

baseball
Page 14



Pages 15 & 16
soccer

Kuwait eyes residency transfer reform on violation clause

— Details Page 2 —

Kuwait hits Iraq maritime pact ruling



GCC-US ministerial meeting in progress.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs photo

Consensus seen

NEW YORK, Sept 19, (KUNA): Kuwait Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Salem Abdullah Al-Jaber Al-Sabah denounced in the strongest terms the recent Iraqi Federal Court ruling over the issue of Khor Abdullah in which Kuwait and Iraq signed a 2012 agreement to regulate maritime navigation.

Speaking to KUNA late Monday on the sideline of the 78th session of the UN General Assembly, Sheikh Salem said that the Iraqi decision was based on ahistorical claims, affirming that he had reflected the State of Kuwait's stance on the issue during his meetings with GCC Foreign Ministers.

He reiterated Kuwait's stance during the GCC Foreign Ministers meeting with US Secretary of State Antony Blinken, affirming that the gathering came out with consensus of views on the issue.

Sheikh Salem hoped that the Iraqi government would take necessary steps to handle the case and respect the sovereignty of the State of Kuwait and agreed upon treaties.

Sheikh Salem presented a narrative on a recent verdict by the Iraqi Federal Supreme Court, which canceled agreement on maritime navigation in Khor Abdullah, according to a press release from the Kuwaiti Foreign Ministry.

The agreement, ratified by parliaments of both Kuwait and Iraq in 2013, was lodged at the UN, the minister told the meeting, noting that Iraqi court ruling contained offending fallacies against the State of Kuwait.

On his part, Secretary Blinken said he understood Kuwait's stance on the agreement, stressing the US commitment to protection of Kuwait's security, safety, sovereignty and territorial integrity, as well as the security of the Gulf region.

The GCC-US meeting dealt also with regional topics of common interest, and strategic partnership between the GCC and the US, according to the statement.

Meanwhile, Deputy Kuwait Foreign Minister Ambassador Sheikh Jarrah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah expressed late Monday Kuwait's firm stance on the Khor Abdullah agreement with Iraq, saying that the latter party's federal court took unnecessary decision based on ahistorical claims.

According to a Foreign Ministry statement, Sheikh Jarrah reflected Kuwait's stance on the matter during his participation in the GCC-UK meeting held on the sideline of the 78th UN General Assembly in New York.

Continued on Page 4

Opinion

Co-education ... and the battle of wills

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

I AM shocked by a country where officials do not accept advice, but rather fight it, and listen to the profiteers who coat falsehood with truth. They frustrate major projects when they have no interest in them, and they put pressure on people with many slogans. If any citizen confronts them, they deliberately slap accusations against them, such as false rumors, as they do in the police states.

I am shocked by a country where officials see the truth and then deviate from it, due to the fact that there are those who make the right thing appear wrong. For this reason, the right things to do become rare in the corridors of falsehood, which has a thousand doors, to the point that if one of them comes out to be addressed, it will be like a missing child; rather, it is born with a thousand faults in it because the opportunists have exploited it to such an extent that it is almost dead.

There are many cases that have been waiting for a decision for three decades. Some of them have been consumed for a long time and drunk to the point of satiety, as if the parliamentarians and ministers were intending not to wake them from their slumber to avoid their negligence being exposed, or so that their political and financial investment in it is not exposed.

That is why there are projects that have passed more than four decades and are still subject to change orders, such as the university city. Some of them were scheduled to be completed within two years, but they are now entering their fourth year, and are still crawling on the path of implementation like a turtle, such as the new Kuwait Airport. Also, some of them have turned into shameful scandals such as roads.

Not to mention poor education, and other problems resulting from one another, as if Kuwaitis were doomed to spend their lives waiting for mirages, while many of them require the decision of a minister or the one above him to be bold, and not to a session of the National Assembly or to settlements, but rather it is at the core of the daily work of ministers.

