



Iran to cooperate on 'new activities'

Tehran to coordinate with IAEA

DUBAI, May 24, (AP): The head of Iran's nuclear program insisted Wednesday that his government would cooperate with international inspectors on any "new activities." His statement followed an exclusive Associated Press report about Tehran's new underground tunnel system near a nuclear enrichment facility.

The AP outlined this week how deep inside a mountain, the new tunnels near the Natanz facility are likely beyond the range of a last-ditch U.S. weapon designed to destroy such sites.

The report sparked wider conversation across the Middle East about the construction, with Israel's national security adviser saying Tuesday the site would not

be immune from attack even if its depth put it out of range of American airstrikes.

Speaking to journalists Wednesday after a Cabinet meeting, Mohammad Eslami of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran sought to describe the interest in the site as a case of Israel feeling pressured.

"The Islamic Republic of Iran is working under the IAEA safeguards, and whenever wants to start new activities, it will coordinate with the IAEA, and acts accordingly," Eslami said, using an acronym for the International Atomic Energy Agency.

The IAEA did not respond to questions from the AP about the construction at Natanz, about 225 kilometers (140 miles) south of Tehran. Natanz has been a point of international concern since its existence became known two decades ago.

Satellite photographs of the piles of dirt from the digging and experts who spoke to the AP suggest the new tunnels will be between 80 meters (260 feet)

and 100 meters (328 feet) deep.

Such underground facilities led the U.S. to create the GBU-57 bomb, which can plow through at least 60 meters (200 feet) of earth before detonating, according to the American military. U.S. officials reportedly have discussed using two such bombs in succession to ensure a site is destroyed. It is not clear that such a one-two punch would damage a facility as deep as the one at Natanz.

With such bombs potentially off the table, the U.S. and its allies are left with fewer options to target the site. If diplomacy remains stalled as it has for months over Iran's tattered nuclear deal, sabotage attacks may resume.

Iran says the new construction will replace an above-ground centrifuge manufacturing center at Natanz struck by an explosion and fire in July 2020. Tehran blamed the incident on Israel, long suspected of running sabotage campaigns against its program.



Amiri Diwan photo

Photo shows Head of the Board of Trustees flanked by the Honorees. Under the patronage of His Highness Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and in presence of the Amir's representative, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, a ceremony was held at Bayan Palace on Wednesday to honor Sheikh Salem Al-Ali Al-Sabah Informatics Award winners of its 22nd edition of 2022.

Addressing the event, Head of the Award Board of Trustees Sheikha Ayda Salem Al-Ali Al-Sabah said that the rapid digital revolution has created unprecedented civil anomalies and artificial

intelligence comes bearing a number of challenges and principals that humanity have never seen before. She voiced much appreciation and gratitude to the country's leaders for their farsightedness, wisdom and fervent efforts for the sake of national development and modernization. Also speaking during the ceremony on the occasion of winning the prize, Vice-President of Google Cloud Company Vinton Cerf said, "It was not likely that I receive this prize in recognition of my long work in the field of the Internet, but at the same time it is a great honor for me that I deeply appreciate."

NewsWatch

RIYADH: The Saudi Cabinet on Tuesday instructed minister of transport and logistic services to launch talks with the Kuwait side on an agreement for railway linkage between the two Gulf neighbors.

The Saudi Press Agency reported that the Cabinet, headed by King **Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud**, also assigned the minister of energy to sign the Pan-Arab Electricity Market agreement. (KUNA)

RIYADH: The Secretariat of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) marked at its headquarters in Riyadh on Wednesday the 42nd anniversary of council's establishment.

In the event, attended by the governor of Riyadh Prince Faisal bin Bandar, GCC Secretary General **Jassem Al-Budaiwi** said that the council - since establishment on May 25, 1981 - had played a pivotal role in promoting cooperation amongst members of the GCC.

The foundation of the council reflected the vision of the leaders in the region and hopefully, the GCC would continue on its mission as a beacon of cooperation, development, and stability in the region. (KUNA)

ADEN: The Yemeni government warned Tuesday international companies against dealing with Houthi militias, as they do not have any constitutional right to put the country's properties and wealth under their disposal.

This came in a statement made by Minister of Information **Muhammad Al-Eryani**, Yemen's news agency (Saba) reported.

The statement came a day after a Chinese private-sector company announced the cancellation of a deal it signed a few days ago with parties linked to the Houthis to invest in the oil sector.

The cancellation of this deal is a strong blow to the Houthi militias, he said, adding that they try to show false victories to mislead their members that they have taken de facto control of the areas under their fist. (KUNA)

KABUL: The bodies of 18 Afghan migrants who died while being smuggled into Bulgaria were returned to Afghanistan's capital, Kabul, on Wednesday, a spokesman for the Taliban government's Foreign Ministry said.

Bulgarian authorities discovered the bodies in a secret compartment below a load of lumber in the back of a truck left on a highway not far from the capital, Sofia, in February.

They confirmed all 18 had died of suffocation. Bulgarian authorities detained seven people in connection to the deaths. The director of Bulgaria's National Investigation Service described the case as the country's deadliest involving migrants. (AP)

HONG KONG: Hong Kong Chief Executive **John Lee** said police will investigate suspicious applications from people seeking to withdraw from the city's organ donation system, condemning the alleged attempt to damage the program as shameful.

The city's organ donation registration system received nearly 5,800 withdrawal applications in the five months since December, when the government raised the possibility of establishing an organ transplant mutual assistance program with mainland China. More than half of the withdrawal applications were found to be invalid, either as duplicate applications or coming from people who had never opted in. (AP)

WASHINGTON: The White House on Tuesday announced new efforts to guide federally backed research on artificial intelligence as the Biden administration looks to get a firmer grip on understanding the risks and opportunities of the rapidly evolving technology.

Among the moves unveiled by the administration was a tweak to the **United States'** strategic plan on artificial intelligence research, which was last updated in 2019, to add greater emphasis on international collaboration with allies. (AP)

Opinion

O Commerce and Finance Ministers, again, 'knowledge has come to you'

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

ONCE again we address the Minister of Commerce and Industry.

Land has no value if it is not used in building facilities. Its value is based on what is built on it, and what is produced from the industry existing on it.

This is what all countries in the world do. Land is granted to industrialists and entrepreneurs in order to invest their ideas and build industries on it, create more employment opportunities for the people, support the national product through exports, and provide the materials that the people in the country need.

In all countries of the world, there is a system known as B.O.T., which is the acronym of Build-Operate-Transfer system. Through this system, land is granted by the state to the investor in order to build a facility on it and run it for 40 or 50 or even 99 years.

This is the case in some European countries. After the expiry of the period, its fees are either reconsidered, or the ownership of that land is returned to the state. This is applicable in Saudi Arabia, the Emirates, and currently in Qatar and Bahrain. There are no obstacles impeding the investor like raising the fees every year as is the case in Kuwait.

An official targets a particular facility because his "cronies" want it. He hence works to impose unrealistic conditions on the investor and the industrialist to push him to leave the facility with its buildings and equipment, displace his workers, and throw them on the street, as it happens in Kuwait.

Given that the country imports 92 percent of its needs from abroad, it is necessary to reconsider the investment, industrial, agricultural and financial policy. This observation is addressed also to the Minister of Finance. This is because a country like Kuwait, whose annual oil revenues amount to USD 98 billion, has not built an industrial or agricultural system for decades, or developed an advanced infrastructure.

This means that it is sterile in ideas and visions, and its executive authority did not comprehend its basic role. The ministers responsible for finance, trade, public works, and health, in fact all ministers, were not qualified for the task that was entrusted to them.

Is it reasonable that we import tissues, gauze, and medical cotton from abroad, while the neighboring countries have begun the stages of military industrialization after they were crowded with manufacturing industries?!

Is it reasonable that an emirate such as Sharjah was able to cultivate vast areas of wheat, which made the UAE reduce the amount of imports from it in pursuit of self-sufficiency in the next few years?

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The Minister of Industry and Advanced Technology in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and COP28 UAE President-Designate, Sultan Ahmed al-Jaber, attends a joint press conference with German Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock on the second day of the Petersberg Climate Dialogue in Berlin, Germany, May 3, 2023. (AP)

Push on for removal of climate talks head

BERLIN, May 24, (AP): Scores of members of Congress and the European Parliament called Tuesday for the designated chair of the next United Nations climate summit to be replaced over his ties to the fossil fuel sector and for the industry's influence at the upcoming talks to be sharply limited.

The United Arab Emirates has been strongly criticized by environmental advocates for nominating Sultan al-Jaber, the head of the state-owned Abu Dhabi National Oil Company, to preside over the Nov. 30 - Dec. 12 meeting in Dubai known as COP28.

In an open letter, the lawmakers urged U.N. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres, U.S. President Joe Biden, European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen and U.N. climate chief Simon Stiell to "engage in diplomatic efforts to secure the withdrawal of the president-designate of COP28."

Citing the presence of hundreds of oil and gas industry lobbyists at last year's climate talks in Egypt, the lawmakers also called on leaders to "take immediate steps to limit the influence of polluting industries, particularly major fossil fuel industry players whose business strategies lie at clear odds with the central goals" of the 2015 Paris climate accord.

Day by Day

OUR government sent scores of Kuwaiti youth to study in American and European universities, and other countries, where they graduated from the most prestigious faculties of engineering, mechanics, business administration, accounting, and some rare specializations.

It is surprising to see them having to wait for years to be employed in their respective specializations. Unfortunately, the positions which they deserve are occupied by those who have graduated in Sharia and jurisprudence.

For this reason many of them leave the country and go to the countries from where they graduated because these countries know their worth.

... Yet tomorrow is another day.

Zahed Matar

Anti-immigrant party backs Erdogan rival

Clue hope on McCann girl

ANKARA, May 24, (AP): A hard-line, anti-migrant party on Wednesday threw its weight behind the opposition candidate who is running against Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan in this weekend's runoff presidential race.

Umit Ozdag, the leader of the far-right Victory Party, announced his support for main opposition party leader Kemal Kilicdaroglu, who will be facing off against Erdogan on Sunday. He said he decided to back Kilicdaroglu after the two reached a consensus on the need to repatriate millions of migrants within a year.

Kilicdaroglu "has stated very clearly that refugees should return to their homeland and that this is the policy he will implement," Ozdag told reporters following several rounds of talks with Kilicdaroglu. "Therefore, as the Victory Party, we decided to support Mr. Kilicdaroglu in the second round of the presidential election."

Ozdag added that the two agreed on "a model that is in line with international laws and upholds human rights, that would ensure the security of Syrians in Syria but lift the heavy burden on Turkey's economy and that would make our streets safe again."

Ozdag's announcement came just days after Sincan Ogan, the third-placed contender in the first round of the presidential election on May 14, endorsed Erdogan in the upcoming runoff. Ogan was the joint candidate of an alliance of small conservative parties, led by Ozdag's Victory Party.

According to a seven-point protocol signed between Kilicdaroglu and Ozdag, the two also agreed on the need to maintain an "effective and determined" fight against the outlawed Kurdistan Workers' Party, or PKK, and other groups that Turkey considers to be terrorists. The two said they would uphold the country's secular traditions and fight corruption.

Erdogan received 49.5% of the votes in the first round of the presidential race - just short of the majority needed for an outright victory - compared to Kilicdaroglu's 44.9%. Ogan received 5.2%.

Erdogan's ruling party and its nationalist and Islamist allies also retained a majority in the 600-seat parliament - a development that increases Erdogan's chances of reelection because voters are likely to vote for him to avoid a splintered government, analysts say.

In an apparent attempt to woo nationalist voters in the runoff, Kilicdaroglu had hardened his tone last week, vowing to send back refugees and ruling out any peace negotiations with Kurdish militants if he is elected. Kilicdaroglu had previously said he planned to repatriate Syrians within two years, by creating economic and safety conditions conducive to their return.

Kilicdaroglu, 74, is the joint candidate of a six-party opposition alliance, which has pledged to reverse Turkey's authoritarian drift under Erdogan and return the country to a parliamentary democracy with increased checks and balances.

Turkey is home to the world's largest refugee community, including 3.7 million Syrians. Anti-migrant sentiment is running high in the country amid economic turmoil, including high inflation, and the issue of the repatriation of migrants has become a main campaign issue.

Erdogan has remained in power for 20 years by repeatedly surmounting political crises: mass protests, corruption allegations, an attempted military coup and a huge influx of refugees fleeing Syria's civil war.

Now the Turkish people and economy are being pummeled by sky-high inflation, and many are still recovering from a devastating earthquake in February made worse by the government's slow response.



Banners of Turkish CHP party leader and Nation Alliance's presidential candidate Kemal Kilicdaroglu hang in Uskudar district in Istanbul, Turkey, Tuesday, May 23, 2023. (AP)

ARADE DAM, Portugal, May 24, (AP): Police searching for clues regarding the disappearance of Madeleine McCann, the British child who went missing in 2007 in Portugal, were concentrating operations Wednesday in several areas around a dam, including one where media reports say a lead suspect in the case often stayed.

The latest search for clues regarding the disappearance started Tuesday following a request by German authorities. Some 30 Portuguese, German and British police were concentrating operations at the Arade dam, which is located about 50 kilometers (30 miles) from the resort of Praia da Luz, where the 3-year-old girl was last seen 16 years ago.

In Germany, Braunschweig prosecutor Christian Wolters told German public broadcaster NDR, "We have indications that we could find evidence there. I don't want to say what that is exactly, and I also don't want to say where these indications come from."

"The only thing that I would clarify is that it doesn't come from the suspect - so we don't have a confession or anything similar now, or an indication from the suspect of where it would make sense to search," Wolters said, adding that "it was other indications that prompted us to conduct this search." But Wolters appeared to calm expectations of what might be found, saying, "We never said that the girl disappeared where we are now searching."

Police on Tuesday were studying an area where Portuguese and Spanish media say the suspect stayed around the time that Madeleine went missing.

Officers could be heard using a motor saw to clear trees and bushes in the zone, which is located on the far side of the reservoir from the base camp that police set up Monday.

Police have given no details on the progress of the searches so far, but leading Portuguese daily Expresso said Wednesday that the first day ended with no significant results, adding that police had collected some objects including fabrics and garments.

Khartoum calm

KHARTOUM, May 24, (KUNA): Cautious calm prevailed the Sudanese capital city on Tuesday a few hours after the ceasefire came into force between the Sudanese National Army and the Rapid Support Forces.

The new ceasefire deal is the first such deal sponsored by the peace mediators.

The clashes subsided and military sorties ceased but bursts of sporadic distant gunfire were heard in some parts of Khartoum, witnesses told KUNA.

Both sides traded accusations of violating the truce deal.

Prayer Timings

Fajr 03:20 Asr 15:20
 Sunrise ... 04:52 Maghrib ... 18:38
 Zohr 11:45 Isha 20:07

Local

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

'UN must redouble efforts to prevent wars'

Civilians bear the brunt of conflicts worldwide: Kuwaiti diplomat

NEW YORK, May 24, (KUNA): Kuwait's Permanent Representative to the United Nations Ambassador Tareq Albanai said late Tuesday that civilians always bear the brunt of the burden of conflicts worldwide.

Albanai made the remark in a speech he delivered on behalf of the Group of Friends of the Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict at the Security Council Open Debate on "Ensuring the security and dignity of civilians in conflict: addressing food insecurity and protecting essential services" under the agenda item "Protection of civilians in armed conflict".

Burden

"Civilians are consistently shouldering the burden of conflicts around the world. Today, 2 billion people - a quarter of humanity - live in places affected by armed conflict. Record numbers of civilians are facing the humanitarian consequences of conflict, including displacement, and food and nutrition insecurity," he said.

"Among all civilians who are affected in armed conflicts, those who require our particular attention are people in vulnerable situations that are disproportionately prone to suffering, especially children," he added.

He called on the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) to redouble its efforts to break the cycle of armed conflict, which drives and sustains many humanitarian crises around the world.

"And together, as the United Nations, we must do all we can to use the full range of tools at our disposal to prevent and end conflicts," he said.

He added that this year's Secretary-General Protection of Civilians report focuses strongly on conflict and hunger and identifies a continuously high number of persons facing crisis levels of acute food and nutrition insecurity, primarily caused by the consequences of armed conflicts.

It notes that in 2022, more than a quarter of a billion people faced acute hunger in 58 countries and territories, many of which were in armed conflict.

Furthermore, conflict and insecurity were the most significant driver of high levels of acute food insecurity for around 117 million people in 19 countries and territories. Stronger efforts are required to prevent and alleviate hunger in armed conflicts, including by protecting food sources and respecting and protecting humanitarian relief objects and personnel in line with their obligations under International Humanitarian Law (IHL), he added.

The Kuwaiti diplomat went on to say armed conflicts also inevitably contribute to the degradation of the environment, which in turn affects essential services such as those related to the delivery of food and water. Those consequences for civilians are compounded by the effects of climate change, food systems and supply chains collapse.

The Group of Friends echoes the Secretary-Generals concern, which is described in his report, about the humanitarian consequences resulting from armed conflicts involving the use of explosive weapons in populated areas.

Protection of civilians must also be strengthened through the protection of objects indispensable to the survival of the population, which include the civilian infrastructure critical to the delivery of interconnected and essential basic services. Too often, the lack of electricity, water and other basic commodities, hamper the delivery of the most essential services such as education and medical care, placing the health and welfare of civilians at risk, he emphasized.

It is important to recall that this Council has adopted Resolution 2286, which strongly condemns attacks against medical facilities and personnel in conflict situations, Resolution 2573 on the protection of civilian infrastructure, and Resolution 2601, on the protection of schools, educational facilities, and civilians connected with schools, including children and teachers, Albanai added.

The Group of Friends calls on Member States and other relevant actors to advance the implementation of these important resolutions of the Council and the IHL obligations that underpin them, he said.

Humanitarian organizations work tirelessly to preserve and re-establish access to essential services for the affected civilian population, he said, adding there is an urgent need to redouble efforts, including in this Council, to allow and facilitate full, safe, timely and unhindered humanitarian access, and the safety and security of all humanitarian personnel, in accordance with IHL.

The Group of Friends commends the Security Council on the adoption of Resolution 2664, regarding humanitarian exemption to asset freezes under UN sanctions regimes. This is a pivotal step for the facilitation of humanitarian assistance in some of the most complex circumstances, he pointed out.

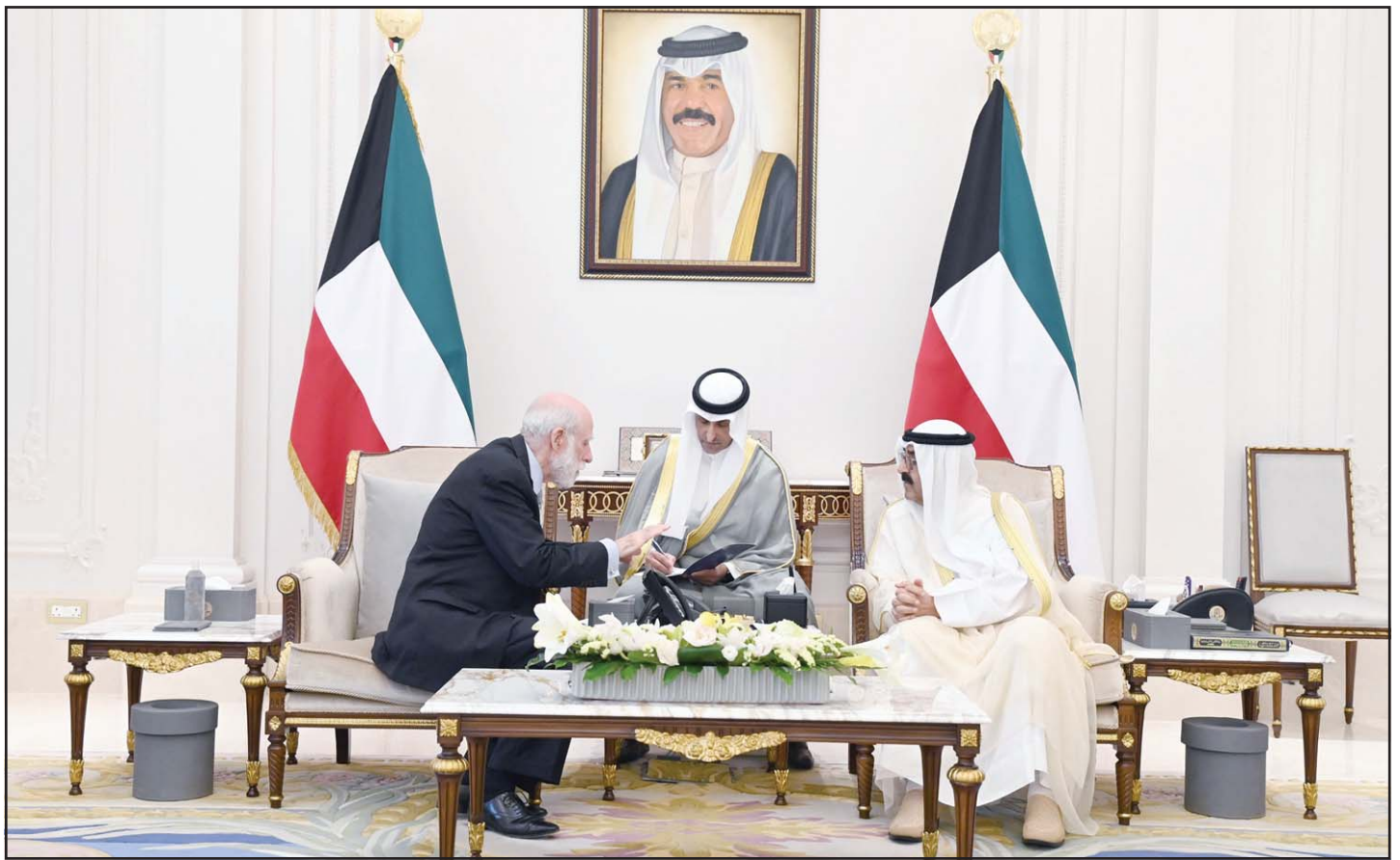
"We are deeply concerned about the growing number of missing persons as a result of armed conflict. Efforts to prevent family separation and disappearances, to search and identify the missing and the dead, and to address the needs of affected families, should be an integral part of our response," he added.

Albanai underlined that taking early action at the onset of an armed conflict is crucial and the regional and national implementation of relevant IHL and IHRL obligations, as well as of UNSC Resolution 2474 on missing persons, is key.

Technologies

Lastly, the use of new technologies is becoming increasingly important for efficient and effective humanitarian operations and the protection of civilians. However, modern technologies, including social media, are all too often misused for false narratives about humanitarian organizations and their work, as well as the work of UN missions, he noted.

Misinformation and disinformation endanger the security of humanitarian and UN mission staff as well as of those they are supposed to serve. It has to be vigorously combatted, including by advocating for IHL and humanitarian principles, he concluded.



KUNA photo
 His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah receives Vinton Gray Cerf, Vice President of Google Cloud.

HH Crown Prince welcomes Google Cloud VP

His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received visiting Vice President of Google Cloud Company Vinton G. Cerf and his accompanying delegation at Bayan Palace on Wednesday.

Welcoming the guests, His Highness the Crown Prince underlined Kuwait's efforts towards digital and technological transformation as being a core pillar of carrying out its national vision, launching development projects based on sophisticated technology, developing national skills in line with the best practices of specialized world companies, and creating promising job opportunities.

His Highness the Crown Prince also stressed Kuwait's eagerness to forge part-

nerships in this regard in order to realize its ambitions of transformation into knowledge-based economy, and build more prosperous and sustainable future.

He, further, pointed out the Kuwaiti political leadership's willingness to upgrade governmental services and cloud computing services, wishing that partnership with Google Cloud Company would be a starting point for digital openness and partnership with world companies concerned with digital, technological and communication advancement.

For his part, Vice President of Google Cloud Company Vinton G. Cerf voiced thanks to Kuwait's leadership and government for trusting his company's technological services,

while looking forward to a constructive partnership by offering the company's expertise in digital transformation and technology use.

In this regard, Cerf vowed that Google Cloud Company would spare no effort to develop this field in the State of Kuwait.

