentary election candidate Saadoun Hammad has appealed to the Constitutional Court, claiming that the election result is wrong. He said he should be in 10th place in his constituency, instead of MP-elect Jarrah Al-Fawzan. He added that the result of his team's vote counting showed he got 441 votes - higher than that of Al-Fawzan.



albander
hotel & resort

June

Room Promotion







Weekdays (Saturday - Wednesday)	Price
Queen Cabana (2 persons inclusive of breakfast) per night.	BHD 61.000/-net
2 Bedroom Chalet (4 persons inclusive of breakfast) per night.	BHD 136.198/-net
Weekends (Thursday & Friday)	Price
Queen Cabana (2 persons inclusive of breakfast) per night.	BHD 69.000/-net
2 Bedroom Chalet (4 persons inclusive of breakfast) per night.	BHD 153.222/-net

Promo period from 1st - 21st June 2023

Terms & conditions apply

Tel: +973 17701201 - Ext. 351 | Email: reservation@albander.com | www.albander.com | @albanderhotelandresort

What's On



Group photo of the 20 years of service awardees.



Group photo of the 15 years of service awardees.



Group photo of the 10 years of service awardees.



Group photo of the 5 years of service awardees.

Event celebrates the 5, 10, and 15 years of service awards

AUK hosts Annual Dinner, marks its administrative achievements

KUWAIT CITY, June 15: The American University of Kuwait (AUK) hosted its Annual Dinner at the Regency Kuwait to celebrate the University's administrative achievements and accomplishments. The event—organized by the University's Human Resources Department—was attended by staff, faculty, and members of the president's cabinet.

The event marked the 5, 10, and 15 years of service awards that were presented to employees who completed the respective years at AUK. This year's annual dinner was significant as it also marked the inaugural celebration of the 20 years' service award.

AUK president, Dr. Rawda Awwad, conveyed her gratitude towards AUK employees in her opening state-



AUK president, Dr. Rawda Awwad giving her speech.

ment, "None of our accomplishments would be possible without the support



AUK executive vice president, Ms. Amal Al-Binali giving her speech.

and recognition for your tireless efforts. Therefore, I would like to take

a moment to acknowledge and celebrate the dedication and perseverance that you have exhibited throughout your journey. So, let us continue to support and uplift one another, daring ourselves to embrace new challenges and fully embody the uniqueness that defines AUK. Let us carry the memory of evenings such as this one, cherishing the community we are part of, the togetherness we share, and the care we have for each other as we continue to grow and leave our mark on the world."

AUK executive vice president, Ms. Amal Al-Binali, is one such awardee that served AUK for an impressive span of 20 years. Reflecting on this significant milestone, Ms. Al-Binali shared her profound sentiments, stating, "I am grateful for the past 20 years at AUK, where I

found not just a workplace but a second home. Together, we overcame challenges, celebrated triumphs, and formed lifelong connections. My heartfelt thanks to the exceptional teams at AUK who supported me throughout the journey. Let us continue striving for greatness and building on our success."

HR senior director, Paul Bassil, highlighted the theme of this year's annual dinner and its significance, "It is with great pleasure that I extend a warm welcome to you, gathered here today for this occasion where we will delve into the concept of 'we are a book.' In the same way that books hold captivating stories that touch our hearts and engage our minds, we, too, possess narratives that define us as individuals and as a collective. Each one of us represents

a page, eager to be opened, read, and shared. Our stories are distinct, filled with unique twists and turns, moments of joy and sorrow, and instances of triumph and defeat. However, by exchanging our stories with one another, we can discover common ground, foster empathy, and cultivate understanding. Through the sharing of these individual narratives, we collectively contribute to the tale of our institution, AUK."

The Annual Dinner also offered attendees enjoyable entertainment, including musical performances, magic shows, and a raffle draw to conclude the festivities.

AUK's strong culture of employee recognition is regularly expressed through events such as the annual dinner that highlight the contributions of faculty and staff.



A group photo from the event.

Play brings legendary poet to life

Future Eye Theatre presents 'Kathakalkappuram' drama

KUWAIT CITY, June 15: Future Eye Theatre (FET) Kuwait, a well known theatre group in Kuwait, successfully performed their drama "Kathakalkappuram - Mizhavu Paranja Katha" (Beyond Stories) on June 2, at Hawally Boy's Scout Hall. The play was based on the life of legendary poet "Kalakkath Kunjan Nambiar" who died a tragic death caused by rabies. The play is a mix of both fiction and real life, drawing inspiration from the events that took place in Nambiar's life. The play was written and directed by FET Patron Shemej Kumar K.K., his fourteenth directorial venture.

In the play Nambiar was portrayed as a social reformer and activist who was against the social norms of that time. The play progresses to show the love and affection Nambiar had for a lady who was an ardent admirer of his writings and art. She drew his attention to the fact that the usage of Sanskrit for classical arts made it inaccessible for the vast majority of common people. The play portrays how Nambiar used Malayalam to write his poems and the difficulties he had to overcome during this process.

Many Indian classical art forms such as "Koodiyattam", "Chakayar Koothu", "Ottanthulal" were used to convey the story. Jayakrishnan and Drishya played Koodiyattam and Theertha played Ottanthulal.

The main character of Kunjan Nambiar was played by Unni Kaimal, the role of Vasundhara, his lover was played by Remya Ratheesh and

that of Chakayar by Jyothish P. G.

Other characters, King Marthanda Varma was played by Krishna Kumar. Unnai warrior, Naadu vazhi were played by Leo and Dr Abraham respectively. Dr Pramod and Noushad Mangalathope enacted the supporting roles. Characters of Nalan and Riituparnan were presented by Sarath and Girish. Bipin played the role of Chakayar interacting with the audience prior to the start of both the shows. The chorus for the play were supported by Chandra Mohan, Suresh, Sunil, Ravichandran, Jijuna, Dr.Prasanthi, Anupama, Shabla, Bindu, Divya Rajeev and, Aneesh. The technical crew included Priyan, Shaju, Rajesh and Naveen. The properties and make up were handled by Dr. Santhosh and Rajeev Devanandhanam.

The official function was inaugurated by Ms Alison Shan Price MBE from One World Actors Organization along with Peter Mulley, Deputy Principal Fahaheel English School. Ms Prabhitha was the anchor for the event which was held at Boys scout hall Hawally on June 2. Lighting design with projection was executed by Shymon Chelad from the school of drama.

Souvenir release was done by Peter Mulley along with the FET Treasurer Sarath Nair. Santhosh Kuttath delivered welcome speech along with the presidential address by Vattiyor Kaavu Krishna Kumar, president of Future Eye Theatre. Dr Pramod Menon delivered the vote of thanks.



Photo from the event.

IFL-25 a thundering success

Indian Frontliners celebrates its Silver Jubilee

KUWAIT CITY, June 15: Indian Frontliners (IFL), a service organization started with the motto of "United to Serve - United We Serve" is celebrating its 25th year Silver Jubilee and the special event held at Innova International School, Mahboubia-Kuwait on May 26, 2023. Thousands of Indians gathered to make this event a grand success.

S. Thirunavukkarasar M.P. (Former Union Minister), Dr. Fouzia Khan M.P. (Former Maharashtra Minister), H.E. Dr. Adarsh Swaika, Indian Ambassador to Kuwait, and Ms. Priyadarshini, Supreme Court Lawyer were present as special guests for the function.

It was celebrated as National Integration Cultural Show and the function started with the traditional lighting of Kuthuvilakku followed by National Anthem. IFL President Ramadoss presented the welcome address with brief of IFL services.

The cultural feast with variety of dance programs by young children covering dances with various language mix, sequences, medley, cinematic etc., and many more adding traditional flavor to the show.

In this most spectacular show, the IFL released its 23rd volume of book on the theme of "Enticing India" - prepared by NCM-Subbu-Hari-Anand team, covering articles on special Touristic places in India.

IFL-23 book was released by Chief Guest Thirunavukkarasar and received by H.E. Dr. Adarsh Swaika. The Function Souvenir magazine was released by Dr. Fouzia Khan and received by Adv. Priyadarshini. Also a book written by famous Tamil writer Dinamalar "Anthumani" was released by Ambassador and received by Dr. S.M. Hyder Ali.

Mathi, the welfare secretary of IFL was felicitated by Thirunavukkarasar

MP for his continuous and tireless social services. Mementoes were presented to the well-wishers as a token of acknowledgement, love and honor for their all-time support.

Ambassador Dr. Adarsh Swaika's message extending congratulations and appreciations to IFL community was cheered by the crowd.

In her keynote address, Dr. Fouzia Khan praised the intellect and virtue of Indians and advised on the importance of education. She praised and congratulated the IFL organization for helping the needy. Priyadarshini spoke about women's rights and the responsibility of parents to their children.

Dr. S. M. Hythar Ali, touched the heart of each and every audience & guests present over there with his powerful and inspiring speech marking history of achievements and services rendered to the society.

Thirunavukkarasar addressed the audience by sharing his experience and knowledge. He praised the service of IFL and honored IFL Founder & Coordinator NC Mohandoss's continuous coordination of IFL for the past 25 years. Also, he had a Q&A session with audience and inspired the gathering with his answers.

It was joyous colorful and made the crowd enjoys every bit of it. The national integration was well exhibited throughout the 4 hours' event. Playback Singers Deepak Blue along with Soundarya gave a splendid musical night for the enthralled crowd.

The entire event was well organized with good performances by the artists. Good ambience of the hall added more flavor by making the evening an enjoyable and pleasant one. The program was compiled by Mrs. Rajalakshmi Balaji and Mrs. Rajeevi Raja.

INVESTMENT STRATEGY & RESEARCH

KAMCO INVEST

GCC Banking Sector Report – Q1-2023 June 2023

Higher non-interest income and lower LLPs drive profits to a new high

Aggregate net profit for listed banks in the GCC reached a new record high during Q1-2023 mainly led by a steep q-o-q increase in non-interest income that more than offset a sequential decline in interest income in Qatar and Kuwait. In addition, lower provisions booked by banks in the region also supported bottom-line performance during the quarter. As a result, aggregate net profits saw the biggest q-o-q growth since the pandemic at 17.0% to reach USD 13.4 Bn during Q1-2023 from USD 11.5 Bn recorded in Q4-2022. The sequential increase in net profit was broad-based and was seen across the GCC.

Total quarterly net interest income declined for the first time in five quarters during Q1-2023 mainly led by a decline reported by banks in Qatar and Kuwait. On the other hand, banks in UAE reported a growth of 1.2% whereas for Saudi-listed banks the growth was flattish. Non-interest income, meanwhile, increased by a strong 17.2% during the quarter with growth seen across the GCC, barring in Bahrain. Kuwait, Saudi and Qatari banks reported strong double-digit growth in non-interest income during the quarter.