In the majority of countries in the world that seek to rely on their own strength, arms deals are not managed by intermediaries who inflate prices artificially, as it did in some deals that were concluded in Paris hotels, the result of which was a scandal that exposed the money obtained by the middlemen when they disagreed on dividing the shares.

In reality, countries can contract directly with arms factories, and the cost ends up being much lower than what the middlemen and brokers put forward.

These are some examples that Kuwait suffers from, and is directly threatened by, either in financial or economic stability, and even social stability as well, which has become an occasion for political as well as financial investment, and is subject to deals. For example, the issue of co-education and efforts to prevent it, which indicates a struggle of wills, and the subjection of society to the vision of a group of parliamentarians who invest in it on all fronts.

Continued on Page 4

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Newswatch

KUWAIT CITY: The Communication and IT Regulatory Authority (CITRA) said Monday that a technical team managed to fix a cut in the internet cable linking Kuwait to the international network.

The glitch, affected some internet service providers, has been fixed and the internet speed was brought back to normal as soon as possible, CITRA said in a post on its X account. (KUNA)

WASHINGTON: US National Security Advisor Jake Sullivan welcomed as constructive the dialogue conducted last week between the Government of Iraq and the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) to resolve the outstanding issues "in a manner consistent with the Iraqi constitution."

"We are encouraged by the Government of Iraq's decision to release additional funds to the KRG to help ensure civil servants receive their salaries and to promote stability and economic growth," he said in a statement on Monday. (KUNA) (KUNA)

IRBIL, Iraq: An airstrike on a military airport in northern Iraq's semi-autonomous Kurdish region killed three people Monday, local officials said.

The region's counter-terrorism service said in a statement that the attack on the Arbat Airport, 28 kilometers southeast of the city of Suleimaniyah killed three of its personnel and injured three members of the Kurdish Peshmerga forces. (AP)

ABU DHABI: UAE President Sheikh Mohammad bin Zayed Al Nahyan met his Egyptian counterpart Abdel-Fattah Al-Sisi at Qasr Al Shaati in Abu Dhabi on Monday to discuss the bilateral relations and regional and international issues of common concern.

The talks focused on cooperation in the economic, investment and development areas, with a view to serving the interests of the peoples of both countries, UAE news agency WAM reported. (KUNA)

CAIRO: The 32nd meeting of the Arab League's customs and information committee started Tuesday at the headquarters of the General Secretariat, chaired by Saudi Arabia and the participation of representatives of the customs administrations in the Arab countries.

Chief of economic integration directorate at the League of Arab States, Bahjat Abu Al-Nasser said in his opening statement that the agenda would include a number of important topics. (KUNA)

DAMASCUS: Syria's President Bashar Assad will head to China later this week in his first visit to Beijing since the start of his country's 12-year conflict during which China has been one of his main backers, his office said Tuesday.

China has been expanding its reach in the Middle East after mediating a deal in March between Saudi Arabia and Iran, and it continues to support Assad in the Syrian conflict, which has killed half a million people and left large parts of the nation in ruins. (AP)

IDLIB, Syria: A Kurdish-led force attacked Turkish-backed opposition fighters in northern Syria on Monday, killing at least 13 of the militants, activists said.

The opposition activists blamed the Kurdish-led Syrian Democratic Forces for carrying out the assault, though the U.S.-backed group did not claim responsibility. (AP)



President of Iran Ebrahim Raisi signs a guest book as he meets with United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres at U.N. headquarters, Sept. 18, 2023. (AP)

Over 30,000 Libya flood refugees

GENEVA, Sept 19, (KUNA): United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) announced on Tuesday that hurricane Daniel that ravaged Libya left out more than 30,000 refugees in the City of Derna, and 3,000 others in Ajdabiya.

This came in a virtual press conference where Assistant Chief of Mission Rana Ksaifi affirmed, "The situation on the ground is more than catastrophic with an unimaginable level of destruction, as homes, buildings, shops, hospitals and schools are almost completely submerged and thousands of people have lost everything."