His Highness the Crown Prince's Diwan Chief Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, Minister of State for Municipal Affairs and Minister of State for Communication Affairs Fahad Ali Al-Shala, Director-General of the Kuwait Direct Investment Promotion Authority Sheikh Meshal Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and senior officials of His Highness the Crown Prince's Diwan were present at the reception. (KUNA)

Court rejects challenge to '22 Assembly nullification verdict

'Poll-runners must focus on family issues'

By Saeed Mahmoud Saleh
 Arab Times Staff and Agencies

KUWAIT CITY, May 24: The Constitutional Court has dismissed the appeal filed by former MPs Muhammad Al-Mutairi, Hamad Al-Matar, Fares Al-Otaibi, Mubarak Al-Hajraf, Muhammad Al-Ajmi and Yousef Al-Bazzali to cancel its ruling to nullify the 2022 National Assembly.

The court pointed out that the appeal violates the law on its establishment, stating its verdicts can neither be appealed nor debated. It said the appeal included wrong information, particularly the allegation that the ruling removes some of the Amiri powers stipulated in Article 107 of the Constitution. It also argued that the ruling took into consideration the errors in the dissolution of the 2020 Assembly, clarifying it did not exercise oversight on the authority granted to His Highness the Amir in terms of the assessment of political conditions.

On the other hand, member of the nullified 2022 Assembly and Second Constituency candidate Alyaa Al-Khalid asserted there is no provision preventing female MPs from running for speakership, which she intends to do in case she wins in the upcoming election. She said this position is not exclusive for certain personalities.

She added she has no intention to assign her representatives in the polling centers on Election Day, as she completely trusts the judiciary.

On the other hand, Alqyas Center polled a random sample of voters in the Third Constituency and the results showed the top 15 candidates as follows:

1. Ahmad Al-Saadoun
2. Abdulkareem Al-Kandari
3. Abdulaziz Al-Saqaabi
4. Hamad Al-Obaid
5. Khalid Dashti
6. Mehalhal Al-Mudaf
7. Muhammad Al-Sayer
8. Abdullah Ghadhanfar
9. Saadoun Hammad
10. Jenan Bu Shehri
11. Fares Al-Otaibi
12. Ahmed Al-Fadhil
13. Jarrat Al-Fawzan
14. Hamad Al-Alyan



Dr. Al-Ghanam



Dr. Saud Al-Ghanim

Amir congratulates Eritrean head

KUWAIT CITY, May 24, (KUNA): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah sent on Wednesday a cable of congratulations to Eritrean President Isaias Afwerki on the occasion of his country's National Day.

In his cable, His Highness the Amir wished the Eritrean President and his people further success and progress.

Crown Prince

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Bid to rationalize expenses

'Cut on consultancy contracts'

KUWAIT CITY, May 24: In a step that reflects the government's tendency to rationalize spending and ease pressure on the state budget, the Ministry of Finance warned against expanding consultant contracts, and the continuation of government agencies to contract with consulting firms, in light of the rules related to ministries' budgets for the 2023/2024 fiscal year, reports Al-Qabas daily.

In a circular sent to various ministries and government agencies, the Ministry of Finance explained that it was noticed that many government agencies expanded contracts with consulting companies to provide consultation in various specialties. The costs of those contracts are deducted from the consulting item in Chapter Two (Goods and Services), and not from Chapter One (Compensation for workers). It was done without following the regulations that control the number of consultants who are hired despite their lack of

experience and without the specialized certificate necessary for the process of classifying consultants.

The circular highlighted the coordination with the Civil Service Commission regarding controlling the disbursement process on the consultancy item, so that the consultation contracts are in accordance with certain controls and bases on which the contract is endorsed.

The ministry requested government agencies, when initiating the contracting process with consultants, to include the tender contracts and practices concluded with consultation companies with a detailed statement that should serve as an appendix to the contract regarding the number of workers in those companies responsible for executing the contract, their experience, and their academic and specialized certificates, according to the government agency's job classification guide.

Focus on family issues

Those eager to secure a seat at the National Assembly during the June sixth elections must highlight issues pertaining to family welfare during the campaigns, said experts on Wednesday, according to Kuwait News Agency, KUNA.

Issues such as housing, education, and employment, the welfare of families in Kuwait are a key component that would ensure the success or failure of a campaign if not provided adequate attention during the election.

Speaking on the issue, professor of psychology at Kuwait University (KU) Dr. Saud Al-Ghanim said that family matters were sort of a bridge that would enable candidates to possibly win a seat in parliament.

The issue is not individualistic by nature, it is a

matter that concerns every household in Kuwait, affirmed Dr. Al-Ghanim.

However, Dr. Al-Ghanim warned that some candidates might hijack this important matter for political gains, saying that voters must choose wisely those who would bring benefits to all families in Kuwait.

In a similar fashion, professor of social science at the Public Authority for Applied Education and Training (PAAET) Dr. Ghannam Al-Ghannam affirmed that the welfare of families was an issue of great importance.

Most candidates focus on social justice issues including providing more social security to all families in Kuwait, he affirmed, saying that in order to elevate the financial stability of families in Kuwait, salary increases must be on top of the priorities for candidates vying for a seat at the parliament's Abdullah Al-Salem Hall.



Ambassador Tareq Al-banai

Banks shut on June 6 poll day

Mol bans use of GHB substance

KUWAIT CITY, May 24, (Agencies): The Interior Ministry on Wednesday warned against the use of Gamma-hydroxybutyrate (GHB), a psychoactive substance banned internationally.

The ministry's Public Relation and Media Department said that the substance was used medically at hospitals for sedation before surgery, saying that it also could be used as a narcotic.

GHB is a colorless and scentless liquefied substance that when mixed with other ingredients could be used as a psychoactive drug and is actually illegal according to Law 48, 1987.

The American FDA and UN agencies warned against GHB and banned across the globe, indicated the department, urging citizens to stay vigilant and report any use of the drug in Kuwait.

Banks shut on June 6: The Union of Kuwaiti Banks has announced that local banks will be closed on June 6 -

National Assembly Election Day, and will resume operations on June 7, reports Al-Anba daily.

Inmate murder for probe: The committee formed by First Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Interior and acting Minister of Defense Sheikh Talal Khaled Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah pursuant to Ministerial Resolution No. 458/2023 has finalized investigations into the suicide of an inmate inside the Central Prison, reports Al-Anba daily.

The committee - whose members are from the Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Health, Kuwaiti Transparency Society and Kuwait Society for Human Rights - has recommended referral of the case to the Public Prosecution.

Meanwhile, the Ministry of Commerce and Industry has announced the suspension of some services related to the supply system; affirming it is working hard to quickly restore these services, reports Al-Rai daily.

Minister to step up distribution of housing units with quality services

Al-Otaibi visits number of housing projects in Jaber Al-Ahmad

KUWAIT CITY, May 24: The Minister of Electricity, Water and Renewable Energy and Minister of State for Housing Affairs Eng. Mutlaq Al-Otaibi plan to accelerate the pace of distribution of housing units, diversify options for citizens, and build more housing

for citizens complete with quality services, reports Al-Qabas daily.

The minister said this when he visited a number of existing housing projects in the city of Jaber Al-Ahmad, along with the acting Director General of the Public Authority for Housing Welfare, Eng. Rashid Al-Enezi.



The ambassador with leading pharmaceutical distributors.

Indian envoy meets with top pharmaceutical distributors

The Indian Ambassador to Kuwait HE Dr Adarsh Swaika met with leading pharmaceutical distributors in Kuwait. The discussions focused

on more registration and greater availability of medicines in Kuwait from India – the 'Pharmacy of the World'.

Building violations under the microscope: official

KUWAIT CITY, May 24: Deputy Director General of Farwaniya and Mubarak Al-Kabeer Municipalities Eng. Nawaf Al-Kandari affirmed recently that building violations cannot be tolerated, and this is currently under the microscope, reports Al-Rai daily.

Eng. Al-Kandari said, "What is currently taking place in the two governorates is a process of listing the violating real estate, followed by several procedures such as issuing reports of violation seizures, and case

reports to those concerned. From there, a precautionary block was placed on the violating property.

Judicial rulings have been issued to remove aspects of violations in the violating property, and to fine the owner of the property."

Al-Kandari explained that he directed the oversight departments to take all legal measures in this regard, and intensify field inspections to reduce violations.

Al-Otaibi was also briefed on the vertical housing project and the readiness of the residential apartments that were handed over to the Ministry of Health during the corona pandemic, in order to hand them over to citizens after carrying out maintenance work on them.

Stressed

Minister Al-Otaibi stressed, during his meeting with the senior PAHW officials and the project work team and contractors on the sidelines of his tour in the city, the importance of working to accelerate the mechanism for distributing housing plots within the projects that the foundation has finished planning and designing, based on directives from the political leadership and the Council of Ministers, with the aim of providing housing care for applicants, and diversify the options available to citizens.

He stressed the importance of working on offering more investment projects that achieve profitable and growing returns that contribute to alleviating the financial burdens on the institution, create job investment opportunities for Kuwaiti youth, and attract investments and praiseworthy competition between the banking sector, private companies, and real estate developers.

He praised the efforts currently being made within the investment opportunities that are being implemented in Jaber Al-Ahmad City, and the actual completion rates on the ground, which will contribute to raising the level and quality of services for the residents of the city and the surrounding areas.



12th Air Force aircraft carrying 10 tons of medical and tent supplies ready to take off. KUNA photo

Kuwait dispatches 12th aid plane to Sudan

The State of Kuwait on Wednesday sent its 12th Air Force aircraft carrying 10 tons of medical and tent supplies to violence-hit Sudan.

The aid plane is part of the recently announced airlift, directed by Kuwait's political leadership, aiming at helping the Sudanese people amid their country's tough circumstances due to ongoing fighting there, Kuwait Red Crescent Society (KRCS) Emergency Chief Yusuf Al-Mearaj told KUNA.

The fresh aid reflects the great humanitarian role of Kuwait, represented by the KRCS, towards Sudanese people, he said, regarding it as a "hu-

manitarian duty towards brothers in Sudan".

However, the KRCS official vowed that the Kuwaiti people would spare no effort in answering the necessary humanitarian requirements of war-affected people amid the current hard circumstances experienced by Sudan.

The Kuwaiti cabinet had decided to dispatch urgent food and medical aid to Sudan under the direction of the country's political leadership in a bid to ease out the humanitarian reflections of this Arab country's crisis triggered by ongoing fighting between the army and paramilitary forces. (KUNA)

'Diwan of Grievances'

Govt electronic platform to look into grievances and complaints

KUWAIT CITY, May 24: An electronic platform 'Diwan of Grievances' will be available to receive complaints from any visitors or officials who believe they have been wronged, and the complaints will be under the direct supervision of the Presidency of the Government and the competent minister, reports Al-Rai daily.

Informed sources told the daily that a government approach to create this new platform for communication between officials in various government agencies and citizens of all categories, whether they are government employees or visitors.

It will place senior officials among ministers and ministerial leaders regarding their responsibilities before the Council of Ministers, which will be linked to each complaint and the measures taken therein.

The sources said that the approach comes within the framework of the government's policy to overcome obstacles faced by citizens, and to enhance and facilitate government communication with people, whether

citizens or employees, to prevent injustice, follow up on administrative and personal mistakes, and inform people that their voice reaches the highest officials in the country, starting with ministers and ending with His Highness the Prime Minister.

The sources pointed out that this new step will monitor any failure of any employee in any entity, as it would be possible to receive complaints and observations from any employee of any rank, citizen or visitor in a government agency against an official or government agency.

The sources indicated that the 'Tawasul' platform will allow the follow-up of the complaint through the concerned minister directly and the Council of Ministers as well, as the platform refers the complaint to the minister to take the necessary measures, and the status of the complaint is followed up in all its steps, indicating that specific colors will be assigned to the case of the complaint at each of its stages, all the way until it is solved.

CSC okays lists for frontliners incentive

Mol includes 3 million services on 'Sahel'

KUWAIT CITY, May 24: The Ministry of Interior has confirmed the inclusion of three million online services on the unified government platform – Sahel, reports Al-Anba daily.

In a press statement, the ministry disclosed that it continues to digitize services to better serve the public.

Meanwhile, the unified governmental electronic platform 'Sahel' includes more than 20 health-related services, reports Al-Rai daily quoting official spokesman of the Health Ministry Dr Abdullah Al-Sanad.

Al-Sanad affirmed that the ministry intends to add more services on the platform to ease and expedite procedures for the public.

Also, the administrator of the unified government application for electronic services – Sahel – has vehemently denied the rumor about the hacking of the platform, reports Al-Rai daily.

He explained notices from the Public Institution for Social Security were sent to some users of the application, indicating these are old notices that were not sent on time due to a technical defect.

CSC approves lists: The Civil Service Commission (CSC) has approved the lists of employees in four oil companies who are entitled to the frontliners incentive, reports Al-Anba daily quoting sources.

Sources revealed this is the CSC's response to the letter of Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) regarding the frontliners incentive.

Sources said the CSC had earlier contacted the Ministry of Finance which, in turn, confirmed its approval of the lists with KPC 10 days ago. Sources added the disbursement date will be announced soon.

O Commerce and

Continued from Page 1

While some Gulf countries have reached the point of sending astronauts into space, we are still drowning in polemics and disagreements between parliamentarians and ministers. The documentary cycle is still stuck in the "our letter and your letter" box, and what the Ministry of Commerce licenses, the municipality prohibits it.

As for the Minister of Finance, managing the state's finances is not like managing a shop. While the country seeks to turn into a global financial center, it must have an attractive policy for investment and investors, and be able to meet people's needs. From 2017, a vision known as "New Kuwait 2035" vision was approved. We wonder what plans your ministry has made in this regard, and what steps have been taken.

Frankly, nothing. In fact, the successive cabinets, including the current one, have worked to suffice with issuing decisions that increase the closure of the country, burden the expatriates

everyday with fees, and harass them to leave. So how can a foreign investor come to the country when he cannot obtain a driving license, cannot bring workers, and cannot bring his wife and family into the country?

If you do not want the expatriates, expel them from the country, roll up your sleeves, and go ahead and work in the construction field, pave roads and maintenance, and even clean your homes.

In Saudi Arabia, the percentage of expatriates is about 50 percent. In the Emirates, the percentage of expatriates is 83 percent and citizens is 17 percent. They helped develop the UAE's national product until it reached about USD 415 billion in 2021. On the other hand, in Kuwait, oil revenues amounted to about USD 183.6 billion in 2021 due to the fact that there is no industrial, financial, commercial, and agricultural policy that keeps pace with the developments of the time.

Dear Commerce and Finance Ministers, you are part of the specialized team - as it is assumed - to set the executive policies of the state. We urge you to ponder over this line - "Knowledge has come to you".

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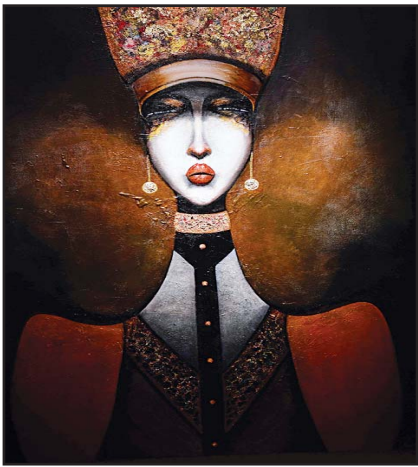
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Part of the gallery



Paints about women characters



The artist Abdullah Al-Zeid

KUNA photos

'Grace' exhibition reflects cultural identity & diversity

In the fourth edition of his "Grace" exhibition, the artist Abdullah Al-Zeid showed 35 paintings that dealt with issues of men and women as well as different civilizations, produced in modern and experimental methods.

The exhibition, held at Den Gallery in Crystal Tower, was crowded with visitors who interacted with the portrait paintings with their diversity of expressions and diverse cultures in a panoramic artistic experience.

'Blood & emergency stocks in Kuwait excellent, sufficient'

MoH blood donation witnessed great turnout

KUWAIT CITY, May 24: The Ministry of Health affirmed that the blood donation campaign, which was launched on Monday at the Central Blood Bank with the aim of enhancing the strategic stock of blood in the country, witnessed a great turnout from citizens and residents, reports Al-Anba daily.

The campaign is organized by Wafra Financial Services Company for the third year in a row with the cooperation of the Central Blood Bank.

In a press statement issued on the sidelines of the campaign, Assistant Undersecretary for Allied Medical Services at the Ministry of Health Yaqoub Al-Tamar expressed his hope that this campaign would bear fruit in strengthening the strategic stock of blood in the country.

Interest

He affirmed the ministry's constant interest in following up everything that is in the interest of the state and society by playing its role in providing all the necessary services and taking all steps necessary to develop the health system and services provided to citizens and residents.

In a similar statement, Director of the Blood Transfusion Services Department Dr. Reem Al-Radwan said the blood and emergency stocks in Kuwait are "excellent" and sufficient to cover the needs of hospitals in the country.

She indicated that the blood donation campaigns will continue until July.

Dr. Al-Radwan revealed that the ministry last week organized a number of donation campaigns with the cooperation of the Ministry of Defense and the Ministry of Interior as well as a number of companies with the aim of strengthening the strategic stock and covering the need of blood in hospitals.

She stressed the blood bank's keenness to ensure the availability of blood for all citizens and residents in Kuwait.

In addition, the General Manager of Wafra

'Bilateral relations strong & excellent'

Kuwait and US exchange info to counter terrorism

KUWAIT CITY, May 24: Acting Chargé d'Affairs at the US Embassy in Kuwait, James Holtsnider, said the United States and Kuwait exchange information on the issue of combating money laundering and terrorism saying "there is cooperation between America and Kuwait" and called the "Kuwaiti-US relations are strong and excellent, and we participate in training and exchange views and experiences," reports Al-Rai daily.

He said this while addressing the media on the sidelines of the workshop which was organized under the title "Model for Investigation and Prosecution Teams" at the Kuwait Institute for Judicial and Legal Studies, in cooperation with the Office for the Development, Support and Training of Prosecutors Abroad of the US Department of Justice and the Public Prosecution in Kuwait.

The aim of the workshop was to

strengthen the capacity of prosecutors in combating organized crime, including terrorism, terrorist financing and money laundering.

The Institute's Deputy Director for Communications, Relations and Research, Counselor Adnan Al-Jasser, said "the title of the workshop was carefully chosen, within the annual program that was agreed to be held, in cooperation with the Office of Development, Support and Training of Prosecutors Abroad of the US Department of Justice."

He stressed that the "societies with all their institutions are responsible for combating and responding to this scourge. As much as the security institutions have obligations, it also falls on the intellectual, scientific, media and educational institutions, a great responsibility to instill correct concepts and values, and immunize society against deviant ideas."

Financial Services Company Wissam Al-Serafi said the idea of the campaign emerged during the period of COVID-19 pandemic in light of the severe need for blood.

He explained that the first campaign was organized after the end of the complete curfew.

The previous campaigns succeeded in collecting about 300 bags of blood.

Ministry 'reorganizes' licenses for activities of special nature

Decision serves large segment of micro-business owners

KUWAIT CITY, May 24: In a development that serves a large segment of micro-business owners, the Minister of Commerce and Industry Muhammad Al-Aiban issued a decision through which he reorganized licenses for activities of a special nature in a way that would reduce the burden of rents for headquarters for a large segment of business owners, reports Al-Qabas daily.

According to informed sources, the number of activities expected to be covered by the decision exceeds 60 commercial and handicraft activities. There is no need for the owners of these activities to rent official premises to practice their commercial activity, provided that they undertake it without the need for workers, a commercial store, or the approval of other regulatory authorities such as the municipality, the Ministry of Interior, the Public Authority for Industry, and others. The activities intended in the decision cannot register or recruit expatriate workers.

Regarding the entitlement of holders of commercial licenses of a special nature to support national manpower, the sources said the decision to disburse labor support is not in the hands of the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, as they will not be granted "national manpower support" for these activities, unless the Public Authority for Manpower issues a decision allowing them to do so.

The sources said this decision would restrict the activity of fictitious office rental brokers, as there are those who rent a fake office or for a short period with the aim of obtaining a commercial license. adding that this measure will stop tampering with this file.

The following was stated in resolution No. 82/2023 regarding licensing activities of a special nature:

Article 1:

In the application of this decision, it means companies carrying out activities of a special nature by their owners without the need for workers, a commercial store, or the approval of other regulatory authorities. It is within the framework of facilitating and supporting projects, and as an exception to the requirements stipulated in the executive regulations of the aforementioned commercial store licensing law.

Article 2:

The application for licensing the companies mentioned in the previous article should be submitted through the ministry's "single window center" along with the required documents in accordance with the laws and decisions in force, with the exception of submitting a rental contract or receipt if the following data is submitted:

1. A proof of the legality of the home address of the applicant, or the chosen domicile of the applicant, whether it is a law firm or an auditor's office.

2. Any other documents for which a decision is issued by the minister or whomever he authorizes.

Article 3:

The provisions of this decision apply to companies established before and after its issuance. The license is issued for a period of three years.

Article 4:

With the exception of the provisions contained in this decision, the provisions of the relevant ministerial decisions remain valid.

Article 5:

The concerned authorities - each within the scope of their competence - shall implement this decision. It shall come into effect from the date of its issuance. It shall be published in the official gazette.

Conditions for obtaining a license are as follows:

1 - Commercial licenses of a special nature are not issued to public sector employees, and are granted to citizens only registered under chapters 3 and 5, and to retirees.

2 - Permitted commercial licenses must require approvals from bodies other than the Ministry of Commerce and Industry.

3 - The applicant for a license who is registered under Chapter 5 is not entitled to labor support for the activity of a special nature.

4 - The owner of the license must practice the work himself. It is forbidden to register or recruit workers for the license.

The following are some of the activities that are allowed to be practiced without a headquarters:

■ Software and web design



Kuwaiti female students at the College of Engineering and Petroleum

Students create 'Unexpire' to tackle food waste crisis

KUWAIT CITY, May 24: A group of Kuwaiti female students at the College of Engineering and Petroleum have created the Unexpire application, which alerts users of the expiry date of food, and helps cooperative societies to digitally transform and create a database that the Public Authority for Food and Nutrition can use in planning for the future, with the aim of contributing to solving the food waste crisis in the country, reports Al-Qabas daily.

■ Consulting activities that do not require the approval of professional bodies

■ Artistic activities such as translation, drawing, calligraphy, photography and booking concerts, events and museums

■ Designing fashion clothes, jewelry, gold artifacts and precious stones

■ Home and office decoration design

■ Organizing sports tournaments and booking stadiums and tickets.



Head Office Relocation

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The Guest Show poster.

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TGS presents Dr Sahar Ghannam

KUWAIT CITY, May 24: This Thursday, The Guest Show (TGS) presents Dr Sahar Ghannam, a renowned Egyptian dermatologist and aesthetic medicine specialist based in Kuwait.

Dr Sahar Ghannam is a consultant in dermatology, venereology, cosmetic dermatology and laser. She has served innumerable patients in Kuwait since 1997 and in the greater Gulf region since 2010. Dr Ghannam is the first Arab doctor to be the President of the International Society for Dermatologic

and Aesthetic Surgery of the World (ISDS World) and the International Peeling Society (IPS). An active member of several societies, she serves on different medical boards, teaches and writes.

In this episode of the Guest Show, she speaks to Chaitali B. Roy about her journey in medicine, about breaking glass ceilings, the obsession of women with cosmetic procedures and the challenges faced by women as they climb up the professional ladder.

oil up

The Kuwaiti oil price went up by 70 cents to USD 77.30 pb on Tuesday against USD 76.60 pb the previous day, the Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) announced on Wednesday.

Comparatively, at international markets, forward Brent crude contracts rose by 85 cents to USD 76.84 pb, and the West Texas Intermediate crude went up by 86 cents to USD 72.91 a barrel. (KUNA)

'Twitter's headquarters may not stay in San Francisco'

Twitter might not keep its headquarters in San Francisco forever, its owner Elon Musk signaled Tuesday.

Speaking virtually at the Wall Street Journal's CEO Council Summit in London, Musk gave a noncommittal answer to an interviewer's question about whether the company will stay in the California city.

San Francisco officials announced last week they are

investigating Twitter after six former employees alleged that Musk's team broke laws by turning the company's headquarters into a "Twitter Hotel." The idea was to create sleeping quarters for workers who were pushed to stay up late working on the social media platform after Musk fired or laid off nearly 80% of Twitter's employee base.