The trend in provisions was mixed during the quarter, although aggregate provisions declined by 6.2% q-o-q to reach USD 3.1 Bn in Q1-2023 as compared to USD 3.3 Bn in Q4-2022. The decline mainly came as a result of a steep drop in provisions booked by banks in the UAE, Qatar and Oman that more than offset higher provisions booked by banks in Kuwait, Saudi Arabia and Bahrain.

Aggregate lending in the GCC continued to see growth during the quarter although the trend remained mixed at the country level with growth in three out of six countries in the GCC offsetting declines in the remaining countries. Moreover, the q-o-q growth in gross loans fell to a five-quarter low level of 1.2% to reach USD 1.9 Trillion at the end of Q1-2023. The growth in net loans was slightly better at 1.7% to reach USD 1.8 Trillion. On the other hand, growth in customer deposit was at a three-quarter high of 2.9% to reach USD 2.3 Trillion at the end of Q1-2023. The trend once again remained mixed across the GCC countries. The net impact of a stronger growth in customer deposits vs. lending resulted in a decline in loan-to-deposit ratio for the GCC banking sector that reached 78.5%, one of the lowest levels in several quarters.

Central bank data showed Kuwaiti banks seeing double digit growth in outstanding credit facilities during the quarter while Saudi Arabia, Bahrain and Omani banks registered low single-digit growths. The Credit survey from UAE central banks also showed strong lending during the quarter. On the other hand, the Qatari banking sector was an exception showing a marginal decline in lending during the quarter. Data on listed banks also showed growth with aggregate GCC gross loans reaching a new record of USD 1.93 Trillion, increasing by 1.2% or USD 23.5 Bn during the quarter. Outstanding net loan witnessed a slightly smaller growth of 1.1% during the quarter as a result of higher provisions booked during the quarter.

Highlights - GCC Banking Sector

This report analyzes financials reported by 57 listed banks in the GCC for the quarter ended Q1-2023. Data for individual banks have been aggregated to the country level. Some of the key observations from the most recent financial quarter for the GCC Banking Sector includes the following:

Net interest income declines for the first time in five quarters

Aggregate net income reported by banks listed in the GCC witnessed its first decline in five quarters. Total net interest income reached USD 20.0 Bn during Q1-2023 from USD 20.2 Bn in Q4-2022, although when compared to Q1-2022 net interest income of USD 15.6 Bn, the y-o-y growth was a strong 27.7%. The q-o-q decline was mainly led by fall in net interest income in Qatar and Kuwait that more than off-

set strong growth in Bahrain coupled with marginal growth in net interest income reported by banks in Oman, UAE and Saudi Arabia. Moreover, cost of funds for the aggregate GCC banking sector saw a sharp increase from 1.9% in the previous quarter to reach a multi-quarter high of 2.5% during Q1-2023.

Net interest income reported by banks in Kuwait dropped by 11.0% q-o-q to reach USD 2.1 Bn as compared to USD 2.3 Bn during Q4-2022. The USD 259 Mn decline was mainly led by a decline in net interest income in five out of 10 listed banks while the remaining five banks reported marginal growth. The decline was mainly led by exposure to currencies via subsidiaries and associates in other countries. Similarly in Qatar, four out of 7 listed banks reported a decline in interest incomes during the quarter. On the growth side, net interest income reported by Saudi-listed banks increased marginally by 0.1% q-o-q to USD 6.8 Bn after growth in net interest come for six out of 10 banks was offset by declines reported by the remaining four that include Al Rajhi Bank, Bank Aljazira, Banque Saudi Fransi and SNB. Amongst the prominent ones, the net interest income for Al Rajhi Bank declined mainly due to higher interest expenses that more than offset a relatively smaller growth in interest income. The aggregate for the UAE banking sector showed net interest income growth of 1.2% after higher interest income in most banks in the UAE was partially offset mainly by a steep q-o-q drop in net interest income reported by Emirates NBD due to the exposure to DenizBank.

Topline surges to a new record high led by non-interest income

Total bank revenue for GCC banks registered a healthy q-o-q growth of 3.9% during Q1-2023 to reach a new record high of USD 29.1 Bn as compared to USD 28.0 Bn during Q4-2022. The q-o-q increase was led by a broad-based improvement in revenues across the GCC during the quarter. The increase was mainly led by a strong growth in non-interest income in all GCC countries, barring in Bahrain, that was further supported by higher net interest income in Saudi, UAE, Bahrain and Oman.

Aggregate non-interest income witnessed growth for the second consecutive quarter and reached USD 9.1 Bn during Q1-2023, registering a q-o-q increase of 17.2%. Banks in Kuwait witnessed the strongest q-o-q growth of 41.3% mainly on the back of higher non-interest income reported by KFH. According to the bank, the increase of USD 230.2 Mn was led by gain on sale and increase in market value of investments along with increase in fees and commissions on consolidation with AUB. Saudi Arabia and Qatari banks also registered strong double-digit growth in non-interest income at 31.4% and 20.7%, respectively.

Operating expenses remain largely under control

GCC banks showed positive performance on the cost front and these efforts were reflected in the aggregate operating expenses during Q1-2023. Total operating expenses registered a decline of 3.1% to reach USD 11.2 Bn during Q1-2023 after seeing consistent growth during the three previous quarters. Bahraini banks reported the biggest q-o-q decline in operating expenses at -12.3% followed by Kuwait and UAE banks with cost declines of 9.8% and 8.9%, respectively. On the other hand, Saudi banks reported higher operating expenses that reached USD 3.5 Bn with a q-o-q increase of 7.1% while Qatari banks also reported a smaller increase of 1.3% with total operating expenses reaching USD 1.6 Bn.

Aggregate LLP declined but remains higher than pre-pandemic levels

After two consecutive quarters of growth, aggregate loan loss provisions (LLP) declined during Q1-2023 to reach USD 3.1 Bn as compared to USD 3.3 Bn during Q4-2022. The USD 0.2 Bn or 6.2% q-o-q decline was led by lower aggregate provisions for UAE, Qatar and Omani banks that more than offset an increase in Kuwait, Saudi Arabia and Bahrain. Kuwaiti banks once again booked the biggest absolute increase in provisions during the quarter with a growth of USD 0.22 Bn followed by Bahraini and Saudi-listed banks. On the

other hand, UAE and Qatar-listed banks reported the biggest absolute declines when compared to Q4-2022. Out of the 57 banks we analyzed, 33 banks reported a q-o-q decline in provisions whereas 24 banks reported higher provisions. In terms of specific banks, Emirates NBD reported the biggest decline in provisions booked during the quarter after reporting the biggest provisions during Q4-2022. On the other hand, banks such as NBK, Al Baraka Banking and SNB reported the biggest provisions during Q1-2023, according to data from Refinitiv Eikon.

NIM continues to improve on higher yield

The improvement in net interest margin reported by GCC banks continued during Q1-2023 as net interest income remained elevated vs. Q1-2022 coupled with a relatively smaller increase in earning assets. NIM reached a multi-quarter high level of 3.1%, also benefiting from the recent rate hikes. This was also reflected at the country-level with banks in all the GCC countries showing improving margins during the quarter. UAE-listed banks showed the biggest improvement in NIMs during the quarter with an increase of 26 bps to reach 3.28% followed by marginal single bps increase in the rest of the GCC countries. With the improvement, UAE now ranked first in the GCC in terms of NIMs followed by Saudi Arabian banks at 3.22% and 3.05% in the case of Qatari banks during Q1-2023.

Meanwhile, the aggressive rate hikes by the US Fed that is largely replicated by banks in the GCC, NIMs for GCC banks are expected to see growth in the near term with a lag of three to four quarters. However, elevated cost of funding is also expected to partially dent the overall growth in margins, and we can expect to see only a marginal impact if lending sees a slowdown.

Lending growth slows during the quarter

GCC banks continued to record growth in lending during Q1-2023 although lending growth slowed down to a 5-quarter low of 1.2%. Aggregate gross loans reached a new record high of USD 1.89 Trillion, up 1.2% q-o-q and 7.9% y-o-y, mainly led by strong growth in banks in Saudi Arabia and UAE. Saudi-listed banks reported the strongest q-o-q growth in lending at 3.2% to reach USD 623 Bn at the end of Q1-2023. UAE-listed banks were next with a growth of 1.6% in gross loans that reached USD 518 Bn followed by Oman with a marginal growth of 0.4%. On the other hand, banks in Kuwait, Bahrain and Qatar reported decline in gross loans during the quarter.

The trend in net loans was slightly better with listed banks in all GCC countries reporting higher q-o-q net loans at the end of Q1-2023, barring Bahraini banks that reported a 1.1% decline. Aggregate net loans at the end of the quarter reached USD 1.80 Trillion registering a growth of 1.7% or USD 30.1 Bn.

Deposit growth continues with mixed trend in the GCC

Total customer deposits reported by listed-GCC banks continued to show growth for the eighth consecutive quarter during Q1-2023 to reach a new record high of USD 2.3 Trillion as compared to USD 2.2 Trillion during Q4-2022, registering a q-o-q growth of 2.9%. Higher deposits reflected higher income seeking depositors as interest rates offered by GCC banks increased after the central banks followed US Fed monetary tightening policy aimed at taming inflation. However, the trend remained mixed at the country level. UAE banks reported the biggest absolute increase in deposits with a growth of USD 41 Bn or 6.2% to reach USD 705 Bn followed by Saudi Banks with a growth of 3.7% or USD 26 Bn to reach USD 717 Bn. Omani banks also reported growth of USD 4 Bn or 6.8% q-o-q to reach USD 67 Bn at the end of Q1-2023. On the other hand, banks in Qatar, Bahrain and Kuwait reported declines in customer deposits.

Loan-to-deposit witnessed a steep decline

The aggregate loan-to-deposit ratio for the GCC banking sector remained below the 80% mark for the fourth consecutive quarter at the end of Q1-2023 to reach 78.5%, one of the lowest on record for regional banks. The decline came after

the quarter saw strong growth in customer deposits as compared to marginal growth in lending. At the country level, the decline was mainly led by a fall in the ratio for UAE and Omani banks and a marginal decline in the ratio for Saudi-listed banks. Omani banks reported the biggest drop in the ratio that reached 90.1% at the end of Q1-2023 as compared to 93.9% at the end of last year. Nevertheless, Oman banks continued to boast the highest loan-to-deposit ratio in the GCC during the quarter. UAE-listed banks were next with the second-biggest drop in loan-to-deposit ratio which fell by more than 300 bps to reach 67.6%, one of the lowest over the last several years for the UAE banking sector. On the other hand, Qatari banks showed the biggest improvement in the ratio that reached 87.5% at the end of Q1-2023 vs. 86.2% at the end of Q4-2022 followed by banks in Kuwait and Bahrain that showed growth in the loan-to-deposit ratio by 60 bps each to reach 76.3% and 69.9%, respectively.