"UNHCR has records that include more than 50,000 persons in Libya who are seeking asylum, including those who were living in areas affected by the floods. In addition to 2,800 internally displaced people from eastern Libya who were settled in Derna and more than 3,000 in Ajdabiya, as the disaster elevated their suffering into a new level," she said.



U.S. officials arrange a group photo after freed Americans Siamak Namazi, Morad Tahbaz and Emad Shargi, as well as two returnees not yet named by the U.S. government, who were released in a prisoner swap deal between U.S and Iran, arrived at Davison Army Airfield, Tuesday, Sept 19, 2023 at Fort Belvoir, Va. (AP)

'Nightmare finally over'

Americans detained for years in Iran arrived home Tuesday, tearfully hugged their loved ones and declared "Freedom!" after being let go as part of a politically risky deal that saw President Joe Biden agree to the release of nearly \$6 billion in frozen Iranian assets.

The prisoners landed at Fort Belvoir, Virginia, with clapping and cheers heard in the predawn hours. Siamak Namazi, the first off the jet, paused for a moment, closed his eyes and took a deep breath before leaving the plane.

Loved ones, some holding small American flags, enveloped them in hugs and exchanged greetings in English and Farsi, the main language of Iran.

"The nightmare is finally over," Namazi's brother, Babak, said at the airport.

"We haven't had this moment in over eight years," he added, his arm around his brother and his formerly detained father, Baquer, who had been earlier released by Iran. "It's unbelievable." (AP)

Biden to emphasize Abraham Accords

More in US doubt Israel shares values

NEW YORK, Sept 19, (AP): As U.S. President Joe Biden prepares to meet Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu this week in New York, a new poll finds that while Americans generally view Israel as a partner or ally, many question whether his far-right government shares American values.

The poll results from The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research and the meeting come during a new period of tension between the Biden administration and Israel. Those tensions are caused by Netanyahu's proposed judicial overhaul that has sparked mass protests in major Israeli cities, ongoing disagreements over how to deal with Iran and how to approach the Palestinians, and comments from Netanyahu political allies that have irked U.S. officials.

Despite the friction, Biden, who spoke out in barely disguised opposition to the judicial plan, and Netanyahu are expected to project a solid partnership in which the U.S. continues to support Israel's security.

Biden will also emphasize that the U.S. is continuing to work on expanding the Trump-era Abraham Accords, which normalized Israeli relations with several Arab countries, to include

Saudi Arabia. However, there is little sign of an imminent breakthrough on that front.

Although the poll showed that Americans overwhelmingly view Israel as more of a friend than a foe, it also found that they are divided on whether Israel is a country with which the U.S. shares common interests and values.

About 4 in 10 Americans described Israel as a partner with which the U.S. should cooperate, but they also said the country does not share U.S. interests and values, the poll found. Only about 3 in 10 said Israel is an ally that shares U.S. interests. Republicans (44%) are more likely than Democrats (25%) to call Israel an ally with shared values. About 2 in 10 Americans described Israel as either a U.S. rival or an adversary.

The U.S. provides Israel with more than \$3 billion a year in military and other assistance and the close relationship has endured over the decades despite not infrequent spats over policy, most notably over Iran and treatment of the Palestinians.

Overall, 61% of Americans disapprove of how Biden is handling the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, with only 35% approving. That number was slightly lower than Biden's overall approval rating.

Prayer Timings

Fajr 04:15 Asr 15:10
 Sunrise .. 05:34 Maghrib .. 17:49
 Zohr 11:42 Isha 19:06

Local

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

Expected weather for the next 24 hours:

By Day: Hot and partly cloudy with light to moderate northwesterly wind to light variable wind with speeds of 08-32 km/h.
By Night: Rather hot and part-

Weather

ly cloudy with light to moderate northwesterly wind to light variable wind with speeds of 06-26 km/h.