The San Francisco Department of Building Inspection said it will be conducting an investigation into the new allegations. The former Twitter employees allege that Musk's team ordered numerous changes to the company's headquarters in a 1930s Art Deco building in downtown San Francisco that violated building codes. Those changes included disabling lights and adding locks that wouldn't open during an emergency, according to the lawsuit. (AP)

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

Market Movements 24-05-2023

	Change	Closing pts		Change	Closing pts
PHILIPPINES - PSEI	+0.19	6,615.95	UAE - DFM	-0.09	3,530.15
EGYPT - EGX 30	+1.80	17,090.56	JAPAN - Nikkei	-0.89	30,682.68
			PAKISTAN - KSE 100	-0.04	41,098.48
			SAUDI - Tadawul	-0.35	11,236.27

Business

The Conversation

Coke's single largest contribution to climate change comes from its refrigeration equipment

Coca-Cola's biggest challenge in greening operations is its own marketing strategy

By Bart Elmore

The Ohio State University

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



Coca-Cola is one of the world's most widely recognized brands. Its global reach, spanning more than 200 countries, was the theme of a 2020 commercial that showed families drinking Coke with their meals in cities from Orlando, Florida, to Shanghai, London, Mexico City and Mumbai, India.

Operating on that scale creates a big carbon footprint. The company uses over 200,000 vehicles to distribute its products every day and runs hundreds of bottling plants and syrup factories across the globe.

But Coke's single largest contribution to climate change comes from its refrigeration equipment.

Running refrigerators uses a lot of electricity, and some coolants in these systems are greenhouse gases that trap heat in the atmosphere. Almost two-thirds of the climate impact of refrigeration comes from electricity consumption, and refrigerants account for the rest. As of 2020, refrigeration produced nearly 8% of global greenhouse gas emissions.

History suggests that the most effective way to shrink Coca-Cola's refrigeration emissions may be to question whether the company needs that cooling equipment running around the clock at convenience stores on street corners worldwide. That's a heretical notion for a company obsessed with making sure Coca-Cola is always within "an arm's reach of desire," as one Coke president put it.

As I show in my new book, "Country Capitalism: How Corporations from the American South Remade Our Economy and the Planet," major companies like Coca-Cola have profited handsomely by making their products readily available worldwide. In doing so, they have created a fast-paced, long-distance form of commerce that is a major driver of our planet's current ecological crisis.

Refrigerators first became an environmental issue because of concerns about ozone loss, not climate change. Before the 1980s, the primary coolants used in refrigerators were chlorofluorocarbons, or CFCs. Discovered in the 1920s by a

chemist at General Motors, these compounds were odorless, nonflammable and seemingly nontoxic - all properties that made them useful to industry. In the following decades, CFCs became the chief refrigerant used to keep things cool.

Then, in the 1970s, researchers at the University of California found that CFCs could destroy stratospheric ozone, a gas in the atmosphere that protects life on Earth from the Sun's ultraviolet radiation. Nations ultimately agreed to ban use of CFCs through the 1987 Montreal Protocol, one of the most successful environmental treaties on record.

Chemical companies such as DuPont led the way in promoting new chlorine-free refrigerants, called hydrofluorocarbons or HFCs, that would not deplete the ozone layer. Like CFCs, HFCs appealed to industry because they were odorless, nonflammable and posed no serious threats to human health.

But HFCs had a big drawback: They were powerful greenhouse gases that trapped heat in the Earth's atmosphere, warming the planet's surface. Some HFCs had warming impacts more than 1,000 times greater than carbon dioxide, the most abundant greenhouse gas.

Companies like Coca-Cola knew about HFCs' climate-warming effects when they began transitioning to this new refrigerant in the 1990s. Bryan Jacobs, a Coca-Cola engineer who worked on this transition, told me in an interview that early on, refrigeration technicians in Europe recommended another promising path instead.

Greenpeace advocates in Germany had worked closely with refrigeration engineers to develop what came to be known as Greenfreeze cooling equipment: machines that used hydrocarbons, including isobutane and propane, as refrigerants. These refrigerants, which had a global warming impact radically lower than HFCs, offered the prospect of protecting both the ozone layer and the climate.

Jacobs told me that Coca-Cola was "pretty dismissive," largely because his team feared that these refrigeration units filled with flammable material might explode - especially in rural areas lacking technical support. Instead, Coca-Cola shifted to HFCs.

In response, Greenpeace launched a major campaign at the 2000 Sydney Olympics to expose how Coca-Cola's HFC units were warming the planet. Doug Daft, an Australian who was Coke's CEO at the time, committed the company to elimi-

nating HFC refrigeration from its systems in the years ahead.

Since 2000, Coca-Cola has become a world leader in developing HFC-free refrigeration equipment. At first it invested heavily in a novel type of refrigerator that used carbon dioxide as the key refrigerant. Soon, however, the company recognized that hydrocarbon refrigerants posed fewer safety risks than they had initially feared, and began adopting these units as well.

Coca-Cola also convinced other companies to shift away from HFCs. Partnering with Unilever, Pepsi, Red Bull and other big firms, the company launched Refrigerants, Naturally!, an organization committed to transitioning major food and beverage companies toward HFC-free refrigeration. In 2010, Coke CEO Muhtar Kent persuaded some 400 consumer goods companies to commit to eliminating HFCs from their refrigeration systems.

By 2016, Coke reported that 61% of all new cooling equipment it purchased was HFC-free. Four years later, that figure reached 83%.

Still, as of 2022, more than 10% of Coke's new refrigeration units contained HFCs, and refrigeration remained its single largest greenhouse gas emissions source. Part of the problem is that all of these units run on electricity, much of which is generated by burning fossil fuels. With Coca-Cola selling roughly 2.2 billion drinks every day, keeping Coke cold still has an enormous carbon footprint. The same is true for Coke's competitors.

In an interview with Coca-Cola's former chief sustainability officer, Jeff Seabright, I asked him whether the company had ever considered thinking more broadly about the necessity of cooling all those Cokes around the clock. Seabright's response was an emphatic "No," and that the company was still driven by the mantra of making Coke available for immediate consumption at the point of sale.

Despite the resources that Coca-Cola has invested in changing refrigerants, its cooling equipment is still warming our planet. As I see it, perhaps it's time for Coke to question whether it needs all those machines in the first place - and for consumers to consider whether their have-it-now expectations are worth the environmental costs they impose. (AP)

Debt ceiling talks grind on, but GOP says there's lack of urgency from WH

Leaders staring down a financial crisis

WASHINGTON, May 24, (AP): Debt ceiling talks showed few signs of outward progress Tuesday as negotiators for President Joe Biden and House Speaker Kevin McCarthy traded more budget-cutting ideas but Republicans warned of a "lack of urgency" at the White House to resolve the standoff in time to avert a potentially chaotic federal default.

With barely a week to go before a deadline as soon as June 1, the Democratic president and the Republican speaker were staring down a financial crisis. Failure to strike a deal would be unprecedented, and certain to throw U.S. financial markets into turmoil, inflicting economic pain at home and abroad. Markets lowered Tuesday with no deal in sight.

"We're not there yet," McCarthy said at the Capitol, reiterating he won't bring any bill forward "that doesn't spend less than we spent this year."

Behind closed doors, McCarthy urged his slim House Republican majority to "just stick together" despite their own factions as he negotiates the strongest deal possible for conservatives, said lawmakers exiting the private session.

But McCarthy did not expect a deal by day's end. He told reporters the teams are eyeing "creative" ways of rolling back spending that all sides can accept.

"I believe we can still get there - and get there before June 1," McCarthy, R-Calif., said.

Dragging into a third week, the negotiations over raising the nation's debt limit, now at \$31 trillion, were never supposed to arrive at this point - a crisis in the making.

From the White House, press secretary Karine Jean-Pierre said it was "ridiculous" to suggest Biden wasn't acting with urgency. "He wants to see this done as soon as possible," she said.

The White House insisted early on it was unwilling to barter over the need to pay the nation's bills, demanding that Congress simply lift the ceiling as it has done many times before with no strings attached.

But the newly elected speaker urged the president at an Oval Office meeting in February to come to the negotiating table on a budget package that would reduce spending to reduce ballooning deficits in the post-COVID era in exchange for the vote to allow future debt.

Both men said after a crucial meeting late Monday at the White House

Asian stocks slide as US debt worries mount

WS drops as markets tumble globally

NEW YORK, May 24, (AP): A worldwide swoon for financial markets is carrying over to Wall Street, and stocks are falling further on Wednesday.

The S&P 500 was 0.9% lower in afternoon trading, a day after dropping 1.1% as the U.S. government creeps closer to a possibly disastrous default on its debt. The Dow Jones Industrial Average was down 272 points, or 0.8%, at 32,783, as of 12:21 p.m. Eastern time, while the Nasdaq composite was 1% lower.

Other markets around the world were hit even harder as discouraging figures piled up on the economy. Stock indexes tumbled 1.7% in London, 1.9% in Frankfurt and 1.6% in Hong Kong.

Inflation in the United Kingdom remains worse than expected, raising worries that the Bank of England may keep hiking interest rates and squeezing its economy. In Germany, business confidence fell in Europe's largest economy. And in China, worries remain about a weaker-than-hoped reopening from COVID restrictions as tensions rise with the United States over technology and security.

On Wall Street, the focus is squarely on Capitol Hill and the White House, where the latest battle between Democrats and Republicans is threatening to cause the nation's first-ever default on its debt. The U.S. government could run out of cash to pay its bills as soon as June 1 unless Congress allows it to borrow more, and the widespread expectation is that a default would result in tremendous economic pain.

The stock market for the most part has remained resilient despite the worries. Fear has been concentrated mostly in corners of the bond market, where prices have dropped for Treasury bills due to pay out around the possible date of default.

That's largely because the widespread belief on Wall Street has been that Congress would come to an agreement at the 11th hour, as it's done several times before, because a default would benefit no one. But fear is rising that Congress may not feel urgency to



People stand in front of an electronic stock board showing Japan's Nikkei 225 index at a securities firm Wednesday, May 24, 2023, in Tokyo. (AP)

act unless markets fall sharply enough to force politicians' hands.

A measure of fear among stock investors on Wall Street climbed 9.6% and is near its highest level since March. That's when worries were flaring hottest about the strength of the banking system, as it creaked under the weight of much higher interest rates.

Rates are so high because the Federal Reserve has yanked them up at the fastest pace in decades in hopes of getting high inflation under control. High rates do that by putting the brakes on the entire economy and hurting prices for stocks, bonds and other investments. That has many investors bracing for a recession even if Congress reaches a deal on the debt limit.

Traders are hopeful just one more hike may be on the way this summer, if any at all. The Fed may offer more clues on its intentions after it releases the minutes from its last policy meeting in the afternoon.

Helping to limit Wall Street's losses were several companies that reported stronger results for the start of the year than analyst expected.

demand to rollback spending to 2022 levels, but say that next year's government spending must be less than it is now. But the White House instead is offering to freeze spending at current 2023 numbers.

Agreement on that topline spending level is vital. It would enable McCarthy to deliver spending restraint for conservatives while not being so severe that it would chase off the Democratic votes that would

be needed in the divided Congress to pass any bill.

"We are holding firm to the speaker's red line," said a top Republican negotiator, Rep. Garret Graves of Louisiana. "Which is that we will not do a deal unless it spends less money than we're spending this year."

With talks perhaps done for the day, Graves said there were still "significant gaps" between his side and the White House.

Economic anxiety rising

Retirees & social service groups among those making default contingency plans

WASHINGTON, May 24, (AP): Phoenix retiree Sandra Cole has been watching the news about they debt limit negotiations in Washington with dismay - and limiting her air conditioning use to save money just in case her monthly Social Security check is

delayed due to a default.

For her, air conditioning is no small thing in a city where the average daily high hits 94 degrees in May. If the government can't make good on its obligations, she says, "I would be devastated."

"What I'm worried about is food banks and electricity here because you know, we've had deaths with seniors because of the heat," says Cole.

Politicians in Washington may be offering assurance that the government will figure out a way to avert default, but around the country, economic anxiety is rising and some people already are adjusting their routines.

Government beneficiaries, social service groups that receive state and federal subsidies and millions more across the country are contemplating the possibility of massive and immediate cuts if the U.S. were to default on its financial obligations.

Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen warned last week that a default would destroy jobs and businesses, and leave millions of families who rely on federal government payments to "likely go unpaid," including Social Security beneficiaries, veterans and military families.

"A default could cause widespread suffering as Americans lose the income that they need to get by," she said.

The number of people potentially impacted is huge. According to the Census Bureau, in 2020 roughly 35% of U.S. households included someone receiving Social Security benefits, 36% received Medicaid benefits and more than 13% of the total population received food stamps.

A recent poll by The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research found that 66% of Americans said they're very or extremely concerned about the impact on the U.S. economy if the debt limit is not raised and the government defaults, though only 21% said they're following the debate closely.

Robert Gault, 63, who depends on a \$1,900 monthly Social Security disability payment, says an economic default "would make life so real awfully hard on me." The former longtime factory worker said he suffers from chronic back pain caused by degenerating disks in his spine.

Gault, who lives in Bradford, Pennsylvania, near that state's border with New York, said he thinks about the debate - and the stalemate - in Washington a lot.

He hasn't made any drastic changes to the way he lives, but said, "I'm more conscientious of everything and I think about everything I do now."

Negotiations between the president and congressional leaders are down to the wire as they try to break an impasse. GOP lawmakers have been pressing for spending cuts in exchange for agreeing to increase the government's borrowing authority and President Joe Biden wanted a "clean" debt ceiling increase without conditions.

Without a deal, the U.S. could default as soon as June 1, according to Yellen.

Asia

Asian stock markets slid Wednesday as the U.S. government crept closer to a potentially disruptive default on its debt. Shanghai, Tokyo and Hong Kong declined.

The Shanghai Composite Index lost 0.8% to 3,220.44 and the Nikkei 225 in Tokyo fell 0.6% to 30,777.29. The Hang Seng in Hong Kong shed 1.2% to 19,203.05.

The Kospi in Seoul retreated less than 0.1% to 2,566.68 and Sydney's S&P-ASX 200 lost 0.6% to \$77.50.

India's Sensex opened up 0.2% at 62,140.23. New Zealand and Bangkok gained while Singapore and Jakarta declined.

Republicans in Washington are pressing for cuts in aid to the poor and other spending in exchange for agreeing to raise the amount the government can borrow. Biden has proposed a mix of cuts and higher taxes on the richest Americans, which McCarthy has rejected.

Without an agreement, Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen says the government will run out of cash to pay bills on about June 1. That could send shockwaves through the global financial system.

Oil

In energy markets, benchmark U.S. crude rose 82 cents to \$73.73 per barrel in electronic trading on the New York Mercantile Exchange. The contract advanced 86 cents on Tuesday to \$72.91. Brent crude, the price basis for international oil, gained 72 cents to \$77.56 per barrel in London. It added 85 cents the previous session to \$76.84.

Currencies

The dollar declined to 138.26 yen from Tuesday's 138.48 yen. The euro gained to \$1.0787 from \$1.0776.

ASB implements a bold and innovative education plan

In this year of the G20 Summit, the American School of Bombay (ASB), with two campuses in Mumbai, is ready to do its part in empowering young minds to pursue their dreams and enhance the lives of others in India and globally. A small school that punches above its weight class, ASB has led the way in innovation among international schools for years. Its reputation as a warm and accepting community

is well known, a place where the phrase 'friend' is ubiquitous. Dr. Paul Richards completes his first year at ASB as the Head of School and continues the tradition of transformational leadership. After starting his career in Boston, and then leading in London, Saudi Arabia, and Dubai, Dr. Paul says he wouldn't want to be anywhere else than at the American School of Bombay. "With what ASB has learned

coming out of the global pandemic, it now has the urgent and exciting opportunity to come together as a community. The school is currently creating a preferred future for the benefit of its students." - Dr. Paul Richards, Head of School, American School of Bombay. ASB has launched a bold and innovative strategic plan to create the preferred future, with five pillars serving as multi-year goals: (PR Newswire)

most consumers turn to apps to simplify their lives

Mobile app experience company Airship today released new global consumer research at MAU Vegas detailing what motivates consumers to continue to use mobile apps, how they discover them and why and when they are likely to delete them. Airship's global survey of 11,000 consumers reveals "ease of use" (35%), "simplifies my life" (31%) and "saves me time" (27%) as the top three reasons

why they continue to use apps from their favorite brands. While deal-motivated behaviors grew the most as reasons consumers opt in to push notifications from mobile apps, the reasons they continue to use apps are increasingly about higher-level benefits: ease, speed and simplicity. Consumers today are turning to apps for convenience and efficiency. Overall, the top three reasons 11,000 global re-

spondents use apps from their favorite brands are "ease of use" (35%), followed by "simplifies my life" (31%) and "saves me time" (27%). While the economic climate is challenging, and deals, rewards and targeted offers grew the most as opt-in motivators, the reasons consumers continue to use apps are increasingly about higher-level benefits: ease, speed and simplicity. (Business Wire)

The Conversation

Intergrated computing addresses main barriers

New approach to teaching computer science could 'broaden' subject's appeal to students

By Lauren Margulieu Georgia State University

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

Despite growing demand for computer science skills in professional careers and many areas of life, K-12 schools struggle to teach computer science to the next generation.

However, a new approach to computer science education - called integrated computing - addresses the main barriers that schools face when adding computer science education. These barriers include a lack of qualified computer science teachers, a lack of funds and a focus on courses tied to standardized tests.

Integrated computing teaches computer science skills like programming and computer literacy within traditional courses. For example, students can use integrated computing activities to create geometric patterns in math, simulate electromagnetic waves in science and create chatbots for literary characters in language arts.

As a professor of learning technologies, I have been designing integrated computing activities for K-12 students for the past five years. I work with faculty and students in teacher training programs to create and test integrated computing activities across all academic subjects.

In my research, I have found that integrated computing solves three major

hurdles to teaching computer science education in K-12 schools.

Fitting a new academic discipline into an already crowded curriculum can be a challenge. Integrated computing allows computer science education to become part of learning in other classes, the way reading skills are also used in science, math and language arts classes.

Teacher knowledge is another difficulty when it comes to teaching computer science in K-12 schools. While people who specialize in computer science are often recruited to more lucrative careers than teaching, integrated computing develops all teachers' computer science knowledge. Teachers do not need to become computer science experts to teach computer literacy and programming skills to their students.

Surprising

In fact, the most surprising result of my research is how quickly teachers learn to teach integrated computing activities. In about two hours, teachers can use a pre-made computer science lesson in their classrooms. In the future, I will teach them to use artificial intelligence to create their own lessons for their students. For example, a science teacher recently asked me how she could create a data analysis activity for her class. AI tools would allow her to quickly design the technical aspects of this activity.

And finally, integrated computing also addresses students' reluctance to take elective computer science classes when they have little knowledge of computer science. In 2022, over half of U.S. public high schools offered computer sci-

ence, but just 6% of students took these classes. Students who do take computer science in high school typically have had early exposure to computer science. Integrated computing can give all students early exposure to computer science, which I believe will increase the number of students who take computer science courses later in school.

Early exposure to computer science in school is especially important for students from groups underrepresented in computer science. A 2022 report from Code.org, a nonprofit that advocates for more computer science education in K-12 schools, found that students who are Latino, female or from low-income or rural areas are less likely to be enrolled in foundational computer science courses.

Teachers who want to build their computer science knowledge and apply it to their classroom can try these free self-paced, online integrated computing courses that I developed, and which are tied to micro-credentials. Also, this sortable list of integrated computing activities provides free lesson plans. The activities require only a computer - no prior knowledge is needed, and young learners can complete them outside of class, too.

Integrated computing provides a path to increase computer literacy for all K-12 students. As technology advances at an increasing rate, I believe schools must take care that our young people do not fall behind.

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The Conversation

Ready for a digital euro? At 25, European Central Bank 'preps' for future of money

Some smaller economies have set the ball rolling

FRANKFURT, Germany, May 24, (AP): As it marks its 25th anniversary Wednesday, the European Central Bank is readying a proposed design for a digital version of the euro, responding to pressure from developing technology that could change how money is used over the bank's next decades.

ECB President Christine Lagarde says a digital euro could offer a way for people to buy things without depending on payment service providers controlled by non-European companies. Those could include Mastercard, Visa, Apple Pay and Google Pay.

The European Union's executive Commission is expected to come up with proposed legislation on the idea in the next several weeks, ECB officials say, while the central bank will publish a detailed proposal for the design of a digital currency in October.

Central banks worldwide, including the U.S. Federal Reserve, are cautiously studying digital currencies as cash increasingly gives way to electronic payments. Some smaller economies such as Nigeria, the Bahamas and Jamaica already have introduced digital currencies, while China is holding trial runs.

Emergence

Central banks also are responding to the emergence of cryptocurrencies, which have raised concerns that someday people could turn to rival forms of digital money that would undercut national currencies.

Digital currency backed by a central bank would be a safe and stable means of payment - unlike volatile crypto, whose price crashes over the past year and collapses of exchanges like FTX have spurred calls for regulation. The EU became a global leader by giving final approval last week to rules for the free-wheeling crypto sector.

As Europe considers its own central bank-based digital currency, the biggest question is: How would it improve on what's already available for consumers?

"Nobody is able to answer this question, not even the ECB," said Philipp Sandner, head of the Blockchain Center at the Frankfurt School of Finance & Management.

"As the user I ask myself, 'What is the benefit, why do we need another solution?'" he said.

Apple Pay, for instance, allows people to buy their morning coffee - and anything else - by tapping twice on their phones, a seamless experience the digital euro would have to match.

"You have to be at least as good as Apple Pay and Mastercard, which is difficult, otherwise people will not use it," he said.

The goal of a digital euro would be Europe's autonomy and resilience when it comes to the largely unseen but critical systems that move money from consumers to merchants through



The European Central Bank (ECB) is pictured in Frankfurt, Germany, Tuesday, May 23, 2023. The ECB celebrates its founding date 25 years ago on Wednesday. (AP)

Google Cloud, Quickplay team up to spur Middle East streaming success

DOHA, Qatar, May 24, (PR Newswire): In the latest expansion of their global collaboration, Quickplay today announced that it is collaborating with Google Cloud to drive new digital transformation opportunities for content providers, streaming providers and broadcasters in the Middle East.

The two companies are building on a shared history of cloud innovation to bring to market regionally optimized solutions that leverage Google Cloud's new Middle East regional data center in Qatar. The solutions are designed to help streaming providers design, deploy and scale new cloud-native platforms with the flexibility of personalization capabilities to enable rapid, cost-effective time to market and powerful subscriber engagement and monetization.

"As we work with the Qatar Ministry of Communications and Information Technology to unleash the power of Google Cloud, it is important

banks and payment services providers, Lagarde said in a recent panel discussion.

She drew an analogy to Europe's previous reliance on Russian oil and natural gas, which led to an energy crisis when the invasion of Ukraine disrupted that supply.

"It's very unhealthy to rely on one single source of energy, it's very unhealthy to rely on one single source of payment," she said.

A digital euro also could help people who don't have bank accounts, the thinking goes, because they could hold

that we surround ourselves with trusted partners who can maximize the impact of our platform," said Kip Schauer, Global Head of Media & Entertainment, Gaming Partnerships, Google Cloud. "Quickplay has proven repeatedly that they have the vision, the commitment, and the technical expertise to help drive positive business and market results for the media industry in the Middle East and beyond."

Quickplay's research and development team has been a leader in using Google Cloud products and tools to enable delivery of personalized FAST services, real-time data and recommendations, and low latency video. Joint customers include PLDT and Signal in the Philippines, aha in India, YES Network and MSG Networks in North America, and others.

"In deployment scenarios around the world our close, collaborative relationship with Google Cloud has helped

our customers achieve their objectives," said Paul Pastor, Chief Business Officer for Quickplay. "We look forward to helping Google Cloud make the most of the new opportunities that are being generated by its enhanced presence in the Middle East."