Central bank data showed continued credit growth in the GCC

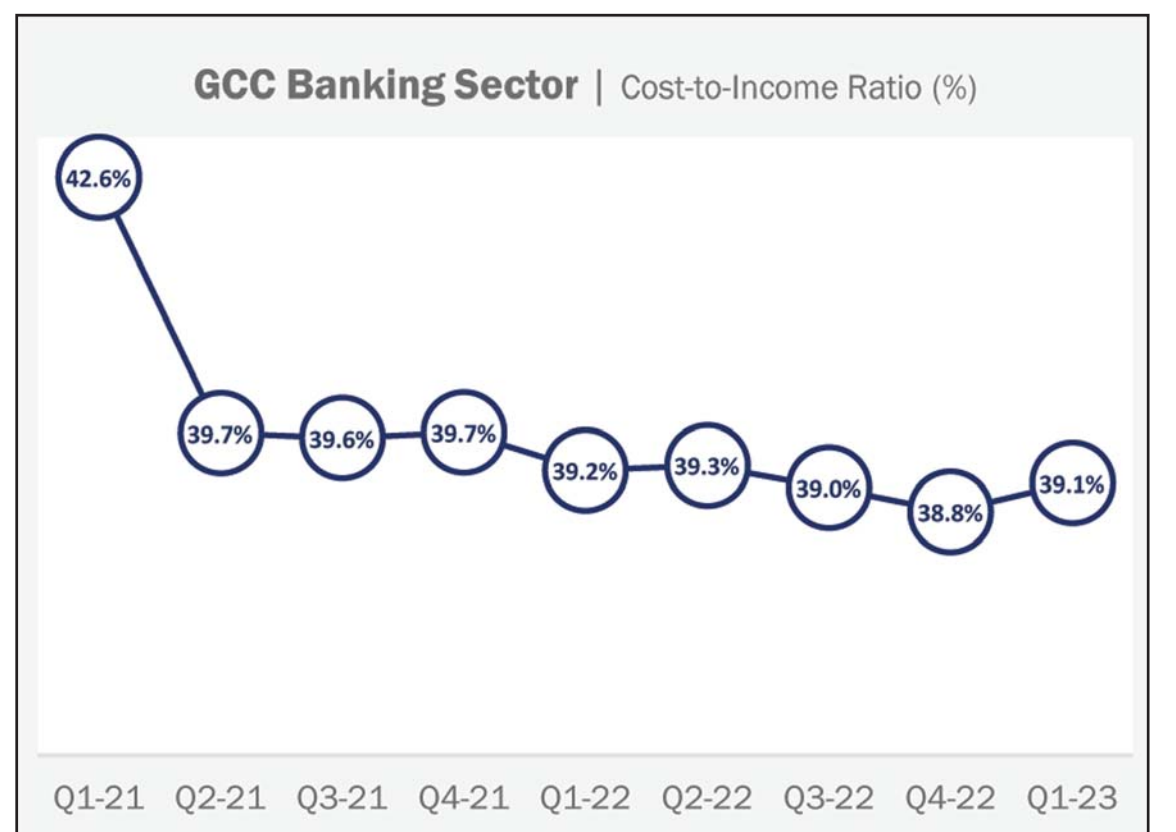
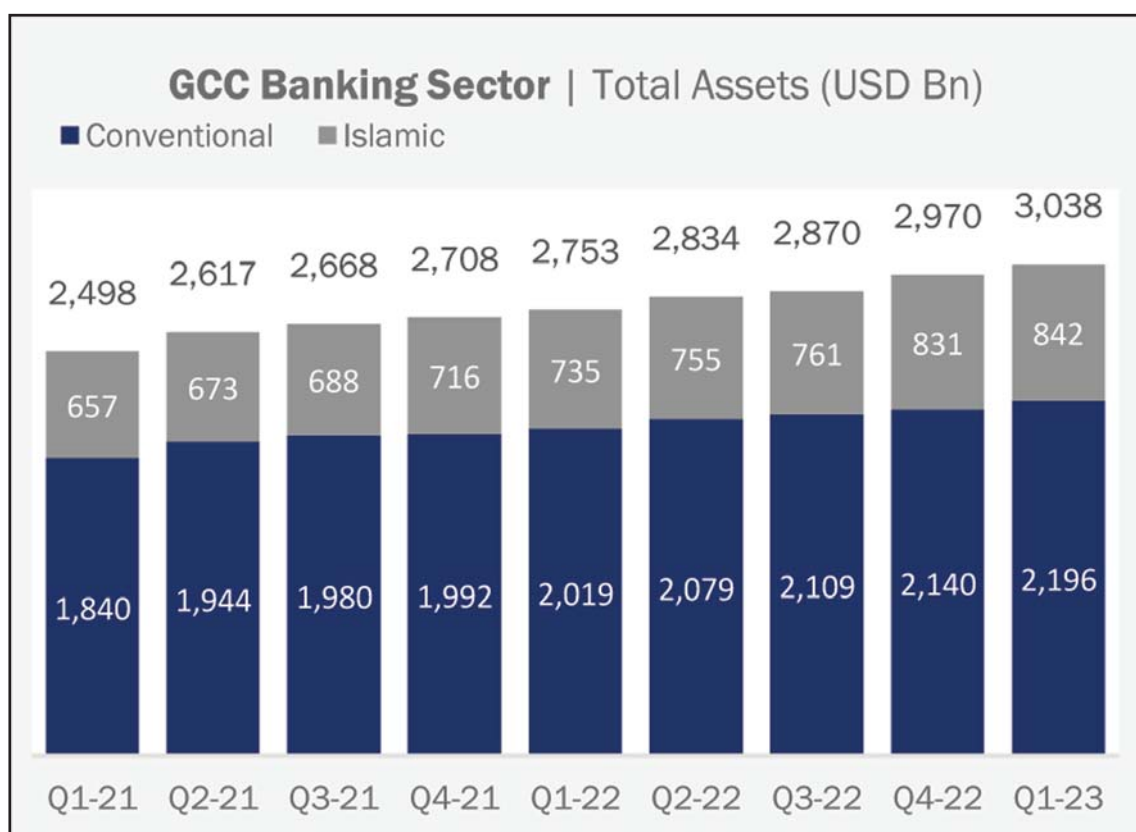
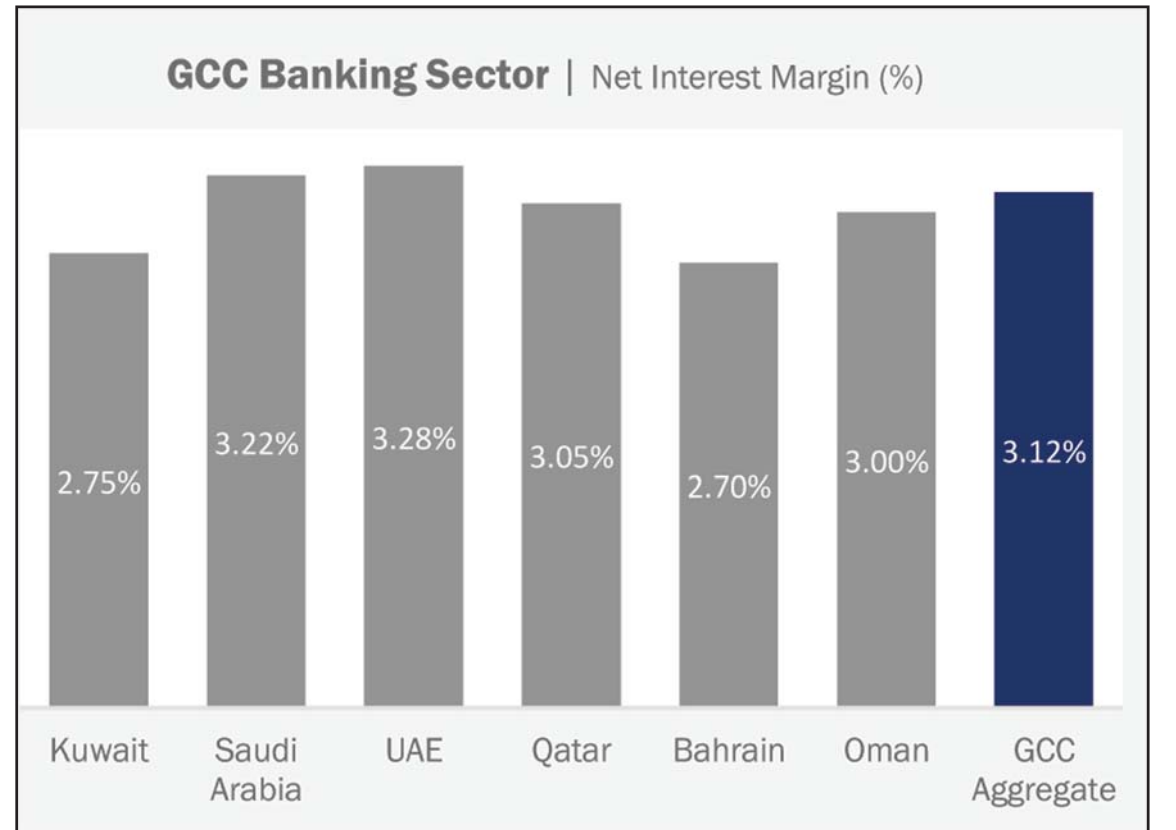
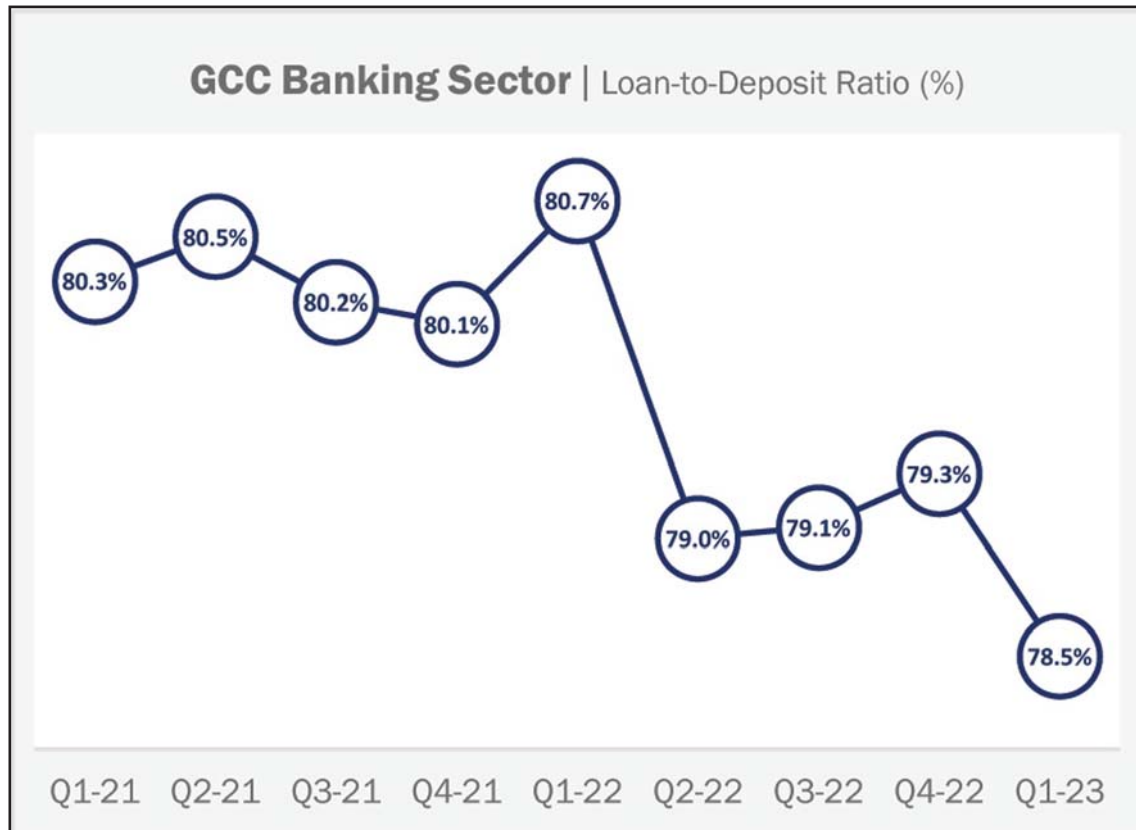
Credit growth in the GCC remained strong during Q1-2023 despite higher interest rates, indicating strong economic activity and business confidence in the region. Manufacturing activity data from Bloomberg (Markit Whole Economy Surveys) showed PMI figures well above the growth mark of 50 for Dubai, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and whole UAE. The manufacturing activity in Saudi Arabia remained robust with PMI at 58.7 points during March-2023 and remained elevated at around the same levels during the next two months. Qatar showed significant gains during March-2023 after remaining subdued during late last year and in the first two months of this year.