Station	Max Exp	Min Rec
Kuwait City	45	33
Kuwait Airport	44	25

Abdaly	44	25
Jahra	45	29
Salmiyah	42	32
Ahmadi	42	34
Nuwaisib	42	26
Wafra	44	25

PAM mulls over worker residency transfer without the sponsor approval

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 19: Dr. Fahd Murad, the Acting Deputy Director for the Protection Sector Affairs at the Public Authority for Manpower, stated that PAM is currently exploring the feasibility of enabling expatriate workers to transfer their residency directly from one employer to another without requiring the original employer's approval, reports Al-Jarida daily.

This would be permissible if it is confirmed that the sponsor has violated the terms and conditions specified in the employment contract or any provisions of Law No. (6/2010) concerning work in the private sector.

In a press statement during an introductory visual presentation organized by the Authority, Dr. Murad highlighted that the Authority is meticulously studying a set of procedures aimed at facilitating labor transfers between employers.

These procedures are designed to ensure a fair balance, respecting the rights of both employers and employees without infringing upon or overstepping legal boundaries. He emphasized that maintaining equity in the labor equation is a priority for the Authority.

Regarding potential amendments to the Private Labor Law, Dr. Murad clarified that while there haven't been any amendments thus far, the Commission is actively reviewing certain articles. They are collecting information and observations to determine the necessity of amending the law. He noted that the Commission consistently gathers feedback from diplomatic missions' representatives in Kuwait concerning their nationals' labor rights, ensuring a careful and swift response.

Addressing the recruitment of domestic workers, Dr. Murad underscored the government's policy to expand recruitment opportunities beyond a limited number of countries, aiming to accommodate workers from various markets. He revealed plans to sign new memorandums of understanding with several East Asian countries to meet the demand for domestic workers from citizens and residents.

In terms of labor complaints, Dr. Murad mentioned the possibility for both workers and employers to schedule complaint submissions through the authority's electronic platform, streamlining the complaint process. Efforts are

underway to enhance the complaint-handling procedures and mitigate any delays. Additionally, plans are in progress to create comprehensive individual worker files to aid in resolving labor disputes and disagreements.

Dr. Murad also discussed ongoing efforts to establish a shelter center for male expatriate workers, similar to the existing center for women in the Jleeb area. This initiative is part of a broader strategy to improve shelter services for trafficking victims, with collaboration and coordination with the International Labor Organization for studies, plans, and programs in this area.

Colonel Abdulaziz Al-Kandari, the Colonel in the Residency Affairs Investigations at the Ministry of Interior, highlighted that a recent operation resulted in the apprehension of a company engaged in human trafficking, responsible for bringing in over 2,000 expatriate workers.

The company coerced these workers into obtaining loans and extorted money from them to waive malicious absenteeism reports, ultimately leading to legal actions taken by the Public Prosecution against the perpetrators.



KUNA photo

Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Salem Abdullah Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets with the US Secretary of State Dirk Schully.

FM, US official talk on Iraq move

Kuwait Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Salem Abdullah Al-Jaber Al-Sabah met Monday with the Advisor to the US Secretary of State, Dirk Schully, on the sidelines of the 78th United Nations General Assembly in New York.

During the talks, the whereabouts of a recent ruling by the Iraqi Federal Supreme Court, which rescinded the

agreement on maritime navigation at Khor Abdullah were discussed.

For his part, the US official expressed his understanding of the position of Kuwait towards this ruling, stressing the commitment of the US to preserving the security of Kuwait and respecting the sovereignty of countries over their lands and territorial waters. (KUNA)

'Official visit to boost relations'

HH CP leaves for China Wednesday

By Amna Al-Shemmari

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 19, (KUNA): His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah is scheduled to head for China on Wednesday on an official visit aimed at bolstering bilateral relations and broadening further the already substantial cooperation between Kuwait and Beijing.

Kuwait was the first Gulf state to establish full-scale diplomatic relations with China (1971).

The strategic Kuwait-China relationship has been evolving, serving aspirations of the two countries namely with respect of development schemes. Moreover, Kuwait was the first Arab state to ink a memorandum of understanding with China for involvement in China's strategy, "belt and road."