Quickplay is leading cloud transformations of OTT and in-home experiences for pay-TV, telcos, and MVPDs. The company's cloud-native platform leverages a transformative open architecture for unparalleled performance in delivering premium video, handling complex use cases, and scaling to millions of viewers. Founded by a team that has built and operated dozens of Tier 1 OTT services worldwide, Quickplay is powering immersive sports, live experiences and personalized entertainment on any screen. The company is headquartered in Toronto and has additional locations in Los Angeles, San Diego and Chennai, India. For more information, visit quickplay.com.

for a standard app, along with use through existing online banking apps. It wouldn't replace cash but add another way to hold euros. Even after the proposal is made, there would be three years of testing. A decision to actually introduce the digital euro would only come after that and require EU approval.

Fabio Panetta, a member of the ECB's executive board and head of the digital euro task force, says it wouldn't replace cash and people would have the option, not the requirement, to use it.

The move toward increased digitalization comes as the ECB marks 25 years since its creation on June 1, 1998, seven months ahead of the introduction of the euro currency. An anniversary ceremony with German Chancellor Olaf Scholz and former ECB Presidents Mario Draghi and Jean-Claude Trichet is planned Wednesday at the bank's Frankfurt headquarters.

The ECB envisions a digital euro for retail use that could even be transferred offline using a digital wallet on people's phones. Early designs call

change, yet their public statements continued to sow doubts about what was known, and they failed to warn their customers, investors and the public about the dangers posed by their products.

Were it not for this deception, the lawsuit says, the city and county would not be facing mounting costs of abating the damage from climate change.

Importantly, the complaint is based on state - not federal - law. It alleges that the defendants have violated established common law rules long recognized by the courts involving nuisance, failure to warn and trespass.

The city and county want the companies to help fund climate adaptation measures - everything from building seawalls and raising buildings to buying flood-prone properties and restoring beaches and dunes.

A boost from the US Supreme Court

More than two dozen cities, states suing 'Big Oil' over climate change

Patrick Parenteau, Vermont Law & Graduate School and John Dernbach, Widener University

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

Honolulu has lost more than 5 miles of its famous beaches to sea level rise and storm surges. Sunny-day flooding during high tides makes many city roads impassable, and water mains for the public drinking water system are corroding from saltwater because of sea level rise.

The damage has left the city and county spending millions of dollars on repairs and infrastructure to try to adapt to the rising risks.

Future costs will almost certainly be higher. More than US\$19 billion in property value, at today's dollars, is at risk by 2100 from projected sea level rise, driven by greenhouse gas emissions largely from the burning of fossil fuels. Elsewhere in Honolulu County, which covers all of Oahu, many coastal communities will be cut off or uninhabitable.

Unwilling to have their taxpayers bear the full brunt of these costs, the city and county sued Sunoco LP, Exxon Mobil Corp. and other big oil companies in 2020.

Their case - one of more than two dozen involving U.S. cities, counties and states suing the oil industry over climate change - just got a boost from the U.S. Supreme Court. That has significantly increased their odds of succeeding.

At stake in all of these cases is who pays for the staggering cost of a changing climate. Local and state governments that are suing want to hold the major oil companies responsible for the costs of responding to disasters that scientists are increasingly able to attribute to climate disruption and tie back to the fossil fuel industry. Several of the plaintiffs accuse the companies of lying to the public about their products' risks in violation of state or local consumer protection laws that prohibit false advertising.

The governments in the Honolulu case allege that the oil companies "are directly responsible" for a substantial rise in carbon dioxide emissions that have been driving climate change. They say the companies should contribute their fair share to defray some of the costs.

The gist of Honolulu's complaint is that the big oil companies have known for decades that their products cause climate

change. The governments in the Honolulu case allege that the oil companies "are directly responsible" for a substantial rise in carbon dioxide emissions that have been driving climate change. They say the companies should contribute their fair share to defray some of the costs.

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Ahli United Bank congratulates 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 24 May 2023 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: Ahmed Ramzy Mahmoud Sehsah, Abdulaziz A R Abu-zoor, Nashwah Bahjat Alkhayer, Maha Saud Abdulaziz Alsallal, Hiyam Shala, Hisham Youssef Ahmed Zarbul, Manal

Jamaan Hamdan Zwaed Bin Salama, Nawal Mohammad Ali Alfailakawi, Khalid Faisal Mohammad Alkandari, Abdullah Sanat Shamroukh Alotaibi.

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.

Al Hassad flyer

The Conversation

A computer scientist explains the carbon footprint of ChatGPT

Is generative AI bad for the environment?

By Kate Saenko
Boston University

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

Generative AI is the hot new technology behind chatbots and image generators. But how hot is it making the planet?

As an AI researcher, I often worry about the energy costs of building artificial intelligence models. The more powerful the AI, the more energy it takes. What does the emergence of increasingly more powerful generative AI models mean for society's future carbon footprint?

"Generative" refers to the ability of an AI algorithm to produce complex data. The alternative is "discriminative" AI, which chooses between a fixed number of options and produces just a single number. An example of a discriminative output is choosing whether to approve a loan application.

Generative AI can create much more complex outputs, such as a sentence, a paragraph, an image or even a short video. It has long been used in applications like smart speakers to generate audio responses, or in autocompleting to suggest a search query. However, it only recently gained the ability to generate humanlike language and realistic photos.

The exact energy cost of a single AI model is difficult to estimate, and includes the energy used to manufacture the computing equipment, create the model and

use the model in production. In 2019, researchers found that creating a generative AI model called BERT with 110 million parameters consumed the energy of a round-trip transcontinental flight for one person. The number of parameters refers to the size of the model, with larger models generally being more skilled. Researchers estimated that creating the much larger GPT-3, which has 175 billion parameters, consumed 1,287 megawatt hours of electricity and generated 552 tons of carbon dioxide equivalent, the equivalent of 123 gasoline-powered passenger vehicles driven for one year. And that's just for getting the model ready to launch, before any consumers start using it.

Size is not the only predictor of carbon emissions. The open-access BLOOM model, developed by the BigScience project in France, is similar in size to GPT-3 but has a much lower carbon footprint, consuming 433 MWh of electricity in generating 30 tons of CO₂e. A study by Google found that for the same size, using a more efficient model architecture and processor and a greener data center can reduce the carbon footprint by 100 to 1,000 times.

Larger models do use more energy during their deployment. There is limited data on the carbon footprint of a single generative AI query, but some industry figures estimate it to be four to five times higher than that of a search engine query. As chatbots and image generators become more popular, and as Google and Microsoft incorporate AI language models into their search engines, the number of queries they receive each day could grow exponentially.

A few years ago, not many people outside of research labs were using models like BERT or GPT. That changed on Nov. 30, 2022, when OpenAI released Chat-

GPT. According to the latest available data, ChatGPT had over 1.5 billion visits in March 2023. Microsoft incorporated ChatGPT into its search engine, Bing, and made it available to everyone on May 4, 2023. If chatbots become as popular as search engines, the energy costs of deploying the AIs could really add up. But AI assistants have many more uses than just search, such as writing documents, solving math problems and creating marketing campaigns.

Another problem is that AI models need to be continually updated. For example, ChatGPT was only trained on data from up to 2021, so it does not know about anything that happened since then. The carbon footprint of creating ChatGPT isn't public information, but it is likely much higher than that of GPT-3. If it had to be recreated on a regular basis to update its knowledge, the energy costs would grow even larger.

One upside is that asking a chatbot can be a more direct way to get information than using a search engine. Instead of getting a page full of links, you get a direct answer as you would from a human, assuming issues of accuracy are mitigated. Getting to the information quicker could potentially offset the increased energy use compared to a search engine.

The future is hard to predict, but large generative AI models are here to stay, and people will probably increasingly turn to them for information. For example, if a student needs help solving a math problem now, they ask a tutor or a friend, or consult a textbook. In the future, they will probably ask a chatbot. The same goes for other expert knowledge such as legal advice or medical expertise.

While a single large AI model is not going to ruin the environment, if a thou-

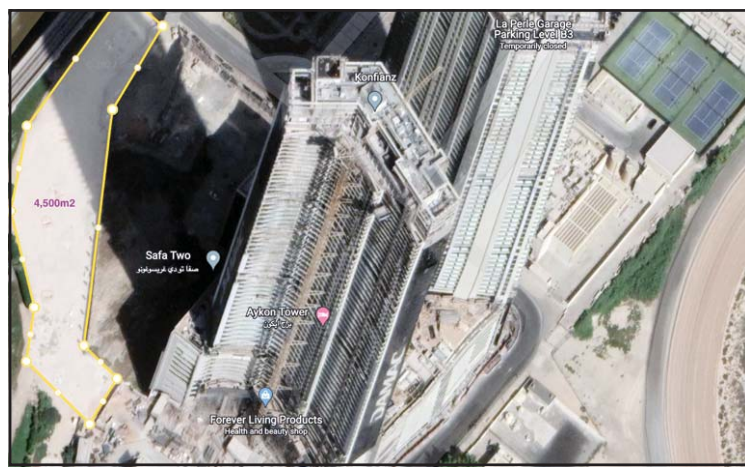
China Railway 18th Bureau awarded contract for iconic Al Habtoor Tower



View-1



A screen-shot of the tower



A screen-shot of the tower

Bauer hired as Piling Contractor

DUBAI, May 24: The Al Habtoor Group announced the appointment of China Railway 18th Bureau Group Ltd as the main contractor for its newest landmark development, the Al Habtoor Tower in the heart of Dubai.

The project, which is being built at the Al Habtoor City using innovative, creative, and selective construction techniques, is valued at AED 3.7bn.

Khalaf Ahmad Al Habtoor, Founding Chairman of Al Habtoor Group, commented: "It gives me great pleasure to welcome China Railway 18th Bureau Group as the main contractor for the Al Habtoor Tower."

"Knowing the complexity of taking on such a project, which requires a progressive and unique approach to construction, selecting the right contractors for the construction works was crucial for my team and me, as our goal is to complete Al Habtoor Tower at the highest quality in record time."

"The tender inquiry was published countrywide. We initially accepted 10 bidders and shortlisted three key bidders in an extensive process. We accepted the documents of European, Local, Indian, Chinese, and Middle Eastern companies."

"China Railway 18th Bureau Group was selected based on a list of criteria, mainly for; a) Meeting the projected target for completion of 36 months, b) Their full technical compliance for state-of-the-art quality, and c) their successful track record in mega pro-

jects."

A multi-billion Dirhams development, Al Habtoor Tower is the largest residential building in the world with ultra-luxurious living facilities, comprising 1,701 keys over a built-up area of 3,517,313 square feet and 81 floors (G+7+73) above ground.

Adding on the non-conventional construction method, Al Habtoor said: "This is a project of many challenging firsts, following a structural system used for the first time in Dubai and validated by a detailed engineering peer review from world-renowned experts; Structural San Francisco, Imperial College London and Terrasol Paris. We are choosing to save the current structure instead of demolishing it and building afresh at a lower cost, which would have meant more than 3,000 trucks of wasted concrete and sand."

"That is why we have opted for the innovative sustainable approach, using a top-down construction method whereby we have employed very heavy equipment from Bauer (the piling contractors), ranging from 60 to 100 tons each, to manoeuvre on top of the current building, reutilizing, and reusing the existing structure."

"Once completed, our carbon footprint will be less than half of any similar construction, where building 1 sqm of equivalent projects is usually 1 ton of CO₂, using our method, our CO₂ footprint will be less than 0.5 ton per sqm. Environmental experts will follow the Al Habtoor Tower construction journey closely as we work towards achieving LEED Platinum Certification (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) from the highest authority in green building rating systems worldwide."

Following their engagement as the main contractor, Mr Zon Lin, General Manager of China Railway 18th Bureau Group Ltd., wrote to Khalaf Al Habtoor saying: "On behalf of China Railway 18th Bureau Group, I wish to take this golden opportunity to express our heartfelt gratitude and joy to you in receiving the LOA for the most prestigious Project - Al Habtoor Tower, which is a clear reflection of your trust and immense confidence in us to deliver the Project in accordance with your deepest satisfaction. With your blessing, we are fully committed to executing and especially delivering the Project within our full capabilities and abilities. You will not be disappointed whatsoever with our promises. We will 'definitely walk the talk'."

"As we embark on this challenging, prestigious project, we assure you that together we will forge a formidable team with all stakeholders to overcome all the arduous and challenging tasks and create a victorious and win-win situation for the project. We look forward to a long-term successful and beautiful relationship with your prestigious company."

Speaking on the Al Habtoor Tower, Bauer the piling contractor, said: "We at Bauer are delighted to be engaged by Al Habtoor Group for this prestigious development. Bauer has developed a unique foundation solution with the Client, Project Consulting Engineers and Architects to enable the construction of the superstructure above an existing three-level deep basement. The foundation solution utilizes deep barrette foundation elements capable of carrying the substantial building loads."

"One of the unique challenges involves the construction and installation

of the foundation system from the top of an existing basement structure. Innovative engineering and design solutions and construction methods have been developed to meet this unique project need. The works at site are well underway with our specialist machine 'Bauer MC96 BC40 Cutter' in action constructing barrette foundation elements to depths greater than 90m."

The majestic Al Habtoor City is home to Dubai's most luxurious lifestyle destinations, which was officially launched in 2016, with its three internationally branded hotels - The Habtoor Palace, LXR Hotels & Resorts, the V Hotel, Curio Collection by Hilton, and the Hilton Dubai Al Habtoor City, La Perle - Dubai's #1 show, a world-class unique theatrical experience in a specifically designed state-of-the-art aqua theatre, and three deluxe residential towers - Noora, Amna and Meera.

About Al Habtoor Group:
Al Habtoor Group LLC, headquartered in the United Arab Emirates (UAE), is one of the region's largest and most respected conglomerates. Founded in 1970 by Khalaf Ahmad Al Habtoor, the Group operates in the UAE and international markets, proudly raising the Emirati flag in cities around the world, including London, Vienna, Budapest, Beirut and Springfield, Illinois. The Group employs thousands of experienced and highly qualified professionals. The name Al Habtoor Group became synonymous with dynamic growth, spurred by an unwavering commitment to excellence with a diverse portfolio of successful businesses operating in key sectors of the economy (hospitality, automotive, real estate, education, insurance and publishing). www.habtoor.com

The Conversation

People prioritize physical proximity

Travelers will refuse an upgrade to sit near a loved one: research

By Ximena Garcia-Rada, Texas A&M University; Michael Norton, Harvard University, and Rebecca K. Ratner, University of Maryland

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

The Research Brief is a short take about interesting academic work.

People will often sacrifice a better experience and opt for one that's less enjoyable if it means they can do it alongside a loved one - whether that's a romantic partner, close friend or relative. That's the main finding of our research published in the Journal of Consumer Psychology in April 2023.

For example, when taking a flight, two friends might decide to sit in adjacent seats in coach rather than accept a free upgrade to nonadjacent seats in first class. Failing to choose togetherness can have consequences, as in the "Seinfeld" episode in which Elaine suffers the indignities of economy class, leading to rage against Jerry after he chooses to accept an upgrade.

We conducted five studies in a variety of settings and featuring different social bonds, including friendships and romantic relationships. In one study, just over half of people chose two adjacent seats far from the stage over two non-adjacent seats closer to the stage when imagining they were attending a Cirque du Soleil performance with a close friend, compared with only about one-third who chose the adjacent seats when imagining attending with an acquaintance.

In another study, we asked students whether they wanted to eat one chocolate with another person - either a new friend or a stranger - or two chocolates alone. Half the people chose the shared experience - but only if the other person was a friend. Fewer people - 38% - opted for the shared experience if the other person was a stranger.

One reason people prioritize physical proximity with close partners is because they want to create shared memories. Import-

tantly, people believe that physical distance can disrupt the creation of shared memories, and so they forgo enjoyable experiences apart from their loved one.

This also matters for companies seeking to improve customer experience, such as an airline offering free upgrades or shorter wait times. Our findings suggest that, for example, consumers traveling with a companion might not take advantage of services like TSA PreCheck, an airline VIP lounge or a free upgrade if it is available only for themselves. It also helps explain why consumers do not like when airlines split up families in their seat assignments.

However, we also tested a few initiatives marketers can use to encourage people to choose a higher-quality experience that requires them to be apart from their companion. In another experiment, we described a train ride as either a fun part of an excursion or as a practical way to reach a final destination. More participants accepted a free upgrade - even though it required sitting apart from their romantic partner - when they perceived the train ride as utilitarian. That's because they cared less about creating shared memories during the experience.

We still don't know how this preference affects relationship quality.

For example, when can time apart from your partner actually strengthen the relationship? And how should couples split their time between lower-quality activities done together and higher-quality activities done alone? One option for separate activities, for example, might be when one partner's desired activity does not interest the other.

Also, given that people believe physical proximity is a prerequisite for creating shared memories, how can partners who live in different places also cultivate shared memories? This question is especially important in light of how COVID-19 has enabled more people to work and study remotely.

Truecaller launches AI-powered assistant to filter out scam calls

SYDNEY, May 24. (BUSINESS WIRE): Truecaller, the world's leading global communications platform, has launched Truecaller Assistant in Australia. The Assistant feature is an innovation that leverages machine learning to create the most helpful call-screening solution available on the planet.

This press release features multimedia. View the full release here: <https://www.businesswire.com/news/home/20230523006039/en/>

Truecaller Launches AI-powered Assistant (Photo: Business Wire)

Truecaller Assistant is a customizable, interactive, digital receptionist that empowers users to answer important calls and avoid unwanted ones. Assistant responds within a second and understands caller requests with >90% accuracy. You can see a live transcrip-

tion of what the caller is saying, so you know who they are and why they're calling. Then you can decide if you want to take over the call, mark it as spam, or ask the caller for more information with the tap of a button.

"Assistant is a game changer for the global market because it does so much more than simply block robocalls. Until now, you had to make a split-second decision as to whether you think a call is important," said "Assistant focuses on what the caller is saying to filter out the robocalls and spam so you know whether the call is worth your time or not."

Truecaller Assistant is available on a free 14-day trial, after which subscribers can add Assistant as part of Truecaller Premium. The service is being launched in a phased manner in Australia today, with more markets and languages soon to follow.

ABK announces Alfouz weekly draw winner

Al Ahli Bank of Kuwait (ABK) announced Amal Hamed Al Farsi as the winner of KD10,000 in the Alfouz weekly draw. The winner was announced on Monday, 22 May 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, 29 May 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.

Al Ahli Bank of Kuwait (ABK) is a retail and commercial bank located in Kuwait City, founded in 1967. The services are provided via 31 branches in Kuwait, 2 branches in the United Arab Emirates (Abu Dhabi and Dubai) and 43 branches in Egypt. In 2016 ABK was the 10th on the List of the 50 safest banks in the Middle East by the Global Finance magazine.

Together with Emirates, the largest airline in the Middle East, they offer to passengers various types of Visa credit and prepaid cards.



Alfouz draw



Hamad Al-Marzouq, Abdulwahab Al-Rushood and the executive management with a number of honorees.

Achieving highest Q1 profits places great responsibilities on KFH to sustain excellence: Al Marzouq

KFH celebrates Q1 Qadha distinguished employees

KUWAIT CITY, May 24: In a special honoring ceremony held at Arraya Ballroom, Kuwait Finance House (KFH) celebrated its distinguished employees as part of the quarterly (Qadha) program with the attendance of Chairman, Hamad Abdulmohsen Al Marzouq and the Executive Management represented by the Acting Group CEO, Abdulwahab Iesa Al Rushood, heads of departments and senior officials from the Bank.

Speaking on this occasion, KFH Chairman, Hamad Abdulmohsen Al Marzouq expressed his gratitude to all Qadha honorees who have shown outstanding performance enabling them to be recognized in Qadha's first quarter ceremony. He emphasized the importance of supporting employees and recognizing their efforts as a driver for further success, which is for the benefit of KFH, its customers and shareholders.

"KFH has become, by the grace of Allah, the biggest bank

in Kuwait, and has achieved the biggest quarterly financial results in its history, recording the biggest quarterly profits at the level of Kuwaiti banks. This entails great responsibilities on KFH to sustain excellence and leadership. It also pushes us to go the extra mile for meeting customers' and shareholders' aspirations and strengthening KFH's leadership at various levels," he continued.

Al Marzouq concluded his speech by congratulating the honorees for earning this recognition while highlighting the valuable influence of each dedicated employee at KFH. He voiced hope for accomplishing more in the coming phase to achieve the Group's strategic goals while enhancing the banking and financial services, products and solutions in accordance with the best world-class banking standards.

Abdulwahab Al Rushood

KFH Acting Group CEO, Abdulwahab Iesa Al Rushood

congratulated Qadha honorees, affirming that the success of KFH, and any organization, depends on the loyalty and dedication of employees to achieve the highest levels of quality and innovation in customer service and meet the objectives of the institution.

He stated that the Executive Management is keen on encouraging and recognizing unique and young talents, adding that Qadha initiative is the umbrella for all KFH recognition programs which reflects positively on employee engagement indices and contributes to boosting the efforts of employees in various departments.

Al Rushood commended the hard work of employees and hoped for more successes and prosperity for KFH.

Zeyad AlOmar

Group Chief Human Resources Officer at KFH, Zeyad Abdullah AlOmar expressed his trust that the outstanding

performance of employees, in terms of their accountability and loyalty to the Bank and its customers, would remain at all levels, stressing that the efforts to support employees would continue as they are the instrumental wealth of the Bank.

AlOmar noted that Qadha recognition program, launched in 2022 by KFH, has been prepared in an optimal manner and according to the best international practices to reward the outstanding performance of employees, adding that over 900 employees were honored under Qadha since its launch.

He pointed out that Qadha is the first of its kind at the banking sector level in Kuwait. The voting measure is based on accurate performance evaluation while considering the professional aspects. The program covers all departments and includes monthly, quarterly, and yearly assessments.



Zain's awards

Most engaged organization

Zain wins 2 awards in Women's Empowerment & Sustainability

KUWAIT CITY, May 24: Zain, a leading provider of innovative technologies and digital lifestyle communications operating in seven markets across the Middle East and Africa, continues to be recognized for its pioneering endeavors in the areas of Sustainability and Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI).

Zain was presented with the Leadership in Sustainability Award 2023; and Championship Award in Women Empowerment 2023 at the annual Global Good Governance Awards recently held in Dubai and organized by Cambridge IFA, a UK-based think tank. The Awards celebrate individuals, governments, public and private sector institutions, and NGOs that exhibit governance and sustainability as their strategic priority.

Zain remains one of the most active organizations in the region with respect to delivering meaningful connectivity through its Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) initiatives, with the company playing a crucial role in empowering the markets in which it operates to reap the benefits of digital transformation for the benefit of the communities it serves and beyond.

The recognition of these prestigious awards is testament not only to how much Zain believes in its purpose, but how relentless the company is in driving systemic change and providing meaningful connectivity to the communities it serves. Zain is among the most engaged organizations across the globe with respect to ensuring its operations are a positive, inclusive force for good, with a commitment to continuing to instill these principles at the heart of the organization.

Sustainability

Recently, Zain joined the United Nations (UN) Global Compact initiative, a voluntary leadership platform for the development, implementation, and disclosure of responsible business practices. Annually, the company publishes its sustainability report,

where it details the progress and strategic efforts undertaken across Zain's footprint as it continues to execute on its five-year, 2025 Corporate Sustainability strategy.

During the course of 2022, Zain cemented the four pillars of its sustainability strategy through a comprehensive engagement process with various stakeholders. This extended to:

1. Climate Change: Decarbonize the business and transition towards Net-Zero by 2050.
2. Operate Responsibly: Embed ESG principles across the entire value chain.
3. Inclusion: Reduce the digital gap.
4. Generation Youth: Build resilience across Zain communities by targeting 16 million children and youth.

Women Empowerment (WE)

Within the WE gender initiatives under Zain's DEI activities, the company has been working on narrowing the gender divide in leadership roles at the company. With the development of a year-long middle management succession program, Zain is looking forward to drawing closer to 25% of its leadership consisting of women by 2025, against a background of just 14.5% when the program was first introduced in late 2017.

Zain firmly believes that the talent, creativity, and passion women bring to their roles is undeniable, and believes developing a WE program to initiate and measure actual progress achieved in this respect over time will reap benefits for the organization as a whole. Notably, Zain is focusing on addressing headcount gaps in technical and revenue-generating divisions through the development of women from STEM backgrounds.

During 2022, women made up 42% of Zain's total recruitment, and the company recently revolutionized its staff-friendly Family Leave Policy clauses, reinforcing its position as one of the most impactful DEI organizations in the region, if not the world.