Data from GCC central banks showed a growth in lending activity across the region, barring a marginal q-o-q decline of 0.1% in Qatar. In addition, there were some signs of a slowdown in credit offtake in Kuwait. Outstanding credit facilities increased by one of the slowest paces in the last nine quarters by 0.6% q-o-q in Q1-2023. The slowdown was led by a decline in Consumer Loans for the first time in eight quarters by 0.8% while total Personal Facilities dropped by 0.1%. Nevertheless, lending to Industry, Construction and NBFC groups continued to show healthy growth during the quarter. Meanwhile, Saudi Arabia showed the biggest growth in lending during Q1-2023 with aggregate credit facilities increasing by 2.6% as compared to Q4-2022. Data from Saudi Central Bank also showed double digit growth in lending to Finance at +12.7% in addition to healthy growth in lending to Mining & Quarrying, Building & Construction and to Utilities sectors. Data from UAE central bank showed lending growth of 1.4% q-o-q during Q1-2023 that came after two consecutive quarters of declines. The increase was led by an increase in lending to Financial Institutions, Trade, Personal Loans and Government that more than offset declines in other sectors.

GCC banking RoE continues to surge on higher interest rates

Aggregate return on equity (RoE) for the GCC banking sector continued to show improvement during Q1-2023 reaching one of the highest levels over the last few years at 12.7% as compared to 12.3% at the end of Q4-2022, reaching almost pre-pandemic levels. The ratio also improved in terms of y-o-y comparison by strong 180 bps supported by an increase in aggregate 12-month profitability coupled with a decline in shareholders' equity. Total shareholder equity declined for the first time in eight quarters, albeit marginally by 0.2%, to reach USD 388.2 Bn. On the other hand, net income improved y-o-y and q-o-q for all countries in the GCC.

At the country level, UAE-listed banks once again topped in the region with the highest RoE at the end of Q1-2023 at 14.8% closely followed by Saudi Arabian and Qatari banks with RoEs of 12.7% and 12.3%, respectively. The biggest q-o-q growth in RoE was also seen for UAE-listed banks at +90 bps which was mainly led by elevated profits as well as a decline in total shareholders' equity. ROEs for Kuwaiti banks also reached double digit level of 10.1% while Bahraini and Omani banks were in single digits at 9.5% and 8.1%, respectively.



Al-Hassad Press Release

AUB congratulates the Winners of Al-Hassad Weekly Draw

Ahli United Bank (AUB) Congratulates the Winners of Al-Hassad Weekly Draw of Al-Hassad Islamic account, which was held on 14 June at the bank's head office in the presence of a representative of the Ministry of Commerce and Industry.

The Bank Announced 10 Winners Of KD 1,000 As Follows: Jasem M S Al-Dikan, Abdul Kader Ahmad Awad, Tahani Turki Rubah Al-Mutairi, Mohamad Ahmad Abdulaziz, Meshal Ali Saad Al-Rasheedi, Khaznah Maayouf Abdulrazzaq Al-Hendal, Abdullah Nawaf Aziz Alenezi, Mohamad Ibrahim Khalil, Khawthar Mohammad Ahmad Habeeb and Laila Abdulhussain Al-Khabbaz.

In its new package, Al-Hassad Islamic Saving Account presents a broader variety of rewards. Customers could now participate in the draw to win a monthly KD 100,000 prize, in addition to 10 weekly prizes of KD 1,000 each. The grand quarterly prize of KD 250,000 in cash for the winner remains the most important aspiration of customers. It is a real chance for them to realize their life dreams. In addition to this attractive package, there will be the annual expected profits on the basis of a Wakala contract that increases the attractiveness of the Al-Hassad Islamic Saving Account to customers.

Al-Hassad Account provides a suite of unique features, including the simplest and easiest savings program and a unique account-opening feature online with all ease with an instant deposit option.

To be eligible to participate in the draw, the customer should have a minimum balance of KD 100, whereby the customer has two chances to participate, with up to 30,000 chances per draw, in addition to rewarding annual profits. Every KD 50 invested entitles the customer to one chance in the draws, provided that to maintain his balance for at least fifteen days before the draw date.

Chairman inks deal on behalf of Fund

SFD signs 3 loan agreements with SIDS worth \$61 million

RIYADH, Saudi Arabia, June 15, (Business Wire): In implementation of the directives of the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, King Salman bin Abdulaziz, and HRH Crown Prince and Prime Minister, Mohammed bin Salman, the Saudi Fund for Development (SFD) Board of Directors Chairman, H.E. Ahmed Al Khateeb, recently signed three development loan agreements worth \$61 million with two Small Island Developing States (SIDS) - Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, and Belize.

This press release features multimedia. View the full release here: <https://www.businesswire.com/news/home/20230614127128/en/>

Image (from left to right): The Prime Minister of Belize, Hon. John Briceño & The Saudi Fund for Development (SFD) Board of Directors Chairman, H.E. Ahmed Al Khateeb (Photo: AETOSWire)

The signings reflect the efforts undertaken by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, through the SFD, to support sustainable development in developing countries and Small Island Developing States (SIDS). Since its establishment in 1974, SFD has implemented over 700 development projects across 85 countries worldwide.

The first two loan agreements, worth \$16 million, were signed with the Honorable Prime Minister of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Dr. Ralph Gonsalves, for constructing a primary care center, and a cultural and artistic hub and market for craft and agricultural products. SFD continued its support of enhancing the healthcare infrastructure across the SIDS, signing a loan agreement worth \$45 million with the Honorable Prime Minister of Belize, John Briceño, for the construction of a tertiary hospital in Belmopan.

H.E. Ahmed Al-Khateeb, the SFD Board of Directors Chairman, said: "The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is deeply committed to promoting sustainable socio-economic development in developing countries and Small Island Developing

UK to invest 54m pounds to develop secure, trustworthy AI research

LONDON, June 15, (KUNA): UK Secretary of State for Science, Innovation and Technology Chloe Smith announced on Wednesday a series of investments to develop trustworthy artificial intelligence (AI) research.

"Universities across the UK are set to benefit from a substantial Pound 54 million investment in their work to develop innovative artificial intelligence (AI) technology," Smith said in a press release.

Smith added, "delivered through UK Research and Innovation (UKRI), Pond 31 million of the funding will be used to back groundbreaking research at the University of Southampton to establish responsible and trustworthy AI, bringing together the expertise of academia, business, and the wider public to explore how responsible AI can be developed and utilized, while considering its broader impact on wider society."

The Technology Secretary unveiled the package in a keynote speech at London

Tech Week, advancing efforts to secure the UK's position as a science and tech superpower, fuel economic growth and create better paid jobs.

The Tech Secretary also announced the launch of the UK Geospatial Strategy 2030, which will unlock billions of pounds in economic benefits through harnessing technologies including AI, satellite imaging and real-time data.

We're investing in our AI talent pipeline with a £54 million package to develop trustworthy and secure artificial intelligence, and putting our best foot forward as a global leader in tech both now, and in the years to come.

Despite our size as a small island nation, the UK is a technology powerhouse. Last year, the UK became just the third country in the world to have a tech sector valued at USD1 trillion.

It is the biggest in Europe by some distance and behind only the US and China globally.

States, in support of the journey towards achieving the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals. These agreements signify an important step forward in development cooperation between Saudi Arabia, the island states of the Caribbean, and Central America, and will open the door for even greater collaborations and partnerships in the future."

The loan agreements will contribute towards raising living standards for the population, while supporting access to vital services. They also represent an essential drive for achieving the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals

(SDGs), including SDG 3, Good Health and Wellbeing, and SDG 11, Sustainable Cities and Communities.

SFD's development cooperation with the SIDS reaffirm the importance of international cooperation and solidarity to support developing countries around the world in achieving their sustainable development goals, and fostering economic and social growth.

SFD contributes to development projects by providing soft loans, and prioritizes the financing of projects in developing countries.

KIB 'spreads' financial literacy, banking awareness at 360 Mall

Effectively contributes to the success of 'Diraya' campaign



Top and above: some of the children participating in the activities of Sadu House.

Part of its sustainability strategy

KFH extends partnership with Sadu House

KUWAIT CITY, June 15: Kuwait Finance House (KFH) has extended its strategic partnership with Sadu House that was launched in 2019. The consistent partnership is part of KFH's efforts to sponsor and support initiatives that target all age groups and enhance the Bank's sustainability strategy, the heart of KFH's social role.

The partnership contributes to boosting the cultural and practical activities of Sadu House, in particular those related to spreading Kuwait's heritage in the art of weaving by introducing kids to traditional handicrafts, history of unique textiles such as Sadu and

develop their skills and creative thinking, in addition to passing down the rich legacy of ancestors to the modern generation.