New Kuwait 2035 development strategy has given further impetus for the country's drive to cement ties with China, with the prime goals of overhauling the Kuwaiti economy to render it diversified and sustainable; thus largely becoming in harmony with the Chinese economic strategy.

Development of the Kuwaiti-Chinese relations witnessed a major leap in 2018, when the late Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ah-

mad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah visited the Asian nation, adding to the significance of the political-economic partnership between the two countries.

The diplomatic efforts led to concrete outcome, particularly when volume of the Kuwait-China trade exchanges soared to USD 31.48 billion in 2022.

Kuwait is the seventh top exporter of crude oil to China and there are more than 60 Chinese companies in Kuwait, contributing to 80 key projects.

The Gulf state highly values China's stand with Kuwait in the face of the 1990 Iraqi aggression and role of the Chinese firemen in putting out flames at oil wells, set ablaze by the occupiers before they withdrew from the country.

In May 2020, amid the coronavirus plight, a Chinese medical team came to Kuwait to furnish the Kuwaiti authorities with Beijing's expertise in coping with the pandemic. In March 2020, the Kuwaiti Government donated USD three million to China to assist Beijing in the efforts against the communicable virus.

At the educational level, China grants academic scholarships to Kuwaiti students and sends Chinese students to the country to study the Arabic language.

Other Voices

Judges must only be men?

By Ahmad alsarraf

One of the most beautiful manifestations of democracy is the supremacy of the judiciary in the state. Without democracy, there is no constitution, and without it, there are no state institutions, no judiciary that can be relied upon, no clear penal code, and no equality in litigation!

But the delay in issuing verdicts is equally harmful to not issuing them, and perhaps even tampering with them.

From time to time, His Highness the Prime Minister makes visits to some government agencies, and the last of these visits was to the Jahra Hospital.

What we urgently need is a visit by His Highness, with his entire Cabinet members, to the judicial facility, to make an effort and extend a hand of cooperation to the judicial authority, our last resort, to overcome all obstacles facing it, as the judicial situation has almost spiraled out of control.

I feel and know, like others interested in public affairs, the great responsibility placed on the shoulders of the President and members of the Supreme Judicial Council, and the almost mythical size of the cases heard by the courts, especially

the Court of Cassation.

This is a worrying matter, as a short while ago I received notices from the Justice Department stating that some cases involving me will be heard by the court of first instance after two years! This means that I will most likely not survive to see the issuance of final rulings in these cases, especially when there are more than 70,000 appeals before the Courts of Cassation to decide on them, and no judge's conscience allows them to issue rulings in them quickly and hastily.

The suffering of citizens and residents with the issue of delayed issuance of rulings has already become a worrying concern, and requires the three state authorities to come together to develop appropriate solutions to resolve this dilemma. This often prompted MP Jenan Bushehri to submit a request for the return of the Legislative Committee in the National Assembly to discuss this issue.

It was funny, and even disgraceful, to read the proposal put forward by a number of MPs, asking that judges be men only, forgetting all the state's problems that have accumulated over the years, and all the difficulties that the judiciary complains about, from the accumulation of appeals, the loss of files, and the delay in implementing the law, rulings, the severe shortage of secretaries, the printing of rulings, the loss of files, and many others.

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Details sought on 'MEW' hackers

'What are you doing to curb drugs spread?'; 3 ministers queried

By Saeed Mahmoud Saleh
Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 19: MP Marzouq Al-Hebeini has forwarded queries to Minister of Electricity, Water and Renewable Energy Jassem Al-Ostad about the arrest of a gang that hacked the electronic systems in the ministry.

He asked if the gang members include current or former ministry employees or those under the sponsorship of the companies that signed contracts with the ministry, list of companies and copies of contracts if the response is in the affirmative, if the usernames of officials were used to hack the systems and if these officials processed illegal transactions.