KUWAIT CITY, May 24: Kuwait International Bank (KIB) announced its preparation to start the subscription process to increase its capital by offering 428,571,429 shares, at a value of KD 60 million, after obtaining the necessary approvals from the relevant regulatory authorities.

The capital increase comes in line with the Bank's strategy to achieve further development and growth, as the Bank will use the proceeds of the capital increase to support the Bank's regulatory capital ratios. In addition, the proceeds will be additional investments in developing its digital infrastructure to provide digital banking services of high quality.

Comprising

The rights issue period will open on Tuesday, May 30th and will last 15 days until June 13th (inclusive), with a price set at 140 fils, comprising of a nominal value of 100 fils and an issuance premium of 40 fils. The Bank has appointed Kamco Investment Company K.S.C.P. (Kamco Invest) as the Issuance Advisor and Subscription Agent. Applications will be received through Kuwait Clearing Company's online subscription platform, www.ipo.com.kw.

Raed Jawad Bukhamseen, Vice Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of the Bank, said: "The capital increase will strengthen KIB's capital base and improve its capital adequacy ratios. The proceeds from the offering will contribute to the Bank's overall growth trajectory and business development activities. In further efforts to cement our position as a leading and competitive financial institution in the



Bukhamseen

Shareholders can subscribe to capital increase online

KIB plans to start 'subscription' to increase its capital by 35 pct

Cutting-edge solutions, offerings

stc opens its new flagship branch in Al Khiran

KUWAIT CITY, May 24: Kuwait Telecommunications Company – stc, a world-class digital leader providing innovative services and platforms to customers, enabling the digital transformation in Kuwait, recently inaugurated its latest state-of-the-art smart flagship branch in Al Khiran. The branch aims to leverage stc's unique solutions and services to provide customers with an exceptional experience. By incorporating digitized and intelligent solutions, the Al Khiran branch aligns seamlessly with stc's corporate strategy, to enhance the lifestyle experience for its customers.

The Al Khiran smart branch is the first telecom branch to open in this area to serve the customers and the nearby areas as well, and it has been designed to offer a seamless, fast, and efficient customer experience that integrates both innovative features and convenient solutions. By visiting the branch, customers will gain access to a wide range of services through stc's expert staff, and interactive screens.

region, we remain committed to implementing our transformational strategy that is in step with the banking sector's continuous development and reflects our future-focused vision."

Bukhamseen added: "As a forward-looking bank, we will use the capital increase to achieve the objectives drawn in our dynamic strategy to enrich customers' experiences by providing innovative, next-level products and services that meet their needs and add real value to their lifestyles. In addition, we will continue driving innovation in the banking sector by investing in digital technology, which, in turn, would enable us to provide holistic solutions to cope with the rapid changes in the local and regional markets."

Moreover, Bukhamseen said: "We expect the subscription period witnesses strong demand from subscribers in light of the growing confidence of shareholders and customers in the Bank. Accordingly, we decided to offer shareholders the choice of subscribing to the rights issue online via the IPO Kuwait system provided by Kuwait Clearing Company. The flexible and easy-to-use system will allow subscribers to save time and effort, in line with our comprehensive development strategy that aims to provide customers with versatile solutions for all transactions."

The new shares represent 34.98% of the current paid-up capital, bringing the Bank's capital after the completion

Commenting on the opening, Chief Consumer Officer (CCO) of stc, engineer Amer Atoui, said, "We take great pride in launching yet another flagship

branch, meticulously designed to prioritize a customer-centric experience and facilitate access to our cutting-edge products, services, and offers in the rapidly developing Al Khiran area. The opening of the Al Khiran

smart branch also marks a significant milestone in stc's ongoing success journey, demonstrating the Company's dedication to providing innovative solutions to enrich the customer's experience. With the introduction of our new flagship branches, such as the Al Khiran branch, we are committed to providing a streamlined and personalized shopping journey, empowering

customers to manage their accounts, learn more about our offerings and promotions with the support of our expert staff at their convenience."

Atoui added, "Whether it is via our branches, digital platforms, or call center, our unwavering objective of delivering an exceptional experience to our customers remains consistent. This aligns with our corporate strategy, which emphasizes our exclusive offers and promotions, the reinforcement of our 5G network, and the provision of a broad spectrum of solutions at competitive and affordable prices. By engaging with our customers through inventive methods, we are better positioned to understand their lifestyle choices and customize our offerings in a way that brings value to their daily routines and activities."

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



Atoui

Event	Date
Confirmation Date	Wednesday, May 17, 2023
CumDate	Wednesday, May 24, 2023
Ex. Date	Thursday, May 25, 2023
Record Date	Monday, May 29, 2023
Opening Date of Subscription Period	Tuesday, May 30, 2023
Opening Date of Trading of Pre-emption Rights	Tuesday, May 30, 2023
Closing Date of Trading of Pre-emption Rights (inclusive)	Monday, June 5, 2023
Closing Date of Subscription Period (inclusive)	Tuesday, June 13, 2023
Allocation of Public Offering Shares	Within five business days from closing date of subscription period.
Refund of Surplus Subscription Amounts	Within five business days from date of announcing the results of shares allocation.

War veterans find another way to contribute to the fight

2 Ukrainian amputees walk to raise funds for a military hospital

KYIV, Ukraine, May 24, (AP): The task for the Ukrainian war veterans was clear: From different cities, Oleksandr Shevtsov and Serhii Khrapko would walk 120 kilometers (75 miles) and meet somewhere in the middle in honor of their comrades wounded in Russia's war against their homeland.

Their walk was shared on social media and they started collecting donations to raise funds to supply medical equipment to Ukraine's main military hospital. Their walk was also an inspiration for many across the country - both the men were severely wounded in Russia's last major war with Ukraine in 2014 and had to have limbs amputated.

Unable to participate in the current war, the men found another way to contribute to the fight.

"I got a call from my brother in arms, Serhii Khrapko. We've known each other for a long time. He said: 'Sania, our hospital needs aid,'" said Shevtsov. Sania is his nickname. "This is truly our dear hospital, the one that saved our lives. It saved my right leg," he said.

"This is how we can help our brothers and sisters in arms, and in some way our country. Because our country is really fighting right now. We are all fighting in the ways we can."

Khrapko, missing an arm and running with one prosthetic leg, left Kyiv on May 15 at 3:05 p.m. Shevtsov, who has a prosthetic leg, had begun the race from Zhytomyr three hours earlier. Five days later they met on the road, having walked a total of 165,156 steps toward each other over five days.

They raised 3.1 million hryvnias (\$84,000), just short of the 500,000 hryvnias (\$14,000) needed to purchase a new gastroscope for Ukraine's National Military Medical Clinical Center.

Shevtsov, 38, was called up for military service nine years ago when pro-Russian separatists seized government buildings in Ukraine's eastern Donbas region and proclaimed the Donetsk People's Republic and Luhansk People's Republic, as independent states, starting the war for the region.

On July 4 that same year, he was struck by shrapnel from an incoming attack in the outskirts of Luhansk, which caused severe damage to a major



Ukrainian war veterans from 2014, Serhii Khrapko, right, and Oleksandr Shevtsov hug each other as they finish a 120-kilometer (75-mile) walk to raise money for medical equipment in honor of their comrades wounded in Russia's war against their homeland, in Yuriv, Zhytomyr region, Ukraine, on Friday, May 19. They raised 3.1 million hryvnias (\$84,000), short just the 500,000 hryvnias (\$14,000) needed to purchase a new gastroscope for Ukraine's National Military Medical Clinical Center. (AP)

artery. Doctors in the hospital worked frantically to revive blood flow to his limbs. Despite their best efforts, surgery did not work and his left leg was amputated.

He was released, with one leg salvaged after six months of surgical inter-

ventions.

But that is when Shevtsov's private battle started.

He could not stand to wear the prosthetic leg provided to him. It stood in his bathroom, by his bed, for a long time, he said. What would other people think? He thought. He believed his friends would pity him, and he couldn't bear the feeling. He was ashamed to even go outside and sit in his wheelchair in the yard, he said, in case anyone would see what became of him.

Rehabilitation

Then, he was sent to Austria to attend rehabilitation training. The experience changed him. He saw how people from all walks of life, from children to the elderly, walked with their prosthetic limbs with confidence.

He told himself, "I will never sit in a wheelchair again."

Before the war kicked off in 2014, Khrapko, 45, was a carpenter, making furniture for kindergartens. At the start of the war he was mobilized and served in the 30th Mechanized Brigade of the army.

In July 2015, a year after Shevtsov was injured, Khrapko was hit during a mortar attack, also in the outskirts of Luhansk.

His injuries were much more severe. The entire left side of Khrapko's body was wounded. He had lost both an arm and a leg when he was admitted to the military hospital. He underwent over 20 operations.

The walk was Khrapko's idea; it occurred to him when an employee at the hospital told them they desperately needed a gastroscope. So he called Shevtsov and told him they needed to raise, "a few million" hryvnias.

"How many exactly is a few?" asked his friend on the other end, according to Shevtsov's account.

"More than 3," his friend answered. "You will walk from Zhytomyr by foot, and I will walk to Kyiv to meet you. That's how we will raise this money."

Khrapko conceded he may have acquired some calluses after the long jaunt. "But that's not a high price," he said. "It's a drop in the ocean compared with what is happening in the east."

Artificial intelligence-powered health coach

AI-enabled app predicts blood sugar response in 32m+ foods

MENLO PARK, Calif, May 24: Precision health tech company, January AI, has released a new generative AI-enabled app that estimates and predicts individuals' glucose response to 32 million foods, even when members are not wearing a continuous glucose monitor (CGM). January AI can help anyone who wants to discover the intricacies of their body and use data to support a healthier lifestyle. And beyond glucose prediction, January AI shifts key behaviors such as intermittent fasting, increasing fiber consumption, aligning calorie intake with activity level, getting post-meal movement, and reducing glucose-spiking foods. January AI is available now at app.january.ai for \$288 for the first month (\$28 monthly membership fee after).

Unlike a normal CGM, January AI predicts how food will impact your blood sugar, beyond only reporting what's happened. "Think of it as a weather report. If it only told you it's already raining, you wouldn't find it very useful," said Noosheen Hashemi, who co-founded January AI in 2016 with Stanford University's Director of Genomics, Dr. Michael Snyder, PhD. "With January AI, members enter foods they are considering eating, and the predictive AI model will tell them what it will do to their blood sugar. It helps them make better decisions about what they're about to put into their body, kind of like having an AI nutritionist in your pocket to let you know whether you should order a smoothie or an arugula salad, and what happens if you take a 25-minute walk afterwards."

The launch of their new app marks January AI as the first and only metabolic health company to harness the power of artificial intelligence to precisely predict individuals' glucose response. Their application of AI advances the growing consumer CGM category, driven by research which shows that man-

Many stroke cases can go undetected

AI tool outperforms man in identifying stroke: study

MUNICH, May 24: Researchers from Denmark have developed a new artificial intelligence (AI) framework to address the number of strokes that go unrecognized by human emergency call handlers. The framework outperformed emergency call handlers in recognizing stroke for both sexes and across all age groups studied, indicating its potential as a supplementary tool for early and precise stroke identification in the future.

The retrospective study, presented at the European Stroke Organisation Conference (ESOC) 2023, drew from the Danish Stroke Registry and a dataset of over 1.5 million calls made to the Copen-

hagen Emergency Medical Services between 2015 and 2020, including over 7000 stroke-related calls. Researchers utilized this data to train an AI framework to transcribe the call audio and then predict the risk of stroke based on the transcribed text.

The results, evaluated on calls from 2021, revealed that the AI framework performed more effectively than emergency call handlers in identifying stroke cases. The AI framework achieved a recall (sensitivity) of 63.0% and a precision (positive predictive value) of 24.9%, which resulted in an F1 score of 35.7. In contrast, emergency call handlers had a recall of 52.7% and precision of 17.1%, resulting in an F1 score of 25.8.

Dr Jonathan Wenstrup, one of the lead authors of the study from Copenhagen University Hospital, commented, "As one of the first points of contact for patients seeking medical assistance, emergency call handlers play a critical role in facilitating early and accurate stroke recognition. Many stroke cases can go undetected at this stage, leading to delays in treatment that can have potentially life-threatening consequences for patients."

Across Europe, stroke is the second leading cause of death and a

major cause of adult disability, affecting over 1 million people each year. As populations continue to grow and age, the number of people living with stroke is projected to increase by 27% between 2017 and 2047 in the EU. Despite this, many strokes can be prevented, and if treated early, the likelihood of a positive outcome can be greatly improved.

"With the implementation of this new, cost-effective supporting tool, we can enhance stroke identification and ensure more patients receive appropriate and timely care, ultimately improving patient outcomes," added Dr Wenstrup.

of their sleep," he continued. January can give you macros, track your fiber intake, and keep you accountable and motivated through gentle nudges and daily reminders that support your goals so you stay on track. The best part is that January makes it easy by offering nutritional values for local restaurants and leveraging voice tracking capabilities - simply tell January what you ate and it does the rest.

How it Works

Get the hardware: Complete a short telehealth evaluation to get your continuous glucose monitor (CGM) prescription. Once approved, January will send your CGM to your door.

Train the AI: Download the January AI app. After one week, January's AI has enough data to establish a baseline of your health and model your physiology. Janu-

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A first-time filmmaker makes a mark in Cannes competition

CANNES, France, May 24, (AP) — Most filmmakers in the Cannes Film Festival's top-rung competition lineup are well-known directors who have been around for decades. One dramatic exception this year is Ramata-Toulaye Sy, a French-Senegalese filmmaker whose first film, "Banel & Adama," landed among the 21 films competing for the Palme d'Or.

"It's only now that I realize that being in competition means being in a competition," Sy said, laughing, in an interview shortly after "Banel & Adama" premiered in Cannes. "Now that we're really in the middle of it, I realize there's a lot of passion going around."

Sy, 36, is the sole first-timer in Cannes' main lineup this year. She is also only the second Black female director to ever compete for the Palme, following Mati Diop, also a French-Senegalese filmmaker, whose "Atlantics" debuted in 2019. For the Paris-raised Sy, it's not a distinction of significance.

"I'm a filmmaker and I really wish we stopped being counted as women, as Black or Arab or Asian," said Sy.

In "Banel & Adama," also the only Africa-set film competing for the Palme this year, Sy crafts a radiant and languorous fable tinged with myth and tragedy.

Banel (Khady Mane) and Adama (Mamadou Diallo) are a deeply in love married couple living in a small village in northern Senegal. In their intimate romantic idyll, they wish to pull away from the local traditions. Adama is set to become village chief but is uninterested in doing so. Banel dreams of living outside the village, in a home buried under a mountain of sand.

Independence

While Banel and Adama slowly work to sweep away the sand, their yearning to live on their own causes angst in the village, especially when a drought arrives that some take as a curse for their independence. Though often opaque, the film stays largely with the psychology of Banel, whose single-mindedness grows increasingly dark.

"I was quite reluctant at the start to acknowledge that Banel is me," says Sy. "Now I have to confess that it's definitely me. I see myself, my questions, my struggle in her journey. How to do become an individual inside a community is really my own question."

Sy began writing "Banel & Adama" in 2014 as a student at La

Fémis, the French film school. Sy, the daughter of Senegalese immigrants, says she was first drawn to literature. Novels like Toni Morrison's "Sula" and Elena Frenate's "My Brilliant Friend" inspired "Banel & Adama."

"The love story was a pretext for to deal with myth," she says. "I wanted to have this kind of mythological female character that you find in Greek tragedy."

Sy co-wrote Atiq Rahimi's "Our Lady of the Nile" and Çağla Zencirci and Guillaume Giovanetti's "Sibel" — both of which played at international festivals. Her first short film, "Astel," was well-received.

But little prepared her for the stresses of shooting in rural Senegal. Along with heat, sandstorms and bouts of illness among the crew, Sy struggled to find her Banel. In the end, she found Mane while walking around.

"We had all the cast except for her. We started five months before shooting and one month before shooting we still didn't have her. One day I was walking down the street and my eyes locked on this girl," says Sy. "It was the way that she looked at me. Her gaze had something a bit wise and a bit crazy."

Film

Variety



Director Wes Anderson, from left, Tom Hanks, Rita Wilson, Robin Dearden and Bryan Cranston pose for photographers upon departing the premiere of the film 'Asteroid City' at the 76th international film festival, Cannes, southern France, Tuesday, May 23. (AP)

Film

Film to give fresh fodder for social-media replicas

Anderson on his '50s-set film 'Asteroid City'

CANNES, France, May 24, (AP) — When Wes Anderson comes down from Paris for the Cannes Film Festival in the south of France, he and his actors don't stay in one of Cannes' luxury hotels but more than an hour down the coast and well outside the frenzy of the festival.

"When we arrived here yesterday, we arrived at a calm, peaceful hotel," Anderson said in an interview. "We're one hour away, but it's a total normal life."

Normal life can mean something different in a Wes Anderson film, and that may be doubly so in his latest, "Asteroid City." It's among Anderson's most charmingly chock-full creations, a much-layered, '50s-set fusion of science fiction, midcentury theater and about a hundred other influences ranging from Looney Tunes to "Bad Day at Black Rock."

"Asteroid City," which Focus Features will release June 16, premiered Tuesday in Cannes. Anderson and his starry cast — including Jason Schwartzman, Scarlett Johansson, Tom Hanks, Steve Carell, Margot Robbie, Bryan Cranston, Jeffrey Wright and Adrien Brody — arrived all together in a coach bus.

The film, which Anderson wrote with Roman Coppola, takes place in a Southwest desert town where a group of characters, some of them nursing an unspoken grief, gather for various reasons, be it a stargazing convention or a broken-down car. But even that story is part of a Russian Doll fiction. It's a play being performed — which, itself, is being filmed for a TV broadcast.

All of which is to say "Asteroid City" is going to give all those Tik Tok videos made in Anderson's distinct, diorama style fresh fodder for new social-media replicas, both human-made and AI-crafted. Anderson spoke about those Tik Toks in an interview the day before "Asteroid City" debuted in Cannes, as well as other questions of style and inspiration in "Asteroid City," a sun-dried and melancholic work of vintage Anderson density.

"I do feel like this might be a movie that benefits from being seen twice," Anderson said. "Brian De Palma liked it the first time and had a much bigger reaction on the second time. But what can you say? You can't make a movie and say, 'I think it's the best everyone sees it twice.'"

AP: It's quite a treat to read in the movie's opening credits "Jeff Goldblum as the alien," before you even know there's an alien. That seems to announce something.

Anderson: We naturally were debating whether this is necessary in the opening credits. I said, "You know, it's a good thing." It's a little foreshadowing. In our sto-

ry, it's not an expansive role. But part of what the movie is to me and to Roman, it has something to do with actors and this strange thing that they do. What does it mean when you give a performance? If somebody has probably written something and then you study it and learn and you have an interpretation. But essentially you take yourself and put it in the movie. And then you take a bunch of people taking themselves and putting themselves in the movie. They have their faces and their voices, and they're more complex than anything than even the AI is going to come up with. The AI has to know them to invent them. They do all these emotional things that are usually a mystery to me. I usually stand back and watch and it's always quite moving.

AP: The alien may signal doom for the characters of "Asteroid City," and there are atomic bomb tests in the area. Is this your version of an apocalyptic movie?

Anderson: The apocalyptic stuff was all there. There probably were no aliens, but there certainly was a strong interest in them. There certainly were atom bombs going off. And there had just been I think we can say the worst war in the history of mankind. There's a certain point where I remember saying to Roman: "I think not only is one of these men suffering some kind of post-traumatic stress that he's totally unaware of, but he's sharing it with his family in a way that's going to end up with Woodstock. But also: They should all be armed. So everybody's got a pistol."

AP: Since maybe "Grand Budapest Hotel," you seem to be adding more and more frames within frames for Russian doll movies of one layer after another. Your first movies, "Bottle Rocket" and "Rushmore" are starting to seem almost realistic by comparison. Do you think your films are getting more elaborate as you get older?

Anderson: Ultimately, every time I make a movie, I'm just trying to figure out what I want to do and then figure out how to make it such that we do what I want. It's usually an emotional choice and it's usually quite mysterious to me how end up with how end up. The most improvisation aspect of making a movie to me is writing it. I have a tendency to obsess over the stage directions, which are not in the movie. With "Grand Budapest" we had multiple layers to it, and "French Dispatch" certainly had that. This one is really split in two but there's more complex layers. We know the main movie is the play. But we also have a behind-the-scenes making of the play. We also have a guy telling us that this is a television broadcast of a hypothetical play that doesn't actually

exist. It's not intention to make it complicated. It's just me doing what I want.

AP: Have you seen all the TikTok videos that have made in your style? They're everywhere.

Anderson: No, I haven't seen it. I've never seen any TikTok, actually. I've not seen the ones related to me or the ones not related to me. And I've not seen any of the AI-type stuff related to me.

AP: You could look at it as a new generation discovering your films.

Anderson: The only reason I don't look at the stuff is because it probably takes the things that I do the same again and again. We're forced to accept when I make a movie, it's got to be made by me. But what I will say is anytime anyone's responding with enthusiasm to these movies I've made over these many years, that's a nice, lucky thing. So I'm happy to have it. But I have a feeling I would just feel like: Gosh, is that what I'm doing? So I protect myself.

AP: People sometimes miss in your films that the characters operating in such precise worlds are deeply flawed and comic. The ornate tableaux may be exact but the people are all imperfect.

Anderson: That's what I would aspire to, anyway. In the end, it's a lot more important to me what it's about. I spend a lot more time writing the movie than doing anything to do with making it. It's the actors who are the center of it all to me. You can't simulate them. Or maybe you can. If you look at the AI, maybe I'll see that you can.

AP: In "Asteroid City," you combined an interest in really disparate ideas — the '50s theater of Sam Shepard with the automat. How does a combination like that happen?

Anderson: We had an idea that we wanted to do a '50s setting and it's got these two sides. One is New York theater. There's a picture of Paul Newman sitting with a T-shirt on and a foot on the chair in the Actors Studio. It was about that world of summer stock, behind the scenes of that, and these towns that were built and never moved into. That becomes the East Coast and the West Coast and the theater and the cinema. There's a series of dichotomies. And one of the central things was we wanted to make a character for Jason Schwartzman that was different from what he's done before. The things that go into making a movie, it eventually becomes too much to even pin down. So many things get added into the mix, which I like. And part of what the movie is about is what you can't control in life. In a way, the invention of a movie is one of those things.

Features

ARABO TIMES

THURSDAY, MAY 25, 2023

LONDON: Bulgarian writer **Georgi Gospodinov** and translator **Angela Rodel** won the International Booker Prize on Tuesday for "Time Shelter," a darkly comic novel about the dangerous appeal of nostalgia.

The book beat five other finalists to the prize, which recognizes fiction from around the world that has been translated into English. The 50,000 pounds (\$62,000) in prize money is divided between author and translator.

"Time Shelter" imagines a clinic that recreates the past, with each floor reproducing a different decade. Intended as a way to help people with dementia unlock their memories, it soon becomes a magnet for people eager to escape the modern world.

French novelist **Leila Slimani**, who chaired the judging panel, said it was "a brilliant novel full of irony and melancholy."

"It's a very profound work that deals with a contemporary question and also a philosophical question: What happens to us when our memories disappear?" she said.

"But it is also a great novel about Europe, a continent in need of a future, where the past is reinvented and where nostalgia can be a poison."

Gospodinov is one of **Bulgaria's** most-translated authors. "Time Shelter" has also won **Italy's** Strega European Prize for literature in Italian translation.

The International Booker Prize is awarded every year to a translated work of fiction published in the **UK or Ireland**. It is run alongside the Booker Prize for English-language fiction, which will be handed out in the autumn.

The prize was set up to boost the profile of fiction in other languages — which accounts for only a small share of books published in **Britain** — and to salute the underappreciated work of literary translators.

Last year's winners were Indian writer **Geetanjali Shree** and American translator **Daisy Rockwell** for "Tomb of Sand." (AP)

INDIANAPOLIS: Two-time Academy Award nominee **Adam Driver**, who will soon be starring as **Enzo Ferrari** in a biopic of the Italian automobile magnate, will serve as the honorary starter for the 107th running of the Indianapolis 500 on Sunday.