Among the programs KFH sponsors are (Fun with Weaving) and (Weaving School). The programs encompass workshops for KFH customers and staff in addition to social and cultural collaborations during national holidays including handicrafts and knitting lessons as well as new weaving skills. The partnership with AlSadu Society continues throughout the year by offering special and notable summer programs, in addition to programs targeting chil-

dren of "Baiti" account customers.

Further, KFH collaborated with AlSadu Society to launch free workshops for kids under the Bank's strategic sponsorship of the first Winter Wonderland in Kuwait. The collaboration granted an opportunity to a larger group of kids to experience the heritage handicrafts and familiarize themselves with historical and cultural legacy that would strengthen their bond with the community.

The strategic partnership also focuses on the environmental aspects as part of KFH's sustainability strategy and its (Keep it Green) initiative.

KUWAIT CITY, June 15: In continuation of its support for the Let's Be Aware "Diraya" campaign, Kuwait International Bank (KIB) designated a team of its finest talents to raise financial and banking awareness at the 360 Mall. As part of its contribution to the campaign, which was initiated by the Central Bank of Kuwait (CBK) in cooperation with Kuwait Banking Association (KBA), KIB dedicates its efforts and resources to educating the public on the Bank's different services, products, and latest special offers.

On her part, Mariam Al-Nasser, Area Manager at KIB, commented: "KIB has played a significant role in achieving the goals of the 'Diraya' campaign. This can be witnessed in its unwavering efforts toward spreading financial literacy across society and raising awareness of the vital importance of the banking sector. Furthermore, the Bank continues to point the public audience to the best means for benefiting from the various banking services - which many banks today continue to develop in a bid to offer their customers the best possible banking experience."

Al-Nasser further noted that the KIB employees were present at the Bank's designated booth in 360 Mall to actively participate in raising awareness on the campaign's multiple focal points, such as customer rights and duties when dealing with banks under the rules and regulations of the CBK. Other topics of interest included data security and the best practices for safekeeping banking account information, as well as the secure means of card use. These topics pose a vital importance, especially when banking and financial services are in constant, fast advancement, which comes with growing risks of fraud that many customers continue to face frequently.

Al-Nasser also clarified that the Bank's employees provided the 360 Mall visitors with all necessary information on KIB's banking and financing services, in addition to highlighting the best-suited products and services to their needs and modern lifestyles.



The Prime Minister of Belize (left) Hon John Brice



The Ritz-Carlton, Budapest

Exciting prizes await members

The Loyal by Al Habtoor Grp launches summer campaign

Loyal members can win two round-trip tickets and an all-inclusive 5-day hotel stay at The Ritz-Carlton, Budapest.

15 June 2023, Dubai - The Loyal by Al Habtoor Group is thrilled to announce a summer offer that will satisfy all your vacation dreams. Whether you are looking for a luxurious hotel stay, an adventure-filled holiday, or a relaxing getaway, Loyal has you covered. With exclusive offers and discounts, you can make the most of your summer vacation. This summer, Loyal by Al Habtoor Group will offer an extravagant staycation with roundtrip tickets for two and an all-inclusive 5-day hotel stay at The Ritz-Carlton, Budapest. All you have to do is download the Loyal by AHG app, be a member, and get a minimum of 3 earning transactions to enter the draw. Winner will be announced on 7 July, 2023. Don't miss your chance to win this luxurious getaway! Download the app and join the Loyal by AHG membership today.

The campaign runs from 15 to 30 June 2023. Start earning points now and you could be on your way to an amazing experience!

The digital multiple-tier Loyal Membership Programme offers

unmatched benefits and encourages members to enjoy five-star hospitality, F&B, leisure, and entertainment by extending discounts, points collection, and points redemption.

Loyal by Al Habtoor Group currently includes 50 restaurants and lounges, seven hotels in the UAE, Habtoor Palace, LXR Hotels & Resorts, V Hotel, Curio Collection by Hilton, Hilton Dubai Al Habtoor City; Habtoor Polo Resort; Waldorf Astoria Dubai Palm Jumeirah; Habtoor Grand Resort, Autograph Collection; Metropolitan Hotel Dubai. Furthermore, the programme offers discounts, earning opportunities, and redemptions at The Atrium at Al Habtoor City and La Perle Dubai.

- Key Points:**
- Download the Loyal by AHG mobile app and get a minimum of 3 earning transactions.
 - The more transactions the more chances of winning.
 - Open to all existing loyal by AHG members.
 - The promotion period starts from 15 to 30 June 2023.
 - The winner will be announced on July 7, 2023.

ABK announces winner of weekly draw prize of KD 10,000

KUWAIT CITY, June 15: Al Ahli Bank of Kuwait (ABK) announced Fowz Mohammad Shukry Mohammad as the winner of KD10,000 in the Alfouz weekly draw. The winner was announced on Monday, 12 June, 2023. The draw was held under the supervision of the Ministry of Commerce and Industry.

The Alfouz draw account offers ABK customers the chance to win life-changing rewards. With Alfouz, ABK customers will get a chance to win KD10,000 in the weekly draw and the ultimate grand prize of KD5,000 monthly additional income for 10 years. Both new

and existing ABK customers can benefit from this opportunity, with a minimum account balance of KD100 only.

ABK encourages everyone to open Alfouz draw account and/or increase their balances to have more chances in winning in the upcoming draw which will happen on Monday, 19 June 2023. The higher the deposits are, the higher the chances to win.

For more information about ABK, please visit eahli.com or contact an ABK customer service agent via 'Ahlan Ahli' at 1899899. Alternatively, you can visit your nearest ABK branch.



Winner of the weekly draw

Bill Gates in Beijing for China visit

BEIJING, June 15, (AP): Microsoft Corp. co-founder Bill Gates says he is in Beijing, joining a series of foreign business figures who have visited China as the ruling Communist Party tries to revive investor interest in the country.

Gates, who stepped down as Microsoft chairman in 2014, said on Twitter late Wednesday that he would meet partners who have worked with his charitable foundation. However, Gates is revered in China as an entrepreneur, giving Chinese leaders a chance to show their interest in foreign

business by publicizing any meetings with him. CEOs of global companies including Elon Musk of Tesla Ltd. and Apple Inc.'s Tim Cook have visited China this year and met Premier Li Qiang, the top economic official, and Cabinet ministers following the end of anti-virus controls that blocked most international travel.

"I'm excited to visit with partners who have been working on global health and development challenges with @gatesfoundation for more than 15 years," Gates wrote on Twitter. He gave no details.

The Conversation

Suicide rates for farmworkers, truckers among highest in US

Adjusting jobs to protect workers' mental health 'challenging'

By Emily Rosado-Solomon, Babson College, Jaclyn Koopmann, Auburn University, and Matthew A. Cronin, George Mason University

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

US employees are increasingly struggling with mental health challenges tied to their jobs, such as depression, anxiety and burnout.

We're professors who research how employees interact and workplace well-being. After noticing that research on mental health and work had not kept up with the increasing prevalence of mental health challenges, we reviewed existing findings on mental health and work to see how scholars can best investigate these issues going forward.

We found that employers could greatly reduce the causes of many of their employees' mental health challenges through basic human resources approaches, such as taking tasks away from someone who is perpetually swamped or providing more job flexibility. But those fixes, as we explained in the journal *Academy of Management Annals*, would require work-related changes employers rarely make or authorize.

We analyzed the findings from 556 articles by researchers on this topic and observed that helping individual employees cope after their problems emerge is far more common than taking steps to preemptively fix problems that are contributing to workers' conditions.

Culture and job design

When you think about jobs that can take a toll on mental health, some very demanding and stressful professions may come to mind. Doctors, nurses, soldiers and first responders, for example, often do suffer due to their regular contact with illness and death on the job.

Yet, we found that the tasks employees perform are often not what leads to their mental health degradation. Instead, an employer's culture and the way its jobs are designed play big roles.

This pattern can explain why poor mental health manifests in all lines of work, not just emotionally demanding jobs. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has found, for instance, that suicide rates for farmworkers, truckers and warehouse workers are among the nation's highest.

An employer's culture lays the groundwork for the quality of social interactions among its employees – and, depending on the profession, with clients, students or the public.

The way people deal with one another can prove important. For instance, employees who endure workplace bullying and don't have a supportive boss or colleagues that they can talk to are more likely to have poor mental health.

The way that a job is designed can cause stress, anxiety and feelings of mental and emotional exhaustion. Not having the authority to make decisions, lacking clarity about responsibilities and facing obligations that regularly conflict with personal obligations, infringing upon personal and family time, can all increase the risk of mental health problems.

Workplace culture and job design also matter for people doing inherently traumatic jobs.

A review of 61 studies of humanitarian aid workers' mental health made clear that poor leadership and

insufficient support for workers caused disproportionate damage to their mental health. These factors were separate from the trauma they regularly witnessed and experienced in the aftermath of disasters.

This body of research indicates that all employers can reduce work-related mental health risks by scrutinizing how jobs are designed and determining whether any positions should be reconfigured for the sake of their employees' mental health.

Mental health benefits

Employers have a choice. They can take steps to prevent mental health damage before it occurs, or they can deal with its aftermath. Both are important, but according to the body of research we've reviewed, the latter is far more common.

People with chronic mental illnesses can thrive at work in the right conditions. And most U.S. employers today do provide access to mental health benefits, partly due to the Affordable Care Act. The ACA, which Congress passed in 2010, requires insurance companies to treat mental health care the same way they treat physical health care when offering coverage.

About 78% of US employers provide mental health benefits, including employee assistance programs, and work benefits that provide individual mental health, financial and legal support. Such measures are useful, but only after the harm has taken place. These benefits generally do nothing about psychological hazards tied to work and preventing work-related harm.

Further, many employees who need help don't take advantage of these programs.

Here are steps employers can take to address the causes of poor mental health:

- Revise job descriptions. Employers should eliminate ambiguity, wherever that's possible, about core duties and responsibilities. They should communicate with employees to ensure they understand why their jobs might require flexibility and adaptation. In times when workloads get unavoidably large, such as what happens at accounting firms in the weeks before Tax Day, employers should strive to balance long shifts with opportunities for employees to rest and recharge.
- Proactively train staff on the positive behaviors expected of them. Just as employers strategically plan which job-related skills are important, they can also strategically identify what interpersonal skills are important and value these like technical capabilities with hiring and promotions. If employees engage in bullying behavior, employers can retrain, reassign or fire them accordingly.
- Help employees build resilience. Research on police officers suggests that when they get resilience-building training before experiencing trauma on the job, it can reduce the risk of developing post-traumatic stress disorder. Similar types of resilience training could also help in less inherently traumatic lines of work.
- Don't assume that employees will speak up. Only 65% of employees with mental health challenges say that they would tell a co-worker, manager or human resources representative about those problems. They may conceal the severity of these issues even if they do talk about them,

What if you can't afford long-term care?