Driver perhaps most famously played **Kylo Ren** in the three most recent "Star Wars" films, and he was nominated for Academy Awards for his work in "Blackk-

Klansman" and "Marriage Story." Driver also has received four Primetime Emmy nominations for the comedy-drama "Girls" and his guest appearance on "Saturday Night Live" in 2020.

"Adam is going to experience one of the most exhilarating, powerful and exciting moments in all of sports as he stands atop the flag



Gospodinov



Rodel

stand and waves the green flag to officially start the world's greatest race," Indianapolis Motor Speedway President **J. Douglas Boles** said in making the announcement Tuesday.

Driver grew up in **Mishawaka** in northern **Indiana** before serving in the armed forces with the Marines. He returned from duty and enrolled at the University of

Indianapolis before auditioning for Julliard, where he graduated with a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree.

His other film credits include "House of Gucci" by **Ridley Scott**, **Steven Soderbergh's** "Logan Lucky" and "Silence" by **Martin Scorsese**. He also appeared on and off Broadway in "Look Back in Anger and the

revival of **Lanford Wilson's** "Burn This."

Given its traditional Memorial Day weekend placement, the Indy 500 is steeped in military pageantry. There are enlistment ceremonies, helicopters and other equipment on display, and the playing of "Taps" just before the call to start the engines. (AP)

People & Places

Film

Beautiful collaboration

'You Hurt,' poignant & funny family tale

LOS ANGELES, May 24, (AP): Nicole Holofcener has learned a few things about Hollywood over the years.

That attending the Oscars is more fun as a guest than a nominee. That when someone just says "congratulations" after a film, they didn't like it and don't want to tell you. That getting to work with your idols is one of the best perks of the job. And that your problems don't go away once you put them on screen. But, even so, it can be ridiculous fun to watch great actors play out your plights.

Since her debut, "Walking and Talking," Holofcener has time and time again gone back to Catherine Keener, a forever friend and muse to help bring her thoughts to the screen. Then just over a decade ago,

Julia Louis-Dreyfus entered her orbit. Like everyone, she knew her as Elaine — almost obsessively so, she said. But when they sat down for dinner, she quickly realized Louis-Dreyfus was nothing like her "Seinfeld" character. Instead, she was more like her.

"She was nice," Holofcener said. "We talked about the script. We talked about our kids going away to college. We both teared up. I felt like,



Louis-Dreyfus

'Wow, I'd be lucky to have this woman play a version of me.'"

The film was "Enough Said," in which Louis-Dreyfus plays a woman who inadvertently befriends the ex-wife (Keener) of the man she's dating (James Gandolfini). As soon as it was over, they longed to do it again — though 10 years was a little longer than they'd hoped.

For their new film, "You Hurt My Feelings" (in theaters May 26), Holofcener landed on an even stickier scenario: An author overhears her husband saying that he doesn't like her latest book, sending her into a spiral of doubt about her talent and her relationship.

Relationships

"I found it to be an utterly captivating notion because it's like an infidelity, but it's not an infidelity," Louis-Dreyfus said. "I was considering how devastating it would be, as an artist myself, if my spouse had been absolutely and totally lying to me about his reaction to whatever I was doing. I would be mortified."

It's something Holofcener thinks a lot about in her own relationships. Some years ago, she actually had the experience of dating a man who was crazy about her but didn't seem to like or get her movies.

"I tried really hard to have that not matter," she said. "But in the end, it really mattered."

After watching "Please Give," her 2010 film about a couple who fill their pricey furniture store with bargain estate sale findings, she remembered the first thing he said was that the old woman was really cranky. She was floored that that was the takeaway.

"My movies are so personal to me," she said. "I couldn't understand how someone could get me or get my sense of humor or my values or what's important to me and not enjoy my films. I still don't have an answer to that."

In "You Hurt My Feelings," Beth (Louis-Dreyfus) is a moderately successful author living in New York City with her husband Don (Tobias Menzies), a therapist whose confidence has also been shaken at work, with some memory gaps and unsatisfied patients (Amber Tamblyn and David Cross play a very unhappily married couple). Beth and Don also worry about their son (Owen Teague) who, in their eyes, is floundering in his career and personal life.

Louis-Dreyfus was able to draw on her own 35-year marriage to help paint a believable picture of this couple, who like to share food — even ice cream cones — much to the horror of their son.

"We both felt very strongly that we really wanted to depict a couple who have been married for a long time but were still in love in a believable way, you know? Not saccharine and lovey-dovey," Louis-Dreyfus said. "They're very bonded to one another."

The film contains acute observations about family, marriage, gift-giving, artistic neuroses, mid-life crises and parenting adult children. It's funny and poignant and sometimes gnawingly uncomfortable and has an enviable cast of great actors, including Michaela Watkins as Beth's sister and Arian Moayed as her husband.

Filming in Manhattan with famous people can be its own headache too. Louis-Dreyfus remembered one difficult scene in which her character has just overheard her husband's confession and has to walk out of a sporting goods store looking nauseated and dry heaving on the city sidewalk. Across the street, there were paparazzi taking pictures.

"It made me feel very self-conscious," Louis-Dreyfus said. "Why would I want pictures of myself vomiting on the street?"

But they got through it and on the whole it was a lovely experience. Holofcener even said it's the most fun she's ever had on a film.

Innovate

"Maybe it's getting older," she said. "I'm calmer. A little more confident."

She loved when Louis-Dreyfus would ad-lib and innovate in scenes. One of the biggest laughs in the film is one of those impromptu additions (without spoiling, it involves a conversation about Botox).

"She gets the tone. She always surprises me," Holofcener said. "And her face just kills me."

And both were delighted to get the chance to work with Jeannie Berlin, who plays Beth's mom. It was a particular coup for Holofcener who cites Elaine May's "The Heartbreak Kid" as the movie that made her want to make movies. She even got to meet May, Berlin's mother, at a screening.

May has seen, and loved, the film. And she's not alone. After it premiered at the Sundance Film Festival earlier this year to fantastic reviews and audience reactions, A24 decided to give the film a nationwide launch. This is both exciting and a source of anxiety for Holofcener, used to smaller openings.

Since her first film put her on the map in 1996, Holofcener has always done supplemental work, writing scripts or directing episodes of television, from "Gilmore Girls" to her most recent gig doing two episodes of "Lucky Hank" with Bob Odenkirk. But they're not just paychecks — she would do it more if that were the reason.

Holofcener grew up with a significant connection to the business: Her stepfather, Charles H. Joffe, was a talent manager and producer of most of Woody Allen's films, including "Annie Hall" and "Hannah and Her Sisters." Her mother occasionally worked as a set decorator too.



This image released by The Press Room shows Jodie Comer in character in 'Prima Facie.' (AP)

Stage

Play 'Prima Facie' challenges the legal system

Comer scales heights on Broadway

NEW YORK, May 24, (AP): The script for the play "Prima Facie" didn't languish after landing in Jodie Comer's inbox. Fitting for an urgent call for change, the script demanded action. It would not be denied.

"Sometimes when things present themselves, it's impossible to say no," says the "Killing Eve" actor. "This piece felt very, very clear to me. There was no hesitation that I felt. Sometimes that kind of guttural instinct really doesn't lie."

It didn't matter that the script represented Comer's first stage role. No matter that she'd be alone for some 90 minutes, even asked to move her own props. "I read it within the hour and I was like, 'What have I got to do?'"

Comer leapt in and has found herself winning an Olivier Award in London for her performance and now a Tony nomination for best actress in a play. She's also raising her fist for women in a work that challenges the status quo.

The script was from Suzie Miller, a former criminal defense and human rights lawyer who uses the one-woman show to illustrate how current laws fail terribly when it comes to sexual assault cases.

Comer plays Tessa Enslin, a young, clever barrister who has developed a knack for getting her male clients off the hook in assault cases until she spends a night drinking with another barrister and he rapes her.

Now, instead of donning a fancy wig as a crown prosecutor, she's left shaking in the witness box. Why isn't her evidence presented in a clean, logical package? She must relive her nightmare in court with her motives questioned. And justice may hinge not on the actions, but on whether the perpetrator believed he had consent.

"A woman's experience of sexual assault does not fit the male-defined system of truth. So it cannot be truth, and therefore there cannot be justice," she says in the play.

"Prima Facie" — a legal term meaning "on the face of it" — has already created shock waves in England. A filmed version is now compulsory viewing for new judges, and Miller says a judge who saw her play has redrafted the spoken directions juries are given in sexual assault matters. The play has inspired efforts to change British laws.

Both Comer and Miller get hundreds of messages a week from women telling their own stories of assault, some telling about it for the first time, part of a larger movement fueled by #MeToo.

Comfort

"I'm really trying to savor every second of it because not every piece of work creates this sort of conversation or space," says Comer. "That is the biggest reward of all — when you are a part of a piece like this and people genuinely feel represented. That it is a source of comfort."

To win a Tony on June 11, Comer must beat Jessica Chastain in "A Doll's House," Jessica Hecht in "Summer, 1976" and Audra McDonald from "Ohio State Murders."

In terms of sheer physicality, Comer earns it every night. She moves tables together, jumps up on them, sits in rain, uses various voices and performs her own character's rape.

"It really helped me build my kind of mental resilience, even though I have moments that is absolutely challenged," she says. "I would say what I've learned from this experience is that you have to

take care of yourself."

Miller was inspired to write "Prima Facie" by the years she spent as a lawyer taking statements from hundreds of women who had been sexually assaulted. "Not a single one of them who went to trial actually ended up having a conviction," she says. "The worst things is they're all so similar."

Her first play, "Cross Sections," was about the homeless and the desperate living in the red-light district in Sydney, Australia, a work which humanized what many believed were throw-away people.

"After I wrote that there was a lightning bolt moment for me, which was, 'Oh, wow, stories really can make people empathize and think about things,'" she says.

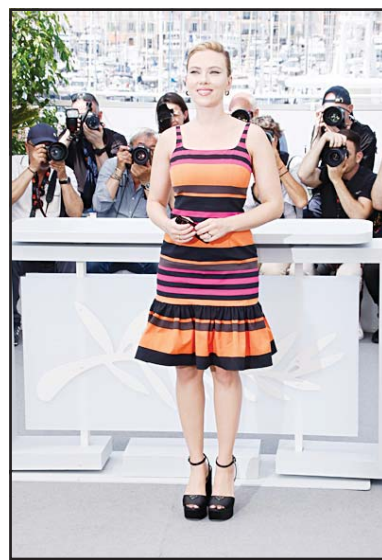
Miller has since taken up the baton of V — the "Vagina Monologues" playwright formerly known as Eve Ensler, who brings social messages to her work. It is no coincidence that Miller named the heroine of "Prima Facie" Tessa Enslin.

The idea of battling the establishment also attracted Comer, an Emmy Award and BAFTA winner, who grew up in the working class of Liverpool and has had to shapeshift in order to succeed, like her character.

When she was auditioning for theater roles, she was rebuffed because she hadn't attended drama school. "There was a lot of feedback of like, 'She's not trained. It's too big a task,'" she recalls.

The producers of "Prima Facie" didn't ask her to audition and didn't mind she hadn't attended drama school.

"They didn't see it as this kind of hindrance. And so I guess the stars all aligned at the right time," Comer says. "This is beyond anything I could have ever dreamed."



Scarlett Johansson poses for photographers at the photo call for the film 'Asteroid City' at the 76th international film festival, Cannes, southern France, Wednesday, May 24. (AP)



Royal



Harris

Variety

LOS ANGELES: Walter Royal, the chef of a destination steakhouse in North Carolina who triumphed as a challenger on "Iron Chef America" by cooking mostly Southern dishes with ostrich meat, has died.

The Angus Barn in Raleigh, where Royal served as executive chef since the 1990s, announced his passing on its website. The restaurant's statement said Royal died Monday at the age of 67. The announcement did not provide a cause or say where the chef had died.

The grandson of farmers, Royal grew up in rural Alabama and worked as a social worker before honing his craft under acclaimed Southern chefs, The Raleigh News & Observer reported.

Royal was already well established as a chef in the Raleigh area when he cooked before a national audience in a 2006 episode of "Iron Chef America." Judge Joel McHale said Royal used one of the world's "ugliest birds" to create one of the best desserts. It was a chocolate soufflé made with an ostrich egg.

Royal led a team challenging celebrity chef Cat Cora in a kitchen stadium format where their "secret ingredient" turned out to be ostrich. The trick, he said, was not to overcook it.

Royal prepared a Southwestern-flavored ostrich burger with horseradish ketchup, Creole mustard and homemade potato chips, according to a 2007 News & Observer article. Other dishes included a soy-and-ginger ostrich satay rounded off with a peanut dipping sauce and spicy coleslaw, and a pot pie with ostrich cubes and an herbed puff pastry.

He enhanced the meat's flavor with a rich whiskey-shallot-ostrich broth reduction, serving wilted watercress and mashed turnips and rutabagas on the side. Regarding the soufflé, Royal told The Fayetteville Observer: "The yoke of the egg is almost like butter. It's just incredible and the consistency of a wonderful custard."

Royal was born in Eclectic, Alabama, about 30 miles (48 kilometers) northeast of Montgomery, according to his biography on the website for The National Association of Chief Executive Officers.

In a 2017 interview with the North State Journal, Royal recalled a childhood of eating pecan pie, country cured ham with a glaze, fresh turkeys from his grandparents' farm and apple cobbler that were "oh, divine."

Royal knew he wanted to cook profes-

sionally since he was 14. But his parents dissuaded him, unsure of how successful he would be as a Black chef, according to the national chief executive biography. (AP)



LONDON: Rolf Harris, the veteran entertainer whose decades-long career as a family favorite on British and Australian television was shattered when he was

convicted of assaults on young girls, has died. He was 93.

Harris "died peacefully surrounded by family and friends and has now been laid to rest," said a family statement released Tuesday. It did not provide details.

Harris, who had a hit record with "Tie Me Kangaroo Down, Sport," was adored by generations of children for his jovial on-screen persona, and was so respected

in Britain that he was once granted the rare privilege of painting a portrait of Queen Elizabeth II.

But his TV career, which spanned half a century, collapsed in 2013, when he was arrested in Britain in relation to sexual abuse allegations.

Many were left in disbelief when in July 2014 Harris was found guilty of 12 counts of indecent assault on four young girls from the 1960s to the '80s. Prosecutors said he had a "Jekyll and Hyde" personality and used his fame to exploit his victims.

Among the victims was a friend of Harris' daughter, who claimed he molested her from age 13 to 19.

But a jury convicted him of all charges, and a judge sentenced him to five years and nine months in prison.

Harris was released on license in May 2017. Harris had enjoyed a 60-year career as a successful television presenter, songwriter and artist. He was best known for his children's television shows such as "Rolf's Cartoon Time" and "Animal Hospital," and had a number of hit songs in the 1960s.

Born in 1930, Harris grew up in a suburb of Perth, Australia, and was an award-winning swimmer as a teenager. After several failed attempts at art school, Harris launched his television career with a slot on a BBC show in 1952.

As well as hosting children's shows like "Rolf's Cartoon Club," Harris was also known in the '60s for performing popular songs including "Two Little Boys," which became a No. 1 Christmas hit in Britain. (AP)



Virginia Eflira, (from left), direct Valerie Donzelli and Melvil Poupaud pose for photographers at the photo call for the film 'Just the Two of Us' at the 76th international film festival, Cannes, southern France, Wednesday, May 24. (AP)

Health

DEA dragged feet

US drug distributors fueled 'opioid crisis'

SHREVEPORT, La., May 24, (AP) — The US Drug Enforcement Administration has allowed one of the nation's largest wholesale drug distributors to keep shipping highly addictive painkillers for nearly four years after a judge recommended it be stripped of its license for its "cavalier disregard" of thousands of suspicious orders fueling the opioid crisis.

The DEA did not respond to repeated questions from The Associated Press about its handling of the case against Morris & Dickson Co. or the involvement of a high-profile consultant the company had hired to stave off punishment and who is now DEA Administrator **Anne Milgram's** top deputy.

But the delay has raised concerns about how the revolving door between government and industry may be impacting the DEA's mission to police drug companies blamed for tens of thousands of American overdose deaths.



Milgram

"If the DEA had issued its order in a timely manner, one could then credibly believe that its second-in-command was not involved despite an obvious conflict of interest," said Craig Holman, an ethics expert at the watchdog group Public Citizen in Washington. "The mere fact that its action has been delayed four years just raises red flags. It casts the entire process under grave suspicion."

Last week, after the AP reached out to the DEA for comment, the agency broke its silence on the issue and abruptly notified Morris & Dickson that it has decided to revoke its registration to distribute controlled substances, according to two people familiar with the development who spoke on the condition of anonymity to discuss the exchange. However, no final order has yet been published. The company has described revocation as a "virtual death sentence" and is almost certain to challenge the decision in federal court.

Louis Milione, who was named DEA's principal deputy administrator in 2021, did not respond to requests for comment.

Controls

He retired from the DEA in 2017 after a storied 21-year career that included two years leading the division that controls the sale of highly addictive narcotics. Like dozens of colleagues in the DEA's powerful-but-little-known Office of Diversion Control, he quickly went to work as a consultant for some of the same companies he had been tasked with regulating, including Morris & Dickson.

Milione was brought in by Morris & Dickson as part of a \$3 million contract to save its registration to supply painkillers after the DEA accused the company in 2018 of failing to flag thousands of suspicious, high-volume orders.

Testifying in 2019 before federal Administrative Law Judge Charles W. Dorman, Milione argued that Morris & Dickson "spared no expense" to overhaul its compliance systems, cancel suspicious orders and send daily emails to the DEA spelling out its actions.

But those efforts were too little, too late, the judge wrote in a 159-page recommendation which has not been previously reported and was recently obtained by the AP. Anything less than the most severe punishment, he said, "would communicate to DEA registrants that despite their transgressions, no matter how egregious, they will get a mere slap on the wrist and a second chance so long as they acknowledge their sins and vow to sin no more."

"Acceptance of responsibility and evidence of remediation are not get-out-of-jail-free cards that erase the harm caused by years of cavalier disregard," Dorman wrote. "Allowing the respondent to keep its registration would tell distributors that it is acceptable to take a relaxed approach to DEA regulations until they are caught, at which point they only need to throw millions of dollars at the problem to make the DEA go away."

Shreveport, Louisiana-based Morris & Dickson, the nation's fourth-largest wholesale drug distributor with \$4 billion a year in revenue and nearly 600 employees, did not respond to requests for comment. But the company repeatedly said in court filings that losing its license would effectively shut it down and have a "catastrophic" effect on patients in 29 states.

Neither Milgram nor two DEA administrators who preceded her have taken any enforcement action since Dorman's 2019 recommendation, allowing Morris & Dickson to continue operating even as it pursued a potential settlement. Former DEA officials told AP a nearly four-year wait in such a case is highly unusual, noting it rarely takes the agency more than two years to issue a final order.

Milgram's management of DEA has been called into question on another front. AP reported last month that a federal watchdog is investigating whether the agency improperly awarded millions of dollars in no-bid contracts to hire Milgram's past associates.

As for Milione, federal ethics rules bar government employees from taking part in decisions that could benefit companies where they previously worked, but DEA did not respond to questions about whether Milione recused himself from the matter. He would have also faced restrictions on his interactions with the DEA when he left government as a senior official - an issue the agency's own lawyers raised in an attempt to disqualify his testimony in support of Morris & Dickson.

Compliance

Milione, a lawyer and former bit Hollywood actor, impressed fellow DEA agents for his risk taking and toughness. Among his achievements was running the overseas sting that in 2008 nabbed Russia's notorious arms trafficker Viktor Bout, aka "The Merchant of Death."

But after taking over as the head of Diversion Control in 2015, he ended his predecessor's refusal to meet with drug manufacturers and distributors and opened the DEA's doors to the industry it was charged with regulating.

Among those Milione met with on at least two occasions was Paul Dickson Sr. - then-president of Morris & Dickson. That included a 2016 visit to the Louisiana headquarters with DEA investigators to discuss the company's compliance program.

John Gray, the head of the Healthcare Distributors Alliance, a lobbying group that includes Morris & Dickson, recounted in a 2015 email how Milione, under orders from then-incoming DEA Administrator Chuck Rosenberg, wanted to "reset" relations with the drug industry. And Milione even delivered the keynote speech at the group's annual meeting.

"Overall, he was engaging, exceedingly pleasant and seemed genuinely concerned that we had lost touch with each other," Gray wrote. "It is a very different tone and approach than we have all seen in the past 8-10 years."

Morris & Dickson had been punished for its mishandling of addictive drugs before. In 2019, before Dorman issued his recommendation, the company agreed to pay \$22 million in civil penalties to resolve federal prosecutors' claims that it violated the Controlled Substances Act by failing to report suspicious orders of hydrocodone and oxycodone. The company also agreed to multimillion-dollar upgrades of its compliance program to ensure it reports suspicious orders moving forward.

The case drew far less attention than the enforcement actions DEA took in recent years against Morris & Dickson's larger competitors, a trio of pharmaceutical distributors who have agreed to pay the federal government more than \$1 billion in fines and penalties for similar violations. Cardinal Health, AmerisourceBergen and McKesson also agreed to pay \$21 billion over 18 years to resolve claims as part of a nationwide settlement.



This photo provided by Indivior in May 2023 shows their drug Opvee. On Monday, May 22, US health regulators approved the medication to reverse overdoses caused by fentanyl and other powerful opioids, which are currently driving the nation's drug crisis. (AP)



This photo provided by Indivior in May 2023 shows their drug Opvee on Monday, May 22. (AP)



Rita



Rivara

Discovery

Rita scales Everest for 28th time: Veteran Sherpa guide **Kami Rita** has scaled Mount Everest for the 28th time Tuesday, beating his own record less than a week after setting it, as two guides compete with each other for the title of most climbs of the world's highest peak.

Kami Rita, considered one of the greatest mountain guides, reached the 8,849-meter (29,032-foot) summit at 9:20 a.m. local time Tuesday, according to expedition organizer Seven Summits Treks. His latest climb comes a day after fellow Sherpa guide Pasang Dawa matched his record of 27 trips to the summit.

The race for the title began with Pasang Dawa climbing the peak for the 26th time on May 14, equaling Kami Rita's previous record. Kami Rita went on to the peak three days later for the 27th time.

With a few more days left in the spring climbing season, both Sherpa guides were on the mountain helping their clients up the snowy peak. May is the busiest month to make the dangerous climb since it has the best weather conditions.

Kami Rita first summited Everest in 1994 and has been making the trip nearly every year since. He is one of many Sherpa guides whose expertise and skills are vital to the safety and success each year of foreign climbers who seek to stand on top of the mountain. (AP)

Foam contaminates public water: Firefighting foam used in battling a fatal fire in an apartment building entered the public water system, prompting the water district to order thousands of residents not to drink the water.

The do-not-drink order went into effect Monday for about 9,000 Kennebec Water District customers in Waterville, Winslow, Benton, Fairfield and Vassalboro. Testing was being conducted Tuesday to determine whether the water is safe to drink.

The foam used by Waterville firefighters is presumed to contain PFAS chemicals, a group of compounds that are widespread, dangerous and expensive to remove from drinking water, but the foam is advertised as being free of fluorine, another compound sometimes used in firefighting foam, said Fire Capt. Edward Moulton.

"While the extent of the contamination is unclear, out of an abundance of caution, Kennebec Water District is issuing a system-wide Do Not Drink Order," the water district announced Monday.

The foam entered the public water distribution system as firefighters battled a blaze in an apartment building for seniors.

Health

New easy-to-use therapy to reverse overdoses

FDA approves overdose nasal spray

WASHINGTON, May 24, (AP) — US health regulators on Monday approved a new easy-to-use version of a medication to reverse overdoses caused by fentanyl and other opioids driving the nation's drug crisis.

Opvee is similar to naloxone, the life-saving drug that has been used for decades to quickly counter overdoses of heroin, fentanyl and prescription painkillers. Both work by blocking the effects of opioids in the brain, which can restore normal breathing and blood pressure in people who have recently overdosed.

The Food and Drug Administration endorsed Opvee, a nasal spray update of the drug nalmefene, which was first approved as an injection in the mid-1990s but later removed from the market due to low sales. Naloxone comes as both a nasal spray and injection.

It's not immediately clear how the new drug will be used differently compared to naloxone, and some experts see potential downsides to its longer-acting effect. The drug will be available via prescription and is approved for patients 12 and older.

In studies funded by the federal government, Opvee achieved similar recovery results to Narcan, the leading brand of naloxone nasal spray.

Opvee was developed by Opiant Pharmaceuticals, which was recently acquired by rival Indivior, maker of several medications for opioid addiction. Indivior expects to launch Opvee in October at the earliest.

As the opioid epidemic has shifted to fentanyl and other synthetic opioids, researchers in the pharmaceutical industry and the U.S. government saw a new role for the drug.

Because fentanyl stays in the body longer than heroin and other opioids, some people may require multiple doses of naloxone over several hours to fully reverse an overdose.

Scientists at the National Institutes of Health worked with pharmaceutical researchers on a nasal spray version of nalmefene that would quickly resuscitate users, while also protecting them from relapse. Testing and development was funded by more than \$18 million

in grants from the U.S. government's Biomedical Advanced Research and Development Authority and the NIH, which also helped design the studies.

"The whole aim of this was to have a medication that would last longer but also reach into the brain very rapidly," said Dr. Nora Volkow, director of the National Institute on Drug Abuse.

Still, some experts see potential downsides.

A side effect of all opioid reversal drugs is that they create intense withdrawal symptoms including nausea, diarrhea, muscle cramps and anxiety. With naloxone, those symptoms might last 30 to 40 minutes.

Dr. Lewis Nelson of Rutgers University says those problems can last six hours or more with nalmefene, requiring extra treatment and management by health professionals.

"The risk of long-lasting withdrawal is very real and we try to avoid it," said Nelson, an emergency medicine physician and former adviser to the FDA on opioids.

Nelson said it's easy enough to give a second or third dose of naloxone if it wears off.

"We're not suffering from a naloxone shortage where we need to use an alternative," he said. "We have plenty of it and it works perfectly well."

Pandemic

The FDA approval comes as drug overdose deaths inched up slightly last year after two big leaps during the pandemic. More than 109,000 fatal overdoses were recorded in 2022, according to the latest figures from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

More than two-thirds of those deaths were linked to fentanyl and other synthetic opioids, which have largely replaced heroin and prescription opioids.

Naloxone has long been at the center of government efforts to fight the overdose crisis at the federal and local levels. Police, firefighters and other first responders routinely carry the drug. And officials in all 50 states have given orders to pharmacists to sell or dispense the drug without a prescription

to anyone who wants it.

In the latest federal push, the FDA recently approved Narcan to be sold over the counter. The change will allow the new version of the drug to be stocked in grocery stores, vending machines and other retail locations. The nasal spray - which includes updated instructions for regular users - is expected to launch this summer. Emergent Biosolutions hasn't yet announced a price for the over-the-counter version.

Indivior said it is still considering what to charge for its drug. It will compete in the same market as naloxone, where most buyers are local governments and community groups that distribute to first responders and those at risk of overdose. Indivior has told investors that Opvee could eventually generate annual sales between \$150 million to \$250 million.

Also:

WASHINGTON: The Biden administration said Tuesday it is planning to conduct a yearly audit to verify the prices drug makers charge on a handful of the costliest prescriptions covered by Medicaid.

Under the proposal, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services would require as many as 10 drug makers every year to furnish the government with proprietary and non-proprietary information as evidence to support the price it charges states, which administer Medicaid.

Drugs that cost Medicaid the most money - some as much as \$2 million per treatment - will be selected for the survey.

The proposal was prompted by rising drug prices and complaints from states leaders who say they are having trouble negotiating those costs with manufacturers, said **Dan Tsai**, director of Center for Medicaid and Children's Health Insurance Program Services.

"We've got very high cost drugs, who have no competition," Tsai said Tuesday.

More than 90 million people are enrolled in Medicaid and CHIP, which provides the poorest Americans with health insurance.

One person was killed and several others were injured Monday. (AP)

Man dead while helping ducks: His family says it's no surprise that **Casey Rivara's** final act was one of compassion.

When he spotted a mama duck trying to guide her ducklings across a busy California intersection, Rivara stopped his car at a red light and got out to help them make it to safety.

Rivara made sure traffic in all directions was stopped, witnesses said, then



Cattle graze on the meadow in front of the German parliament building, the Reichstag, during a protest of the environmental organization Greenpeace for species-appropriate animal husbandry, in Berlin, Germany, May 16. (AP)

escorted the duck and her babies to the other side of the street around 8:15 p.m. last Thursday in suburban Rocklin, northeast of Sacramento.

"All the ducks made it safely across," said 11-year-old Jude Peterson, who was watching with a carpool group after track practice. "He did something amazing."

His good deed done, Rivara was walking back to his car when another vehicle came through the intersection and struck him. He flew through the air and landed in the street. The 41-year-old father of two died at the scene.

"Casey was the kindest, most amazing husband and father. Even his last act in this world was a sign of his compassion," his aunt, Tracey Rivara, wrote on a verified GoFundMe page raising money for his widow and their 11-year-old daughter and 6-year-old son. Nearly \$90,000 was raised by Tuesday afternoon.

"The family is trying to figure out how to recover and keep going after this immense loss," his aunt wrote.

The driver of the car that hit him, a 17-year-old girl, remained at the scene and is cooperating with investigators, said Rocklin police Capt. Scott Horrillo. Detectives are still interviewing witnesses and reviewing video, he said, but it doesn't appear the teen driver will face charges. (AP)

Brazilians protest outside Spanish consulate

Valencia slam 'disproportionate' punishment after racial abuse against Vinicius

Jays pound MLB-best Rays, score 10 off position players



Los Angeles Dodgers right fielder Jason Heyward (23) catches a fly ball off the bat of Atlanta Braves' Kevin Pillar in the ninth inning of a baseball game in Atlanta. (AP)

Judge hits tying HR in 9th, Volpe wins it in 10th as Yanks rally past Orioles

ST. PETERSBURG, Fla., May 24, (AP): Vladimir Guerrero Jr. had six RBIs and the Toronto Blue Jays stopped a five-game losing streak with a 20-1 rout of the Tampa Bay Rays on Tuesday night, scoring their last 10 runs off position players.

Guerrero put Toronto ahead with an RBI single off Taj Bradley (3-1) in the first, had a run-scoring single in the fifth that opened a 10-0 lead and hit a 423-foot grand slam in a nine-run ninth against Luke Raley.

All 12 Toronto batters in the game had hits, and the Blue Jays finished with 27 hits - their most since getting 29 against Boston in a 28-5 win last July 22.

Tampa Bay entered with the second-fewest runs allowed in the majors at 170 and gave up its most since a 20-8 loss at Boston on Aug. 11, 2021.

BASEBALL

George Springer had four hits, and Bo Bichette, Whit Merrifield, Guerrero and Danny Jansen had three apiece. Springer hit his seventh homer, a solo drive in the third.

José Berríos (4-4) allowed one run, five hits and two walks, striking out five.

Yankees 6, Orioles 5, 10 innings

In New York, Aaron Judge hit a tying homer in the ninth inning and rookie Anthony Volpe drove in the winning run with a sacrifice fly in the 10th against Bryan Baker (3-2) as streaking New York rallied past Baltimore.

Harrison Bader homered to begin New York's comeback from an early 4-0 deficit, and Judge took Gerrit Cole off the hook for his first loss in 11 starts this season.

Back home from a 6-1 trip, the Yankees (30-20) won their fifth straight in a series opener between AL East rivals.

Cedric Mullins and Gunnar Henderson homered off Cole for Baltimore, which was coming off a three-game sweep at Toronto.

Michael King (1-1) pitched two hitless innings for the win, striking out three.

Dodgers 8, Braves 1

In Atlanta, Bobby Miller allowed one run over five innings in his big league debut and Los Angeles beat Atlanta.

J.D. Martinez and Jason Heyward homered for the Dodgers, who also got three RBIs from Will Smith.

Spencer Strider (4-2) fanned 11 hitters to increase his MLB-leading strikeout total to 97 - his fourth start this season with double-digit Ks and 10th of his young career. He allowed four runs, two earned, in six innings.

Miller (1-0) surrendered four hits, walked one and struck out five while consistently reaching 100 mph with his fastball.

Rangers 6, Pirates 1

In Pittsburgh, Texas' Nathan Eovaldi pitched a complete game for

the second time in five starts after throwing just two in the first 226 of his major league career.

Eovaldi (6-2) allowed six hits, struck out five and walked one, his fifth straight start of at least seven innings.

Josh Jung hit his 11th home run of his first full season in the majors to give the Rangers a five-run lead in the eighth.

Texas has won four of five. Pittsburgh has split its last eight games after losing 11 of 12 and has not won a series since taking two of three at Washington on April 29 and 30.

Rich Hill (4-4) gave up five runs on seven hits in 5 1/3 innings with a season-high nine strikeouts.

Padres 7, Nationals 4

In Washington, Juan Soto hit his ninth homer and had three hits to begin a three-game visit to his former team as San Diego beat Washington.

Jake Cronenworth followed Soto's seventh-inning solo shot with a two-run homer two batters later as the Padres scored four times off Nationals reliever Erasmo Ramirez (2-2).

San Diego's Yu Darvish (3-3) allowed back-to-back homers to CJ Abrams and Lane Thomas in the fifth inning, but no other damage in a six-inning effort.

Josh Hader worked a scoreless ninth for his 12th save in 14 chances.

Diamondbacks 4, Phillies 3

In Philadelphia, Corbin Carroll singled in the go-ahead run in the eighth inning for his third hit and Arizona beat Philadelphia for its ninth victory in 11 games.

At 29-20, Arizona moved nine games over .500 for the first time since Sept. 11, 2018, when it was 77-68.

Lourdes Gurriel Jr. extended his hitting streak to 16 games - the longest active run in the majors - with a leadoff double in the eighth off Seranthony Dominguez (1-2). After advancing to third on a passed ball by J.T. Realmuto, Gurriel scored on Carroll's single to left through a drawn-in infield.

Reliever Jose Ruiz (2-0) got the win and Miguel Castro earned his

fifth save with clean ninth.

Giants 4, Twins 3

In Minneapolis, Michael Conforto doubled to spark a sixth-inning rally and hit the go-ahead two-run homer in the seventh as San Francisco rallied past Minnesota.

The Giants have won seven of eight. Alex Cobb (4-1) finished seven innings for the third time in four starts this month, working around a two-run home run by Byron Buxton in the first inning and a solo shot by Michael Taylor in the fifth.

With Jorge López (1-2) on the mound for the seventh, Thairo Estrada led off with a double and trotted home on Conforto's 10th homer of the season.

Camilo Doval pitched a hitless ninth for his 13th save in 14 attempts.

Angels 4, Red Sox 0

In Anaheim, Mike Trout hit a two-run homer and Griffin Canning allowed two hits in seven innings as Los Angeles beat Boston.

Mickey Moniak homered for the second straight game and Matt Thaiss also went deep for the Angels, who have won three straight and four of five.

Canning (3-2) struck out five and walked three.

Brayan Bello (3-2) gave up Moniak and Thaiss' solo homers in his seven innings. Trout homered in the eighth off Joely Rodriguez.

Rockies 5, Marlins 4

In Denver, Charlie Blackmon doubled in a four-run fifth inning. Jurickson Profar extended his on-base streak to 31 games and Colorado spoiled 20-year-old Eury Pérez's road debut for Miami.

Elías Díaz had three hits for Colorado. The Rockies have won the first two of the four-game set.

Pérez (1-1) allowed four runs - three earned - on four hits in 4 1/3 innings.

Garrett Cooper's two-run homer with two outs in the sixth inning chased starter Austin Gomber (4-4). Soler's RBI double in the ninth made it a one-run game, but Pierce Johnson closed it out for his 10th save.

Mariners 3, Athletics 2

In Seattle, J.P. Crawford and Ty France hit back-to-back home runs in a three-run fifth inning, and Seattle sent Oakland to its sixth straight loss and 14th in 16 games.

The A's dropped to 10-40, matching the 1932 Boston Red Sox and

1897 St. Louis Browns for the fourth-worst 50-game start in big league history.

Marco Gonzales (4-1) who allowed five hits in six innings with four strikeouts. Trevor Gott, Justin Topa and Paul Sewald pitched a hitless inning each. Sewald remained perfect in 10 save chances.

Luis Medina (0-3) took the loss.

Cubs 7, Mets 2

In Chicago, Christopher Morel, Matt Mervis and Seiya Suzuki homered and Chicago cooled off New York.

Mervis had three RBIs and Drew Smyly (5-1) pitched four-hit ball into the sixth inning.

Morel extended his homer streak to five games with a solo shot against Stephen Nogosek in the seventh. He became the first player with such a streak for the Cubs since Sammy Sosa in June 1998.

Taylor Megill (5-3) allowed six runs, four earned, in 3 2/3 innings for the Mets, whose five-game winning streak ended. Pete Alonso hit his big league-best 18th homer for New York.

Brewers 6, Astros 0

In Milwaukee, Joey Wiemer and Owen Miller homered, Colin Rea combined with four relievers on a five-hitter and Milwaukee stopped Houston's eight-game winning streak.

Rea (1-3) gave up four hits in 5 1/3 innings. Houston was blanked for the second time.

J.P. France (1-1) gave up two runs - one earned - and five hits in 5 2/3 innings.

White Sox 4, Guardians 2

In Cleveland, Romy González's two-run double off rookie starter Logan Allen (1-2) broke a 2-2 seventh-inning tie and sent Chicago past Cleveland.

Yasmani Grandal homered for the White Sox, who started 7-21 but have won six of eight.

Chicago's rally helped Dylan Cease (3-3) win for the first time since April 10 - a span of eight starts. The right-hander went six innings, Keynan Middleton and Joe Kelly pitched an inning apiece, and Kendall Graveman worked the ninth for his fourth save.

Cardinals 8, Reds 5

In Cincinnati, Paul Goldschmidt homered in his first two at-bats and St. Louis' Adam Wainwright beat Cincinnati for the first time since 2019.

The Cardinals have won 12 of 16 since starting the season 10-24.

Goldschmidt hit solo homers in the first and third innings off Graham Ashcraft (2-3).

Wainwright (2-0) allowed five runs in 5 2/3 innings.

Royals 4, Tigers 1

In Kansas City, Maikel Garcia had three hits, an RBI and a run and Kansas City beat Detroit to snap a four-game skid.

Mike Mayers allowed one run on six hits in 4 2/3 innings in his first start for the Royals. He struck out a career-high eight and walked one. Jose Cuas (3-0) was the winner, and Aroldis Chapman pitched a scoreless ninth for his second save.

Eduardo Rodriguez (4-4) allowed four runs - two earned - on eight hits in five innings.

MADRID, May 24, (AP): Valencia will appeal the partial closure of its stadium following the racial abuse directed at Real Madrid forward Vinicius Junior in a Spanish league match, saying the punishment is "unfair and disproportionate."

Spanish soccer's competition committee late Tuesday fined Valencia in 45,000 euros (\$48,500) and closed one of the sections of Mestalla Stadium for five games in what is the strongest ever punishment for a club in a case of racism in Spain.

The punishment was part of a strong response by soccer officials and Spanish authorities following an outpouring of support for Vinicius after he was targeted by Valencia fans on Sunday. Late Tuesday, about 100 Brazilian protestors gathered outside the Spanish consulate in Sao Paulo to condemn the racist abuse against Vinicius. The protestors chanted "La Liga is racist" and "end with racism in Spain and in Brazil" for about an hour.

Vinicius, who is Black, has been subjected to repeated racial insults since he arrived to play in Spain five years ago. The 22-year-old Brazil forward heavily criticized Spain and its lack of action against racism after the latest incident against him.

"Valencia wants to express its complete disagreement and indignation over the unfair and disproportionate penalty imposed by the competition committee," the club said in a statement early Wednesday. "Valencia wants to publicly denounce that the evidence shown by the committee contradicts what the police and La Liga say. This sanction is based on evidence that the club has not been able to see."

Valencia also complained that it was not given a chance to defend itself before the ruling was made. The club said it has been cooperating with police from the start and has acted strongly to condemn what happened at its stadium.

Valencia said not long after the game it would work with authorities to identify those responsible for the abuse, and a day later it banned one person for life for being involved in the incident against Vinicius.

With the club's cooperation, police arrested three people on suspicion of a hate crime for their alleged abuse against the Brazilian on Sunday, with all being banned for life from the stadium. The club said that was the maximum punishment it could impose.

"To punish fans who were not involved in these lamentable incidents is a measure completely disproportionate, unfair and unprecedented," Valencia said. "We will fight against it until the end."

The three people spoke to police and were set free as the investigation against them continues. Four other people were detained in Madrid after being accused of hanging an effigy of Vinicius off a highway bridge in January.

Fans have been fined and banned



Real Madrid's head coach Carlo Ancelotti (left) speaks to Real Madrid's Vinicius Junior during a Spanish La Liga soccer match between Valencia and Real Madrid, at the Mestalla stadium in Valencia, Spain. (AP)

before for attacks on Vinicius, but so far no one in Spain has ever gone to trial on criminal charges for racially abusing a player.

Spain created a specific law against violence, racism, xenophobia and intolerance in sports in 2007, and since then an anti-violence commission composed of several entities has been in charge of monitoring and denouncing cases that may break the law.

But the current legislation stipulates that not all cases of racism can be punished criminally, only those in which there is an extra element affecting the victim. Most cases, including many similar to the ones involving the fans in Valencia, end up falling into a category in which punishment only includes fines and bans from stadiums.

Valencia, which is still fighting against relegation to the second division, has one home game left in the league this season, against Espanyol on Sunday. Espanyol is also trying to avoid demotion. Valencia is in 13th place, five points from the relegation zone.

The section of Mestalla that will be closed is where the insults against Vinicius came from, behind one of the goals. It's also where the club's more hardcore fans usually are located.

The committee late Tuesday also rescinded the red card shown to Vinicius after an altercation with Valencia players late in the game, saying video review did not show the referee images of the full altercation, including the part in which the Brazilian was grabbed from behind by an opponent.

The highly unusual decision drew surprise by many.

"Acts of racism and insults must be censored, but what happens on the field is different," Barcelona coach Xavi Hernandez said. "It's clear that there was an aggression by Vinicius and I am surprised that they took away the red card. One thing has nothing to do with the other."

PSV coach Van Nistelrooy resigns

EINDHOVEN, Netherlands, May 24, (AP): PSV Eindhoven coach Ruud van Nistelrooy resigned with only one match left to play this season because he did not feel enough support within the team, the Dutch club said Wednesday.

The former Manchester United striker had been in charge only one year and led his players to victory in the Dutch Cup final.

PSV travels to AZ Alkmaar in the league on Sunday and will secure a second-place finish behind champion Feyenoord with a draw.

Following a meeting with Van Nistelrooy and the board of directors, PSV wanted him to remain in charge until the end of the season.

"On Wednesday morning, Van Nistelrooy told the first-team squad and coaching staff that he would be stepping down with immediate effect, due to a lack of support within the club," PSV said. "At the request of the board, Fred Rutten will now take charge of the AZ game on Sunday."

If PSV finished second, the team would enter the Champions League in the third qualifying round, needing to beat two opponents from mid-

ranked countries to join the group stage.

□ □ □

Southampton manager Rubén Sellés will not have his contract renewed when it expires at the end of the season, the relegated Premier League club said Wednesday.

Sellés took charge in February after the departure of Nathan Jones but was unable to extend Southampton's 11-year stay in England's top division.

SOCCER

The south-coast team is assured of finishing in last place this season ahead of its final game, at home against Liverpool on Sunday.

"The club wants to place on record its thanks to Rubén for taking on the managerial position at a difficult time for the club and for giving his all as we attempted to stay in the Premier League," Southampton said.

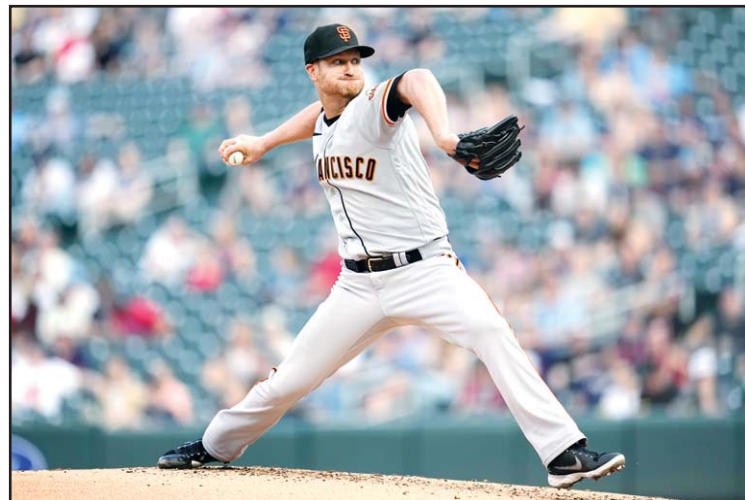
Sellés, who is from Spain, was previously an assistant coach at FC Copenhagen in Denmark and also has coached Valencia's youth team in his native country.

MLB Results/Standings

WASHINGTON, May 24, (AP): Results and standings from the MLB games on Tuesday.

Chicago W. Sox 4	Cleveland 2	Seattle 3	Oakland 2
Texas 6	Pittsburgh 1	St. Louis 8	Cincinnati 5
Toronto 20	Tampa Bay 1	Arizona 4	Philadelphia 3
Kansas City 4	Detroit 1	LA Dodgers 8	Atlanta 1
NY Yankees 6	Baltimore 10	San Diego 7	Washington 4
Milwaukee 6	Houston 0	Chicago Cubs 7	NY Mets 2
San Francisco 4	Minnesota 3	Colorado 5	Miami 4
LA Angels 4	Boston 0		

American League				National League				
East Division				East Division				
W	L	Pct	GB	W	L	Pct	GB	
Tampa Bay	35	15	.700	—	Atlanta	29	19	.604
Baltimore	31	17	.646	3	New York	25	24	.510
New York	30	20	.600	5	Miami	24	25	.490
Boston	26	23	.531	8-1/2	Philadelphia	22	26	.458
Toronto	26	23	.531	8-1/2	Washington	20	28	.417
Central Division				Central Division				
W	L	Pct	GB	W	L	Pct	GB	
Minnesota	25	24	.510	—	Milwaukee	26	22	.542
Detroit	21	25	.457	2-1/2	Pittsburgh	25	23	.521
Cleveland	21	27	.438	3-1/2	Chicago	21	26	.447
Chicago	20	30	.400	5-1/2	St. Louis	22	28	.440
Kansas City	15	35	.300	10-1/2	Cincinnati	20	28	.417
West Division				West Division				
W	L	Pct	GB	W	L	Pct	GB	
Texas	30	18	.625	—	Los Angeles	31	19	.620
Houston	28	20	.583	2	Arizona	29	20	.592
Los Angeles	27	23	.540	4	San Francisco	24	24	.500
Seattle	24	24	.500	6	San Diego	22	26	.458
Oakland	10	40	.200	21	Colorado	21	28	.429



San Francisco Giants starting pitcher Alex Cobb delivers during the second inning of a baseball game against the Minnesota Twins in Minneapolis. (AP)

SPORTS

Vegas 1 win from another Stanley Cup Final

Golden Knights shut out Stars in Game 3

DALLAS, May 24, (AP): The Vegas Golden Knights kept their composure and got the best payback after an ugly hit early against their captain.

They have a 3-0 series lead in the Western Conference Final and are now just one more win away from making it to another Stanley Cup Final.

Ivan Barbashev scored a power-play goal after Dallas Stars captain Jamie Benn was ejected because of his hit on Mark Stone less than two minutes into the game. That was the second of three goals the Golden Knights had in the first 7 1/2 minutes, leading to an early exit for goalie Jake Oettinger as they won 4-0 in Game 3 on Tuesday night.

"You keep your composure," said Alex Pietrangolo, who added a goal midway through the second period.

After the two captains collided near the blue line and Stone fell to the ice, Benn lunged forward with both hands on his stick and made contact near Stone's neck as he was sliding over the center line.

"We're upset when we see that, he's our captain," coach Bruce Cassidy said. "But at the end of the day, they make a call that gives us a chance to make them pay for the penalty. And we did with one goal anyway, so we've doubled our lead. ... Do it the right way. That's been our mindset all along." While Oettinger had the shortest start of his career, Vegas goalie Adin Hill stopped 34 shots in his first career postseason shutout. Hill also became the second Knights goaltender with a five-game winning streak this postseason - Laurent Brossoit won five in a row before an injury.