By Kate Ashford NerdWallet

As many as 8 in 10 older Americans couldn't afford more than four years in an assisted living facility or two years in a nursing home, according to a 2023 analysis by the National Council on Aging and the LeadingAge LTSS Center @UMass Boston.

This is particularly hard for people in the monetary middle, defined by Pew Research Center as "those with an annual household income of about \$52,000 to \$156,000 annually in 2020 dollars for a household of three." They don't have enough to pay for long-term care, but they have too many assets to qualify for government assistance. Medicare also doesn't cover long-term care. What are the options for the 47 million households with older adults who will face this scenario?

From reverse mortgages to hybrid insurance policies, here are some avenues available to people who can't afford the care they need.

Reverse mortgage

If you have significant equity in your home and you're at least 62 years old, a reverse mortgage can provide a helpful stream of income. A reverse mortgage is a loan or line of credit based on your home's equity. You tap the equity now and pay the loan off when the home is sold.

"What most people do, especially in a situation like a long-term care issue - once they're out of the house, you sell it and use the proceeds to pay it off," says Nicholas Bunio, a certified financial planner in Downingtown, Pennsylvania.

A reverse mortgage has downsides - closing costs are expensive, similar to taking out a traditional mortgage, and you'll leave less to heirs - but if you're planning to receive home care or there's a spouse still at home, it can be a solid option. (Once there's no one living in the home for a year or more, the home must be sold to pay back the loan.)

Price out insurance

If you have no major health issues, get quotes for long-term care insurance. Although experts recommend purchasing by age 65, you may be insurable up to age 79. Premiums can be pricey, but note that a semiprivate room in a nursing home costs more than \$94,000 per year, according to the 2021 Cost of Care Survey by Genworth, an insurance company.

"In many cases, long-term care insurance is a lot less expensive than the actual cost of care," says Michelle Gessner, a certified financial planner in Houston. "So \$1 of premium gives you multiple dollars of benefits, and that's not the case with paying for it out of pocket."

Another option may be a permanent life insurance policy with a long-term care rider, often called a

hybrid policy. Arrangements vary, but typically you can use some or all of your death benefit to pay for long-term care during your lifetime, and anything you don't use will be paid to your estate when you die.

"People complain that they're expensive," Gessner says, but she points out that nursing home care can cost \$6,000 to \$7,000 a month (or more). "What I tell people is just get what you can afford," she says. "It's not all or nothing."

Benevolent funds

Some nursing homes or assisted living communities offer benevolent care, meaning they'll take someone in who doesn't have enough money to pay full freight or who can't pay

full price for long. When someone runs out of money, the benevolent fund covers the difference for as long as they need care. (They'll typically collect Social Security and pension payments that may come in to help cover costs.)

"They can be a good alternative for people who think they won't have enough financial assets," says Diane Pearson, a certified financial planner in Wexford, Pennsylvania.

Benevolent care funds are often connected to faith-based communities. A search for faith-based facilities in your area might yield some options.

Life settlement

If you have a life insurance poli-

cy and you're considering letting it lapse or taking the cash value from it, a life settlement may be the better option. In a life settlement, a third party buys your insurance policy, and you typically receive between 5% and 25% of the value of the death benefit.

"There are investors out there who will basically make the premium payments on your behalf, but they keep the policy proceeds when you pass away," says Christopher Lyman, a certified financial planner in Newtown, Pennsylvania. You might make this choice in a financial crisis. "The only reason you would do that is kind of like a last option," he says. (AP)

less dangerous or can't be addressed. Requiring hard hats, posting warnings and mandating safe work habits have reduced accidents in factories, on construction sites and at other

workplaces. Likewise, researchers have found that redesigning jobs and adopting better workplace cultures can go a long way toward improving mental health. (AP)

Reverse mortgage has downsides

80% of migraine sufferers are women

Quantum selects AndHealth to offer new migraine reversal program for employees

COLUMBUS, Ohio, June 15: Quantum Health, the leading consumer healthcare navigation and care coordination company, has announced the extension of its comprehensive benefits program to include AndHealth's migraine disease reversal program available to Quantum Health's employee base, also known as Healthcare Warriors®, and members of the Quantum Health health plan over the age of 18.

Given Quantum Health's employee interest in migraine care and support, AndHealth was selected to enhance the benefits offering based off of their successful achievement of life-changing patient outcomes, and strong, guaranteed ROI. As the leader in healthcare navigation, Quantum Health is committed to rigorously evaluating healthcare solutions for value and outcomes for its clients and, with this same rigor, brings vetted programs to their own employees.

The debilitating impact of migraine has historically been overlooked due to difficulties with unclear care options and access to patient treatment, resulting in minimal visibility in health insurance claims. However, with a working-age prevalence of 1 in 5 adults, leading employers now acknowledge migraine as a costly condition. Employers recognize the increasing need for solutions that provide high-value specialty care to reverse the significant human and financial toll migraine has in the workplace.

Migraine is a neurological disease that causes severe headaches along with symptoms like nausea, sensitivity to light and sound, and difficulty concentrating. These symptoms significantly impact employee productivity, leading to increased absenteeism and presenteeism. Additionally, medical costs associated

with migraine can be twice the average claimant and continue to increase due to new high-cost medications and emergency room visits. Migraine is frequently cited as a top cause of short and long-term disability leave—another cost that is typically hidden in medical claims data.

Because about 80% of migraine sufferers are women, the condition has been well-established as a health equity challenge, a source of social stigma, and a contributor to the gender wage gap. And with just 2,000 headache specialists nationwide, patients that suffer from migraine may wait months just to see a qualified provider.

Challenges

To address these challenges, Quantum Health will provide its employees access to AndHealth's migraine disease reversal program which offers comprehensive, personalized care for migraine sufferers. AndHealth clinicians focus not only on managing migraine symptoms but also on identifying and addressing the underlying root causes. Patients are supported through a care plan that combines expert specialty treatment alongside personalized lifestyle, behavior, and nutritional support.

Veronica Knuth, Chief Human Resources Officer of Quantum Health, highlighted the organization's commitment to employee well-being and the importance of the partnership. "Caring for our members starts with caring for our people, and I am proud to invest in and continually enhance our benefits offerings. Migraine is a condition that is often overlooked or hidden, posing challenges in providing appropriate care and support. By partnering with AndHealth, we are dedicated to addressing these barriers and ensuring that our Healthcare

Warriors have access to specialized migraine care."

AndHealth patients routinely achieve reductions in migraine days of about 2X what is achieved with the "standard of care" or medications alone. Samantha, a Quantum Healthcare Warrior, was experiencing 12-15 migraine days per month. Her treatment plan included addressing lifestyle factors like nutrition and the impact of stress in her life. Through the program, Samantha successfully reduced her migraine days, unlocking a new way of living. "AndHealth has been very beneficial in helping improve my treatment for migraines," said Samantha. "The one-on-one coaching time and personalized plan fits my treatment needs; my migraines have slowed tremendously, and it has helped me sleep. I'm doing a lot better."

Migraine is also highly comorbid with other conditions, and about 80% of migraine sufferers also have anxiety or depression. Matt Scantland, Founder and CEO of AndHealth, said, "By addressing shared root causes and the pain and disruption associated with migraine, AndHealth patients demonstrate consistent improvement in mental and cardiometabolic health. Migraine is a condition that can be incredibly challenging for patients but is very addressable when patients get real-time access to high-quality care to address root causes. As another Columbus-based company, I admired Quantum Health's commitment to its culture and its people, and we are thrilled to be working alongside them to provide this support so their employees can realize their full potential."

Quantum Health's program with AndHealth launched in June, coinciding with National Migraine Awareness Month.

MEDICAL CLASSIFIEDS

Take care of your health

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

CITY CLINIC GROUP A CARING MISSION

GENERAL PHYSICIANS EVERY DAY 6.00 AM - 11.00 PM

CITY CLINIC MIRQAB

Dr. Ashok B Deb MBB5
Dr. Alen Rajesh Singala MBB5
Dr. Mohsin Alam Khan MBB5, MPH PGT (Tropical Medicine)

CITY CLINIC KHAITAN

Dr. Rehana Alauden MBB5
Dr. Syed Raheel Haider MBB5

22497080
22497060

1880020

Mawash building - opp Safat post office - Mirqab
2 nd Floor Mohammed Abdullah Al Zamami Building Block 7 IBN Al Zohar Street, Khaitan

Home Collection Services Available We Accept All Major Insurance Card

مركز شفاء الجزيرة الطبية - الفروانية

SHIFA AL JAZEERA MEDICAL CENTRE - FARAWANIYA

Our Services
PRP | Peels | Painless laser hair removal | Treatment for scars, acne scars, wrinkles, aging, | Skin tightening, stretch marks
Cellulite, fat, warts, moles, com | Mesotherapy | Crystal Peel & diamond microdermabrasion | Whitening treatment (Localized & Whole body) Dualpeel | Carboxytherapy
Dualpeel | Botox | Fillers | Hair loss treatment | Nail surgeries
Skin biopsies | Cryotherapy | Dermapen

Dr. Abdul Nazer MBB5, MD Dermatologist & Cosmetologist

Phone : 24 734 000
Hotline: 60 749 749

CLINIC WORKING HOURS: 7 am to 12 Midnight

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

Fox News says it 'addressed' message calling Biden a 'wannabe dictator'

NEW YORK, June 15, (AP) — Fox News appeared to express regret Wednesday for showing an onscreen message that called President Joe Biden a "wannabe dictator" who had his political rival arrested.

On the day he was arraigned on federal charges for hoarding classified documents, former President Donald Trump illustrated his continued role as a lightning rod for the media. PBS second-guessed one of its own messages about Trump, and his primetime speech showed a policy change at CNN following the ouster of its former leader.

The Fox News Channel chyron appeared beneath split-screen video boxes that showed Trump addressing supporters live in New Jersey, and Biden speaking at the White House earlier in the day.

The message read, "Wannabe dictator speaks at the White House after having his political rival arrested."

Fox said in a statement Wednesday that "the chyron was taken down immediately and was addressed." The website Mediaite reported that the message was onscreen for 27 seconds. It was also not removed when the telecast was rerun late at night.

Fox did not explain how the message made it onto the screen and how the matter was addressed.

The White House has said Biden has had no contact with Attorney General Merrick Garland about the indictment by special counsel Jack Smith, which accuses Trump of illegally hoarding classified documents. Biden has not commented on the case.

Two months ago, Fox News agreed to pay Dominion Voting Systems \$787 million to settle a lawsuit accusing the news organization of telling lies about the 2020 presidential election.