ICE HOCKEY

After four consecutive comeback victories in these playoffs, including two overtime wins at home to start the best-of-seven series, the Golden Knights were in control all of the way in this one.

Game 4 is Thursday night, when Vegas will have the opportunity to advance to its second Stanley Cup Final in the franchise's six seasons.

The Golden Knights were Western Conference champions during their inaugural 2017-18 season, then lost the Cup Final in five games after winning the opener against the Washington Capitals. Vegas missed the playoffs for the only time last season, before coach Pete DeBoer was fired and became the Stars coach.

Johnathan Marchessault scored only 71 seconds into the game, which was only 42 seconds before Benn was assessed a game misconduct after a five-minute major for cross-checking.

"Let's put it this way, he made a mistake. He feels really badly about it. I don't think anyone in the building feels worse than he does about it," DeBoer said. "I'm not going to pile on, he's been a leader here for his entire career, and leads every day on and off the ice. ... Fortunately Mark Stone's OK, and we've got to live with the consequences." The Stars played the rest of the game without Benn, who could also face an NHL suspension after the league reviews the play.

Just before Benn's early exit, he had a wrist that was stopped by Hill but was initially still loose under the goalie as Benn tried to get his stick back on it.

The goal by Barbashev, who later had two assists, was one of only three shots the Knights got on net during the five-minute penalty. His 30-foot wrist shot for a 2-0 lead came after a Ty Dellandrea's short-handed break was blocked and Nicolas Roy took the rebound the other way before passing to Barbashev.

"What goes unnoticed in there is the save by Adin Hill on the short-hand 2-on-1 ... and we come down and score," Cassidy said. "That 15 seconds of hockey is a huge impact of the game." Oettinger was pulled and replaced by Scott Wedgewood after William Carrier's backhand made it 3-0 with 12:50 left in the first period.

The 24-year-old Oettinger has now lost three starts in a row. He has lost four of five overall, the win being when he had 22 saves for the Stars in their 2-1 win in Game 7 of Western semifinal against Seattle.

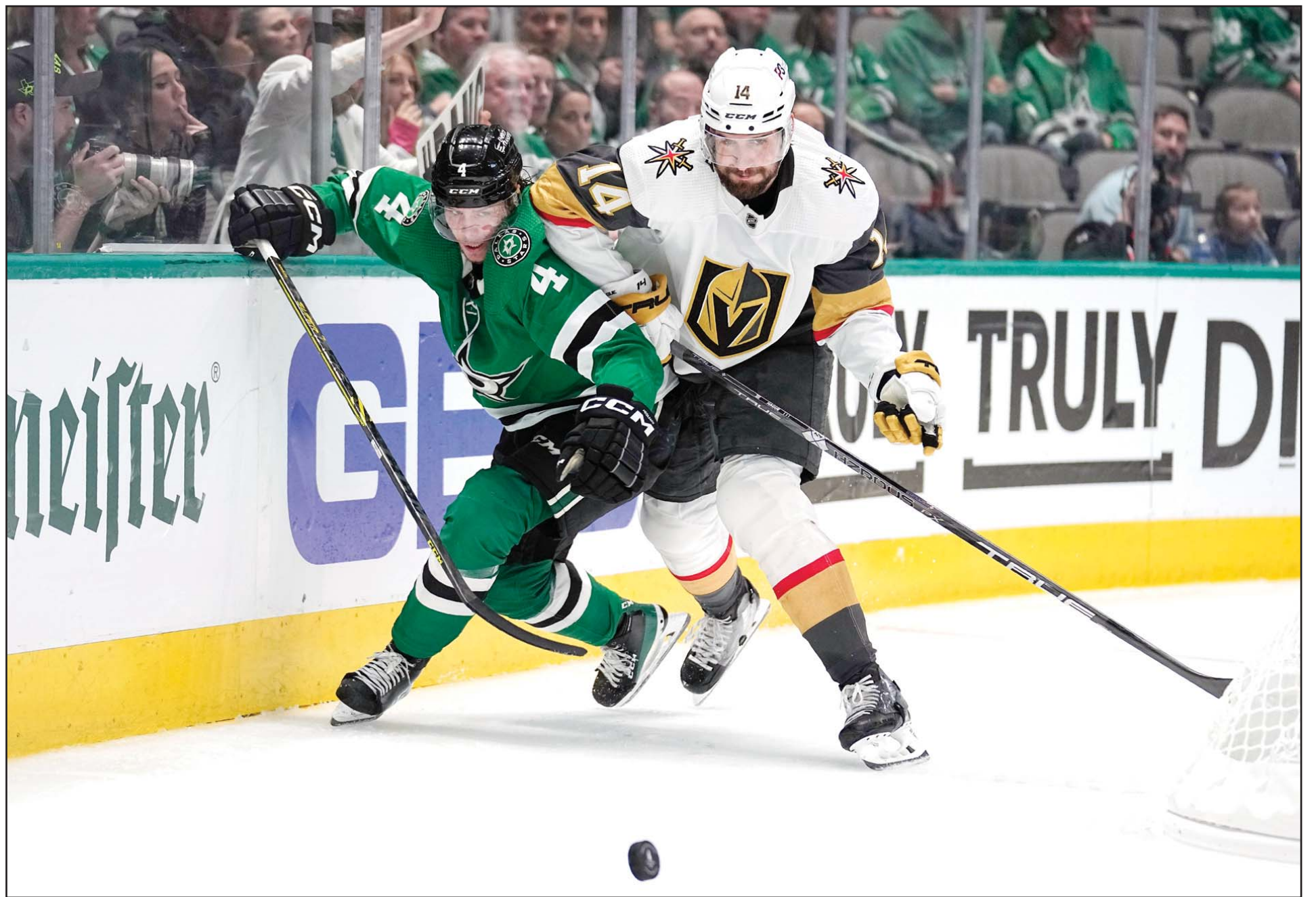
Wedgewood stopped 10 of 11 shots, with Pietrangolo's goal coming just a second after the end of a power play as Miro Heiskanen was coming out of the penalty box.

Stars center Max Domi got a game misconduct with 21 seconds left in the second period. After his cross-check against Nicolas Hague, Domi started throwing punches.

"I think you guys know exactly what was being discussed," Hague said when asked about what led to that incident. "There's no reason for me to get involved in anything. It is what it is, and we got a big win." Fans in the arena reacted to the ensuing penalty by throwing water bottles, food and other items on the ice. With extended time needed to clean up the playing surface, officials sent both teams to their locker rooms early for the second intermission with the Knights up 4-0.

Those final 21 seconds were played after the intermission before the clock was reset to 20 minutes for the third period.

"It was a little weird," Hill said. "I've never seen so much stuff on the ice, that's for sure."



Dallas Stars defenseman Miro Heiskanen (4) and Vegas Golden Knights defenseman Nicolas Hague (14) compete for control of the puck during the third period of Game 3 of the NHL hockey Stanley Cup Western Conference finals in Dallas. (AP)



Chennai Super Kings' Devon Conway plays a shot during the Indian Premier League qualifier cricket match between Chennai Super Kings and Gujarat Titans in Chennai, India. (AP)

US top Sweden to win Group A

TAMPERE, Finland, May 24, (AP): Dylan Samberg scored in overtime and the United States beat Sweden 4-3 on Tuesday to finish the group stage with a perfect record at the ice hockey world championship.

Samberg's winner from the slot 1:37 into overtime clinched first place for the United States in Group A, two points in front of Sweden, ahead of Thursday's quarterfinal games.

The Americans lead 3-1 in the third period but Leo Carlsson scored his second goal before Timothy Liljegren equalized with 2:31 left to force overtime.

Nick Bonino and Conor Garland had answered Carlsson's opener with power play goals and Lane Hutson stretched the advantage to 3-1 on a break-away.

The United States will play the Czech Republic in the quarterfinals. Sweden faces co-host Latvia, which reached the quarterfinals by beating Switzerland 4-3 in overtime.

ICE HOCKEY

In the Latvia's capital of Riga, Canada defeated the Czechs 3-1 to finish second in Group B.

Peyton Krebs gave Canada an early 1-0 lead and Tyler Myers scored the go-ahead goal in the third after Martin Kaut tied it in the second. Lawson Crouse finished it off with an empty net goal.

Canada completed the group with 15 points and set up a quarterfinal game against defending champion Finland, which finished third in Group A. The Finns routed Denmark 7-1.

The Czechs finished fourth with 13 points.

Germany shut out France 5-0 in its final group game to clinch a place in the quarterfinals.

John Peterka had a goal and an assist and goaltender Mathias Niederberger stopped 13 shots for the shutout as Germany finished fourth in Group A with 12 points.

Defending champions Titans beaten by 15 runs

Super Kings reach Indian Premier League final

CHENNAI, India, May 24, (AP): Chennai Super Kings powered their way to a record-breaking 10th Indian

Premier League final with a 15-run win over defending champion Gujarat Titans in the playoffs.

Opening batter Rituraj Gaikwad top-scored in the match with 60 off 44 balls before cameos from the

Chennai middle-order batters guided the home team to 172-7.

Chennai didn't deviate from its perfect bowling script of squeezing the teams through spinners in the middle overs as Gujarat got bowled out for 157 off the final ball.

It was a remarkable turnaround for four-time champion Chennai this season after finishing ninth last year.

"I think IPL is too big to say it is just another final," Chennai captain Mahendra Singh Dhoni said. "Ten teams makes it all the more tougher. Everyone has contributed. Yes, middle order hasn't got ample opportunity but they have chipped in."

Gujarat, one of the best chasers in the IPL, couldn't get momentum in the run-chase when fast bowler Deepak Chahar (2-29) continued to excel in the powerplay and had Wriddhiman Saha caught in the deep in the third over.

Even Shubman Gill, who came into the playoff with two successive centuries, struggled to get going against hard lengths of Chennai bowlers to score 42 off 38 balls before Chahar also had him caught in the deep off a brilliant short ball in his return spell.

CRICKET

Spinners Ravindra Jadeja (2-18) and Maheesh Theekshana (2-28) then squeezed the runs in the middle overs as they found plenty of help off the wicket before Rashid Khan hit a rapid 30 off 16 balls to narrow down the defeat.

Chennai's find of the tournament fast bowler Matheesha Pathirana (2-37) was a bit wayward bowling seven wide balls before the Sri Lankan pacer wrapped up the innings by claiming the last wicket of Mohammed Shami off the final ball.

Earlier, after being put into bat, Gaikwad dominated an 87-run opening wicket stand with Devon Conway, who struggled to score 40 off 34 balls.

Darshan Nalkande became only the fifth player in the history of IPL to play his first game of the season in the playoff and also had Gaikwad caught at mid-wicket off a no-ball in his first over.

Gaikwad hit seven fours and a six before he holed out at long-on in the 11th over off Mohit Sharma (2-31) and Conway tried to accelerate in the death overs but also picked up Rashid Khan at deep mid-wicket off Shami (2-28).

However, Jadeja made 22 off 16 balls while Ambati Rayudu and Ajinkya Rahane both scored quick 17s to propel Chennai's total. Shami conceded 15 runs off the final over after allowing only 13 off his first three overs.

"We were quite spot on but we made some basic errors," said Gujarat captain Hardik Pandya, who made eight before getting caught at point inside the powerplay. "We must've conceded 16 runs or so due to our soft balls, (but) we have one more chance of going to the final. Two days later we will give it a crack again."

Pricing defended

6.8 million tickets sold so far: organizers of Paris Oly

PARIS, May 24, (AP): Organizers of the Paris Olympics said they have sold 6.8 million tickets out of 10 million available with 14 months left before the opening ceremony and brushed off criticism that prices are too high.

Tony Estanguet, the organizing committee president, said the second ticketing phase that ended last week exceeded expectations despite some fans - and athletes - complaining about hefty prices.

The most expensive tickets are 2,700 euros (\$2,900) for the opening ceremony, and the sports with the highest prices are the athletics, swimming and basketball finals. The cheapest tickets are 24 euros (\$26) and were quickly snapped up, leaving just 200,000 low-cost seats available in a later round to the frustration of many buyers.

OLYMPICS

A key goal was to keep a large amount of tickets affordable, said Estanguet, citing that the 5.3 percent of tickets that cost 400 euros each are guaranteeing that four million seats can be bought for 50 euros or less.

"There is a very big appetite among the public, French and international," Estanguet said. "It is an important success in terms of sales. It's rather a good news for the Paris 2024 Games."

A total of 5.2 million tickets have been sold to the general public across the first two phases - with 1.6 million going to corporate partners and others.

During the second phase only - for the sale of individual tickets and which saw four million people register for the draw - a total of 1.89 million tickets were sold in 178 countries. Fifty-eight percent of those went for 100 euros or less.

"Our goal was to sell 1.5 million tickets and we were more successful than expected," Estanguet said.

Some 610,000 seats were sold at 24 euros, he added. More tickets will be put on the market this summer, without a lottery, and a resale platform is set to open in 2024.

Estanguet said "in volume and price, there are very affordable tickets that have been put on sale, and bought."

More than 3.25 million tickets were sold in the first phase earlier this year, featuring packages for multiple sports.

Organizers did not give a detailed breakdown by country but said the



Bach



Chennai Super Kings' Deepak Chahar bowls a delivery during the Indian Premier League qualifier cricket match between Chennai Super Kings and Gujarat Titans in Chennai, India. (AP)



Alberto Dainese, (second from left), sprints with Jonathan Milan and Michael Matthews to win the 17th stage of the Giro d'Italia, tour of Italy cycling race, from Pergine Valsugana to Caorle. (AP)

Sports

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Dainese claims Giro stage, Thomas leads

CAORLE, Italy, May 24, (AP): Local rider Alberto Dainese won the 17th stage of the Giro d'Italia in a mass sprint that was decided in a photo finish Wednesday, while Geraint Thomas' overall lead was unchanged in the last flat day before the race concludes in Rome on Sunday.

Dainese, who rides for Team DSM, finished just ahead of Jonathan Milan and Michael Matthews but had no reaction at the finish while the trio waited to be told the official results.

In the overall standings, Thomas remained 18 seconds ahead of Joao Almeida and 29 seconds ahead of Primoz Roglic.

The stage offered a day off from climbing as the 195-kilometer (121-mile) route from Pergine Valsugana to Caorle started with a gradual descent before a long, flat finish.

Dainese, who is from the Veneto region where the stage ended, required nearly 4½ hours to complete the route and earn his second career win in the Giro after also winning a sprinting leg last year.

"It's more special winning at home," Dainese said. "I knew every bump and hole in the road."

Starting on Thursday, there are three straight days of hard climbing that should decide the race winner.

CYCLING

The race returns to the high mountains in stage 18 on Thursday with two first category climbs followed by two second-category climbs in the finale - including an uphill finish - along the 161-kilometer (100-mile) route from Oderzo to Val di Zoldo.

Thomas will celebrate his 37th birthday on Thursday.

Veteran sprint specialist Mark Cavendish announced Monday that he will retire from cycling at the end of this season, which could see him break the long-standing record for most stage wins at the Tour de France.

The British rider, who competes for the Astana Qazaqstan team, turned 38 the previous day.

"Cycling has been my life for over 25 years. I have lived an absolute dream," he said.

Celtics stave off elimination



Miami Heat forward Caleb Martin (16) drives to the basket as Boston Celtics forward Grant Williams (12) defends during the first half of Game 4 in the NBA basketball playoffs Eastern Conference finals in Miami. (AP)

Barcelona lose to Valladolid

Sociedad strengthen hold on final CL spot

MADRID, May 24, (AP): Barcelona forward Raphinha took off his jersey and revealed his message of support for fellow Brazilian Vinicius Junior.

The message, which included anti-racism words in Portuguese and the phrase "we are together. Vini," was on his undershirt and visible when Raphinha was substituted off in the second half of Barcelona's 3-1 loss to Valladolid. He raised his right fist while leaving the field. Real Sociedad strengthened its hold on the final Champions League spot with a 1-0 home win over 10-man Almeria.

It was the first matchday in the Spanish league since the outpouring of support for Vinicius Junior following the latest case of racial abuse against the Real Madrid star forward on the weekend.

Vinicius, who is Black, has been subjected to repeated racist taunts since he arrived in Spain five years ago. Since the Spanish league season began in September, he has experienced racist abuse by fans of at least five rival teams, including Valencia on Sunday.

Barcelona's second consecutive defeat since clinching the title with games to spare was overshadowed by the fallout from that.

Players from Barcelona and Valladolid held a banner before the match with the words "racists out of football," which is one of the slogans of a campaign against racism launched jointly by the Spanish league, Spanish federation and the government's top sports authority.

Anti-racism slogans were also shown during the national and international broadcast of the game.

The win moved Valladolid three points clear of the relegation zone. The club owned by former Brazil striker Ronaldo can stay safe going into the last two rounds if Getafe fails to win at Real Betis on Wednesday.

Barcelona was coming off a 2-1 loss to Real Sociedad at home after securing its first Spanish league title since 2019 in the previous round.

Valladolid, which had lost five straight matches, took a 3-0 lead with an own-goal by Barcelona defender Andreas Christensen and with goals from Cyle Larin and Gonzalo Plata. Robert Lewandowski, the league's leading scorer, netted late for Barcelona.

"Beating Barcelona gives us a lot of confidence going forward," Plata said. "Now we have two finals left and hopefully we can reach our goal of staying in the first division."

Takefusa Kubo scored the winner

Kuwait to host Gulf Cup in December 2024

KUWAIT CITY, May 24, (KUNA): The Arab Gulf Football Federation (AGCFF) granted Kuwait the honor of hosting the 26th Gulf Cup in December 2024.

The Federation agreed to Kuwait's hosting (Gulf 26) for the

fifth time in its history, in 1974, 1990, 2003 and 2017, Kuwait Football Association said via its Twitter account Wednesday.

Kuwait holds the record for the number of times winning the cup for 10 times.

in first-half stoppage time to give Sociedad its second straight victory - and fourth in five matches.

The win allowed Sociedad to open an eight-point gap to fifth-place Villarreal, which hosts relegation-threatened Cadiz on Wednesday. Sociedad will clinch the Champions League place if Villarreal fails to beat Cadiz.

Almeria, sitting four points from the relegation zone, has lost three of its last five games. It had forward Luis Suarez sent off with a straight red card in the 36th.

SOCCER

Celta Vigo opened a five-point gap to the bottom three after a 1-1 draw with Girona.

Celta got on the board first with a goal by Carles Pérez in the 42nd. The visitors equalized with a penalty kick converted by Cristhian Stuani in the 59th. Stuani scored on his second attempt after the first was saved by the goalkeeper. The penalty was ordered to be retaken because a Celta player entered the area before the kick.



From left, Valladolid's Sergio Escudero, Barcelona's Frenkie de Jong and Barcelona's Eric Garcia go for a header during Spanish La Liga soccer match between Valladolid and FC Barcelona at the Jose Zorrilla stadium in Valladolid, Spain. (AP)

Argentina 'secure' spot in KO stage, US move closer

BUENOS AIRES, Argentina, May 24, (AP): Argentina secured its spot in the knockout stage of the Under-20 World Cup on Tuesday with a convincing 3-0 win over Guatemala.

The United States moved closer to the Round of 16 with a 3-0 victory over Fiji in Group B.

Argentina faced little difficulty against Guatemala, with the tournament hosts opening the scoring in the 17th minute with a header by Alejo Veliz. A red card for midfielder Carlos Santos in the 58th made it easier for the locals in Santiago del Estero, and they doubled their lead with Luka Romero in the 65th.

Argentina's Tomás Aviles was sent off in the 82nd, but the hosts still found an opportunity in stoppage time to score when midfielder Máximo Perrone pushing the ball to an empty net.

In the earlier Group A encounter,

Sherzod Esanov scored in second-half stoppage time as Uzbekistan rallied to salvage a 2-2 draw against New Zealand. Uzbekistan trailed 2-0 after first-half goals by Benjamin Wallace and Jay Herdman. Abbosbek Fayzullaev started the comeback with a goal in the 51st minute.

Argentina has six points in two matches and cannot finish lower than second place in the group. The six-time champions play New Zealand on Friday. New Zealand has four points and Uzbekistan, which finishes the group stage against Guatemala, has one.

The top two teams of each group and the four best third-place teams at the 24-team tournament will advance to the Round of 16.

Earlier, with Fiji sitting back in defense, the Americans didn't score until the 66th minute when midfielder Diego Luna curled in a shot from the edge of the box. Winger Cade Cowell doubled the lead with a similar strike in the 88th before defender Caleb Wiley sealed it with a stoppage-time tap-in.

The United States has six points after two victories in Group B, but Ecuador and Slovakia, with three points each, could also reach that number.

SOCCER

The Ecuadorians, who have in striker Kendry Paez one of the stars of the tournament, beat Slovakia 2-1 in San Juan. Slovak midfielder Máté Szolgai scored in the 29th, but Ecuador responded with goals by center-forward Justin Cuero on half time and by striker José Klinger in the 59th.

The U.S. will face Slovakia and Ecuador will take on Fiji in the last of the group games.

Tatum scores 33, Boston routs Heat

MIAMI, May 24, (AP): Down nine early in the third quarter, down 3-0 in the series, the Boston Celtics knew their season was completely on the brink.

Three minutes later, everything looked different.

Jayson Tatum had 33 points and 11 rebounds, Jaylen Brown added 17 points and the Celtics staved off elimination in the Eastern Conference finals by running away in the second half to beat the Miami Heat 116-99 in Game 4 on Tuesday night.

BASKETBALL

"We were just trying to save our season," Tatum said.

They most definitely found a way to do that. The two big differences: a 30-point edge for the Celtics on 3-pointers, and an 18-0 run in that three-minute, third-quarter spurt that changed the game and - they hope - might end up changing the series.

"We can't relax," Celtics coach Joe Mazzulla said. "We have to keep the same level of intensity, the same mindset, the same focus in the next game."

Derrick White scored 16 points, Grant Williams had 14, Al Horford added 12 and Marcus Smart scored 11 for the Celtics, who still trail the series 3-1 - but sent it back to Boston for a Game 5 on Thursday.

Jimmy Butler scored 29 for Miami, which was outscored 48-22 in a 14-minute stretch that turned the game - and perhaps the series - completely around. Boston would also have Game 7 on its floor as well if it can keep extending this series.

"Tonight we played with pace, purpose," Tatum said. "We were getting stops. We were getting out in transition. You see layups and free throws go in, the jump shots start to feel a lot easier."

Gabe Vincent scored 17 for Miami, Caleb Martin had 16 and Bam Adebayo added 10. The Heat shot 8 for 32 on 3-pointers, while Boston was 18 for 45.

No team in NBA history has ever successfully rallied from a 3-0 deficit in a best-of-seven series; 150 have tried, 150 have failed.

But the Celtics gave themselves hope. "We don't really have a choice," Mazzulla said. "It's do-or-die. Got to stick together."

The Heat led by as many as nine points in the opening quarter, kept



Boston Celtics guard Jaylen Brown (7) drives to the basket as Miami Heat center Bam Adebayo (13) defends during the second half of Game 4 during the NBA basketball playoffs Eastern Conference finals in Miami. (AP)

the lead for the majority of the first half and were up by nine again when Max Strus connected on a 3-pointer early in the third quarter.

That was the moment where Boston's season was at stake.

And the Celtics responded - most emphatically.

The 18-0 run took Boston from down nine to up nine, a huge turnaround that took 3 minutes, 3 seconds. The Celtics were 6 of 7 from the floor during the run, 4 of 4 from 3-point range. Tatum had nine of the 18 points and just like that the defending East champions - who won three playoff games on Miami's home floor in last year's playoffs - were rolling again.

"We always say the last one to get is the hardest one to get," Adebayo said. "I knew they would be desperate."

Miami got within four late in the third, only to see another lightning-fast spurt by the Celtics - this time, seven unanswered points in 40 seconds. Boston's edge was 88-79 going into the fourth, after winning the third quarter 38-23, with 21 of those points coming on 3-pointers.

The Celtics kept the lead the rest of the way.

"They got us tonight," Heat coach Erik Spoelstra said. "You have to give them credit for that. There's no doubt about it. There's no questioning it. We're not wondering about that. They deserved to win tonight. We have to regroup and get ready for a great opportunity in Boston."