"There are probably about 787 million things that I can say about this," White House press secretary Karine Jean-Pierre said when asked

Wednesday about the chyron. "That was wrong - about what we saw last night - but I don't think I'm going to get into it."

It's not hard to find Republican politicians or commentators on Fox to suggest the indictment was politically motivated - Trump attorney Joe Tacopina made the same charges on Sean Hannity's show within a half-hour after Trump's speech.

Yet some on Fox have spoken to the seriousness of the case against Trump, most notably his former attorney general, William Barr, during an appearance over the weekend, and legal analyst Jonathan Turley.

Fox has seen its primetime ratings tumble sharply since it fired Tucker Carlson shortly after the Dominion case was settled. Carlson posted another video commentary on Twitter Tuesday night, despite Fox's lawyers demanding that he stop doing that because it violated the terms of a contract that runs until early 2025.

Meanwhile, PBS used the lower third of its screen to post fact-checks when it streamed Trump's New Jersey speech on its YouTube channel Tuesday night.

The final one was eye-catching: "Experts warn that inflammatory rhetoric from elected officials or people in power can prompt individual actors to commit acts of violence."

Defense

While the statement is true, PBS officials are questioning whether or not that was the right forum, said Sara Just, senior executive producer at "NewsHour." Other messages PBS used onscreen mentioned how federal officials have attested to the security of the 2020 presidential election, and how prosecutors say that some documents discovered at Trump's home pertained to US nuclear programs and defense capabilities.

"We are discussing whether or not we might phrase that better," Just said.

While Fox News aired Trump's speech live, MSNBC did not. Neither did CNN. That's in contrast to when Trump was indicted on separate charges in New York in April, when CNN aired most of a similar Trump address the night of his arraignment. That was before former CNN chief executive Chris Licht, who had been making efforts to appeal to GOP viewers, was ousted.

"We're not carrying his remarks live because, frankly, he says a lot of things that are untrue and, frankly, potentially dangerous," CNN's Jake Tapper said.

After the speech was over, CNN aired a nearly two-minute clip of Trump that Tapper followed with several fact-checks.

Also:

LONDON: Executives at Britain's ITV on Wednesday defended the broadcaster's working culture as a committee of lawmakers grilled them about the way the network handled staff complaints and allegations of a "toxic," bullying work environment.

ITV, best known for shows like "Downton Abbey," "Coronation Street" and "The X Factor," has been under intense public scrutiny since Phillip Schofield, a long-time host on the channel's popular morning show, quit last month after admitting he lied about his affair with a much younger male colleague.

Chief executive Carolyn McCall and two other ITV executives were called to Parliament's culture, media and sport committee to answer wider questions about how the broadcaster handled staff complaints and safeguarding.

Media

Variety



This image released by Focus Features shows Scarlett Johansson in a scene from 'Asteroid City.' (AP)

Film

'Avatar 3' pushed to 2025, Disney sets 2 'Star Wars' films for 2026

Anderson-style Americana in 'Asteroid City'

By Lindsey Bahr

Wes Anderson gets back to the heart of things in "Asteroid City," a film about grief, performance, storytelling, the cosmos and, well, everything. Or, as one character, a playwright played by Edward Norton, says when asked what his work is about: "It's about infinity and I don't know what else."

Meticulously designed and choreographed, with a beautiful, starchy cast reading his and Roman Coppola's droll words, "Asteroid City" is very, very Wes Anderson. Aren't they all? But "Asteroid City" also represents a return to form (or at least the form most people preferred) after his past two films, "Isle of Dogs" and "The French Dispatch," divided even his disciples. They worried, among other things, if style and form had finally usurped his storytelling. Regardless of whether you thought they were fun or painful or some dreadful in between, there was a palpable detachment to both films. Authentic emotion, when there at all, was strained.

In this way, "Asteroid City" seems like a response to all of that — an earnest and self-conscious case for making art, putting on the play, telling the story, acting the part even if you (and your audience) aren't entirely sure what you're saying. It is wrapped in a labored and stylized conceit — a play within a play that's being broadcast on a television network (the 1950s show "Playhouse 90," worldlier people have noted, is the reference). And because it's a play, the American midcentury Desert West can look as set designed as Anderson wants. He didn't need a justification. Nonetheless, it's a sly deflection — as is the idea that no one is really sure what the point is, embodied by Jason Schwartzman playing an actor playing a recently widowed war photographer, Augie Steenbeck, who has traveled to the desert with his brainiac son, Woodrow (Jake Ryan) and 6-year-old triplets (truly standouts).

They come to Asteroid City, population 87, for the Junior Stargazer Convention, a government-organized science competition in which genius kids show off in-

ventions (jet packs, blasters, etc.) which the government then owns, as Jeffrey Wright's Gen. Grif Gibson explains. It is post-war in an anxious America where scientists are a key part of the nation's defense strategy. In the distance, atomic bombs are being tested, too. Was something in the air while things like "Asteroid City," "Oppenheimer" and even the documentary "A Compassionate Spy" were coming together? Here, the mushroom clouds are not terribly threatening though. They are, for lack of a better word, adorable.

Convention

This Stargazer convention allows for an assemblage of a quirky ensemble with government types (Fisher Stevens), the brainiac kids (Grace Edwards, Sophia Lillis, Ethan Josh Lee, Aristou Meehan), their parents (Scarlett Johansson, Liev Schreiber, Hope Davis, Steve Park), the head scientist (Tilda Swinton's Dr. Hickenlooper) a school group led by Maya Hawke and some musically inclined cowboys (among them, Rupert Friend) who, I think, just missed their bus. Locals include Hank the mechanic (Matt Dillon) and the motel manager (Steve Carrell). Tom Hanks is Stanley Zak, Augie's father-in-law and a wealthy Palm Springs retiree who wears a gun in his plaid pants.

In the world of the play being put on, there is the director (Adrien Brody), his soon-to-be ex-wife (Hong Chau), the Lee Strasberg-acting teacher Saltzberg Keitel (Willem Dafoe), the actress whose scene was cut (Margot Robbie), the host of the television program (Bryan Cranston) and Jeff Goldblum as, well, you'll see. As always, the names are a delightful treat. And all the actors make a meal out of their parts, no matter how small.

But if there are characters with something like an arc to spotlight, that would be Schwartzman and Johansson, whose understated 50s movie star Midge Campbell might be one of her very best performances. Augie and Midge have a brief romance, mostly emotional, in that very repressed Wes Anderson way. Is this all a little confusing? Don't dismay, I think

that might be part of the point. Maybe. Probably. And, in any event, it works — "Asteroid City," with its sprawling cast, beautiful hues, mumbled jokes, box-within-a-box setup, references that only the 80+ crowd may truly get and retro-cool soundtrack, actually makes you feel things even if it can't quite make sense of itself.

"Just keep telling the story," as Brody Schubert Green says to his actor looking for answers and motivations, is advice that could be interpreted as a shrug. Or maybe it's actually everything — "Asteroid City" makes a pretty compelling case.

Also:

NEW YORK: "Avatar: The Way of Water" may have finally arrived in theaters in 2022, but that long parade of "Avatar" delays isn't done, yet.

The Walt Disney Co. on Tuesday pushed the release of "Avatar 3" a year, bumping it from December 2024 to December 2025. The timeline is stretched even further for the next planned installments. "Avatar 4" is now slated to hit theaters in December 2029; "Avatar 5" is set to arrive in December 2031.

If those dates hold, the "Avatar" film series will have stretched across the first four decades of the century. Director James Cameron, who launched "Avatar" in 2009, has said he may not direct films 4 and 5. By December 2031, the 68-year-old Cameron would be 77. "Avatar" and "Avatar: The Way of Water" have collectively made more than \$5.2 billion at the box office.

"Each 'Avatar' film is an exciting but epic undertaking that takes time to bring to the quality level we as filmmakers strive for and audiences have come to expect," "Avatar" producer Jon Landau wrote on Twitter.

Disney on Tuesday shuffled plans for some of its biggest franchises. Two "Star Wars" films are planned for 2026. One was pushed from December 2025 to May 2026. Another was added for December 2026. The studio hasn't announced details on either untitled production. (AP)

Features

ARABIC TIMES

FRIDAY-SATURDAY, JUNE 16-17, 2023

LAS VEGAS: Nine more women are accusing Bill Cosby of sexual assault in a lawsuit that alleges he used his "enormous power, fame and prestige" to victimize them.

A lawsuit filed Wednesday in federal court in Nevada alleges that the women were individually drugged and assaulted between approximately 1979 and 1992 in Las Vegas, Reno and Lake Tahoe homes, dressing rooms and hotels.

One woman alleges that Cosby, claiming to be her acting mentor, lured her from New York to Nevada, where he drugged her in a hotel room with what he had claimed to be non-alcoholic sparkling cider and then raped her.

The 85-year-old former "Cosby Show" star has now been accused of rape, sexual assault and sexual harassment by more than 60 women. He has denied all allegations involving sex crimes. He was the first celebrity tried and convicted in the #MeToo era - and spent nearly three years at a state prison near Philadelphia before a higher court threw out the conviction and released him in 2021.

Earlier this year, a Los Angeles jury awarded \$500,000 to a woman who said Cosby sexually abused her at the Playboy Mansion when she was 16 in 1975.

The Nevada lawsuit came only a few weeks after Gov. Joe Lombardo signed a bill that eliminated a two-year deadline for adults to file sexual abuse cases. Similar suits have followed other "lookback laws" in other states.

One of the plaintiffs, Lise-Lotte Lublin, a Nevada native, had advocated for the change. She had previously alleged that Cosby gave her spiked drinks and raped her at a Las Vegas hotel in 1989.

"For years I have fought for survivors of sexual assault and today is the first time I will be able to fight for myself," Lotte-Lublin said in a statement cited by the Las Vegas Review-Journal. "With the new law change, I now have the ability to take my assailant Bill Cosby to court. My journey has just begun, but I am grateful for this opportunity to find justice." (AP)

SEOUL, South Korea: A British man was detained after climbing more than half way up the world's fifth-tallest skyscraper in Seoul with only his bare hands on Mon-

day, authorities said.

More than 90 emergency, police and other personnel were dispatched to the 123-story, 555-meter (1,820-foot)-tall Lotte World Tower, after the man was spotted scaling the building on Monday morning, the Seoul fire agency said in a statement.

The man, in his 20s, reached



Cosby



Lombardo

the 72nd floor, which is about 310 meters (1,020 feet) high, before officials took him to a gondola lift and moved him inside the building, the statement said.

South Korean media identified the man as free climber George King-Thompson. The reports said he was carrying a parachute and told police that he wanted to

BASE-jump from the top of the building.

Fire and police authorities didn't immediately confirm the man's name or his motive.

King-Thompson was arrested in 2019 after scaling the Shard in London — the UK's tallest skyscraper at 310 meters (1,017 feet) — after the owners of the building

pressed charges against him for trespassing. He was sentenced to six months in prison and served three.

In 2021, he climbed the 36-story Stratosphere Tower, a residential block in east London's Stratford neighborhood and reached the top in less than half an hour. (AP)



Argentina's Lionel Messi (right) controls the ball against Australia's Mathew Leckie during their friendly soccer match at the Workers' Stadium in Beijing, China. Argentina won 2-0. (AP)

Sports

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

Croatia qualify for Nations League final

Modric penalty completes thrilling 4-2 win over Netherlands

ROTTERDAM, Netherlands, June 15, (AP): Veteran midfielder Luka Modric scored an extra-time penalty to seal a thrilling 4-2 victory for Croatia over the Netherlands and a place in the Nations League final.

Thousands of ecstatic red-and-white clad Croatia fans chanted "Luka! Luka! Luka!" after the 37-year-old completed the scoring from the penalty spot in the 116th minute.

"We couldn't believe how many fans for Croatia there were in the stadium. That was really phenomenal," Modric said through an interpreter. "They give us great support and that's something that drives us and moves us forward."

It was Modric's 165th appearance for his country. He said after captaining Croatia to victory over Morocco in the third-place game at the World Cup in Qatar he wanted to "continue until at least the Nations League and after we will see."

SOCCER

Netherlands coach Ronald Koeman said Modric was, "in one word: fantastic."

"Sometimes there's a player for the opponent who is so decisive and so good that I can - it's hard to say - enjoy watching," Koeman said.

Croatia was runner-up at the 2018 World Cup in Russia and third last year in Qatar.

Substitute Bruno Petković also scored in extra-time with a shot from just outside the penalty area that flew low into the corner, just out of the reach of Justin Bijlow as staunch Dutch resistance finally crumbled.

Another substitute, Netherlands forward Noa Lang, had forced the game into extra time with a volleyed equalizer six minutes into stoppage time.

Earlier in the pulsating match, a 55th-minute penalty by Andrej Kramarić - awarded for a foul on Modric - and a shot by Mario Pašalić in the 73rd minute canceled out Donyell Malen's 34th-minute opener to keep Croatia and Modric in the hunt for their first major interna-



The Republican team poses with the trophy after the GOP beat the Democrats 16-6 in the Annual Congressional Baseball Game at National Park in Washington. (AP)

tional title.

It ended the Netherlands' latest attempt to add another international trophy to the European Championship the country won in 1988. The Netherlands has finished as runner-up at three World Cups - in 1974, '78 and 2010.

Lang scored only his second international goal after coming on in the

85th minute. But he squandered a great chance in the second half of extra time when he shot into the side netting with Croatia goalkeeper Dominik Livaković out of position.

Modric shot into the goal in the 24th minute, but referee István Kovács had already stopped play because of Pašalić's overhead kick that floored Nathan Ake.

Tough start for Pochettino

Man City start EPL title defense against Burnley

LONDON, June 15, (AP): Manchester City will begin its latest English Premier League title defense against Burnley, a promoted team managed by City great Vincent Kompany.

The opening round of the season also contains a match between two of the league's so-called "Big Six" as Chelsea - with a new manager on board in Mauricio Pochettino - hosts Liverpool.

City's trip to Turf Moor will start the season on Aug. 11 - and on a Friday night - and it's laden with narrative because of the presence of Kompany, who spent 11 years (2008-19) at the club and has a statue outside the team's Etihad Stadium.

Kompany, who was City captain for eight years and won four Premier League titles, led Burnley back into the top division in his first season as a manager in English soccer.

He has already faced City as a Burnley manager and it didn't turn out to be such a happy occasion, with his team getting thrashed 6-0 in the FA Cup quarterfinals in March.

City's early season schedule looks relatively benign - the champion also plays promoted Sheffield United and host Fulham and Nottingham Forest in its first six games - before a tough-looking October when City plays Arsenal (Oct. 7) and Manchester United (Oct. 28) away either side of hosting Brighton.

Arsenal, which ran City surprisingly close in the title race last season, begins the campaign with matches against Nottingham Forest, Crystal Palace and then Fulham.

Arsenal is in the Champions League for the first time in six years, with its first two group games in Europe coming immediately ahead of Premier League matches against Tottenham and Man City.

The first league game for new Tottenham manager Ange Postecoglou is a London derby at Brentford, while Manchester United is at home to Wolverhampton on Aug. 14.

Luton will play its first top-flight match since 1992 away to Brighton. The following week, Kenilworth Road will become the smallest ground to host a Premier League game when Burnley visits.

The other promoted side is Sheffield United, which starts the season at home to Crystal Palace.

The top two from last season go head to head before the season when City faces Arsenal at Wembley in the Community Shield on Aug. 6.

The traditional curtain-raiser is usually between the league champion and

FA Cup winner. But because City won both competitions, it faces the runner-up in the league, Arsenal.

While that game can be seen as a chance to strike a psychological blow ahead of the campaign, it is worth remembering Liverpool beat City in last year's Community Shield, only for Pep Guardiola's team to go on and win a treble of trophies including the Champions League.

Of far more importance will be the first league meeting between City and Arsenal on Oct. 7 at Emirates Stadium.

SOCCER

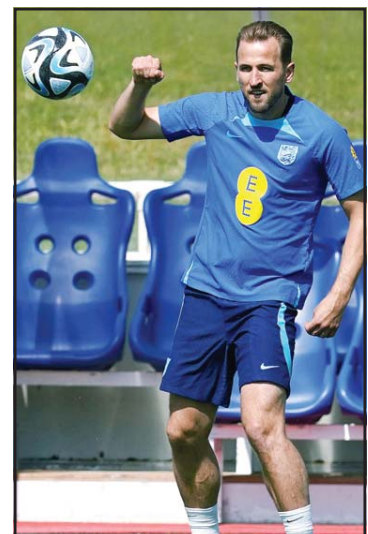
Beginning his Chelsea career with a home game against Liverpool, represents a daunting start for Pochettino.

Liverpool was the team that denied him the Champions League title in 2019 when beating his Tottenham team 2-0 in the final.

While Jurgen Klopp's side suffered a disappointing campaign last season, it will be among the teams expected to challenge City for the title.

Chelsea does not face another big six team until Arsenal on Oct. 21, meaning Pochettino will have the chance to build some momentum to that point.

But that Arsenal game is the start of a challenging run when Chelsea will also take on Tottenham, City, Newcastle and United over a seven-game period.



England's Harry Kane attends a training session ahead of the Euro 2024 soccer matches against Malta and North Macedonia, at St. George's Park, Burton-upon-Trent, England on Friday. (AP)

A return to Liverpool might give Erik ten Hag sleepless nights after his United team was routed 7-0 on Merseyside last season.

This year's game is scheduled for Dec. 16. The last time the rivals played at Anfield on that date was in 2018 in a match that brought the curtain down on Jose Mourinho's United career. The Portuguese coach left the club two days after a 3-1 loss.

Ten Hag will hope history does not repeat itself in more ways than one.

The first Manchester derby is scheduled for Oct. 28 when United hosts City at Old Trafford.

The north London derby is on Sept. 23 between Arsenal and Spurs at Emirates Stadium.

Having avoided relegation on the final day of the season, Everton ensured the Merseyside derby would remain a part of the top-flight calendar for at least another year.

Liverpool host Everton at Anfield on Oct. 21.

Meanwhile, Premier League clubs agreed Wednesday to measures for tackling the rise in tragedy-related chanting at matches, with criminal prosecution of offenders a principal aim.

The move comes in response to incidents of chants and other behavior - often between rival clubs - taunting victims and survivors of soccer-related tragedies.

A Manchester United supporter was arrested following the FA Cup final at Wembley this month after he was seen wearing a soccer shirt that appeared to make an offensive reference to the 1989 Hillsborough disaster, which led to the death of 97 Liverpool fans.

Manchester City and Chelsea both apologized to Liverpool in recent months for Hillsborough-related chants sung by their fans, and appealed for supporters to stop. United supporters have been targeted repeatedly with chants that reference the Munich air disaster of 1958 in which 23 people died, eight of them players.

The measures, which were agreed to unanimously on Wednesday at the league's annual general meeting, come after a working group of stakeholders from across the game was established six months ago, and will also look at issues surrounding regulation and enforcement, online abuse and education.

"(These) issues have continued to cause significant distress to the victims' families, survivors and affected-club supporters, in addition to damaging the reputation of the clubs involved and football in England and Wales," a Premier League statement read.



Netherlands' Xavi Simons vies for the ball with Croatia's Luka Modric (right), during the Nations League semifinal soccer match between the Netherlands and Croatia at De Kuip stadium in Rotterdam, Netherlands. (AP)

Sweden moves closer to launching Winter Oly bid

STOCKHOLM, June 15, (AP): Sweden is moving closer to a bid to host the Winter Olympics for the first time in what is shaping up to be a race for the 2030 Games with only one obvious candidate.

Following a four-month feasibility study, Swedish sports officials said Thursday there is a desire for the Nordic country to stage the Olympics in Stockholm. It will be the ninth Winter Olympic bid for the country that hosted the Summer Olympics in 1912.

"Our preliminary study shows that Sweden has the opportunity, know-how and will to arrange the Winter Games in 2030," Swedish Olympic Committee president Hans von Uthmann said.

Von Uthmann said there will now be a "dialogue phase" with the International Olympic Committee as the second stage of the bid process.

"The IOC has welcomed us to the next phase," he said.

The hosting rights have looked to be there for the taking for Sweden since its surprise entry in the 2030 picture this year as the IOC's other options fell away. Sapporo was the long-time favorite but support in Japan faded during the investigation, trials and convictions related to bribery in commercial deals for the Tokyo Olympics.

This week, the Japanese Olympic Committee said it would support a Sapporo bid only if it was pushed back to target the

2034 Winter Games.

Salt Lake City, a previous Olympic host city like Sapporo, also wants to host again but prefers 2034. That would avoid a back-to-back clash for organizers and sponsors in the United States with the 2028 Los Angeles Summer Games.

Sweden suddenly found a clear and unexpected path to hosting the 2030 Olympics four years after the IOC inflicted a bruising loss on a Stockholm-Are bid for the 2026 Games, which were awarded to Milan-Cortina d'Ampezzo.

That project plan for 2026 has now been revived and relies even more heavily on existing sports venues with fewer construction projects. The IOC urges hosts to avoid potential white-elfer venues that typically go over budget.

OLYMPICS

Further progress for the Stockholm bid can be made next week in the revamped and more flexible Olympic process to pick host cities.

The IOC executive board will meet from Tuesday to Thursday in Lausanne, Switzerland, and can give Stockholm the status of preferred candidate. That would start a period of, in the Olympic jargon, "targeted dialogue" excluding rival bids.