MP Khalid Al-Tamar asked Minister of State for Municipal and Communication Affairs Fahd Al-Shulah if licenses were granted to Red Bull Mobile operator in the last three months. If yes, he demanded for copies of the licenses and value of the contract. He also inquired if Red Bull Mobile published promotion advertisements before obtaining the licenses, if complaints were filed against it, measures that the Communications and Information Technology Regulatory Authority (CITRA) took regarding the complaints, copy of the decree issued by the Council of Ministers to form the Board of Directors of CITRA including the positions occupied by the members in the last five years, if any of them are board members of other entities or if they serve as consultants in other companies. He requested for copies of the decisions of the Council of Ministers specifying the salaries and allowances of CITRA's board members.

MP Muhammad Al-Mahan asked Minister of Education, Higher Education and Scientific Research Adel Al-Mane about the plan of the ministry to curb the spread of drugs among students; if the ministry has a strategy to raise awareness among youths and warn them about the devastating effects of drugs, and copy of the strategy if the answer is 'yes'.

He also forwarded queries to Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Talal Khalid Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah about the strategy of the ministry in fighting against drugs; number of citizens and expatriates accused of trafficking and possessing drugs since Jan 1, 2015 till date; reasons behind the spread of drugs; and measures taken to eliminate this social menace.

Strategy

He asked the health minister about the strategy to prevent the spread of drugs, number of individuals undergoing treatment for drug addiction and other related health conditions in public and private hospitals and clinics since Jan 1, 2015 till date; number of drug-related deaths; and if there is a plan to establish clinics and centers for drug addiction treatment.

MP Dawoud Ma'arafi forwarded queries to Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Salem Al-Sabah about the number of employees under contracts at the ministry classifying them into citizens, children of Kuwaiti women married to foreigners, Bedouins and expatriates.

He wants to know the actual manpower needs of the ministry, number of nationals appointed since 2020 till date, number of vacant supervisory posts, if they have been advertised, number of national and expatriate consultants at the offices of the minister, undersecretary and assistant undersecretaries.

MP Mubarak Al-Tasha asked Minister of Justice and State Minister for Housing Affairs Faleh Al-Raqaba if any of the courts ruled against any of the ministers since the issuance of decree number 116/2023 on the formation of the current government on June 18, 2023. If yes, he wants to know which court issued the ruling - First Instance, Appeals or Cassation, and list of concerned ministers.

He asked Minister of Commerce and Industry and State Minister for Youth Affairs Muhammad Al-Aiban about the number of consultants in the ministry and its subsidiaries including their nationalities, qualifications, salaries, allowances, job performance assessment in the last five years, committees they joined, training courses they passed and official tasks.

He inquired about the measures taken to oversee the lotteries organized by banks and malls to promote their products, list of lotteries held in the last five years including the names of winners and their nationalities, names of the members of the committee tasked to attend the lotteries, copies of the committee's report on each lottery including violations if any, number of individuals who won more than once since Jan 1, 2018 till date, legal action if any, and if the ministry or Consumer Protection Department received complaints about lotteries in the last five years.

MP Hassan Jawhar asked Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Talal Khalid Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah about the reasons behind the delayed completion of the traffic safety project, which was included in the development plan for fiscal 2020/2021 and was supposed to be completed in fiscal 2021/2022. He wants to know if the ministry questioned those tasked to complete the project, action taken against them if the answer is 'yes', reasons for not taking action if the answer is 'no', and completion percentage of the project as at the end of the first quarter of fiscal 2023/2024.



Marzouq Al-Hebeini



Muhammad Al-Mahan



KUNA photo

Chief of Kuwaiti Chamber of Commerce and Industry Mohammad Al-Sager poses for a picture with the French Ambassador to Kuwait Claire Le Flecher.

Kuwait, France eye ties boost

Chief of Kuwaiti Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Mohammad Al-Sager, discussed along with French Ambassador to the country, Claire Le Flecher, preparations for the first ever Kuwaiti-French friendship committee meeting taking place in Paris on Sept 28.

Chamber Chief Al-Sager, also head of the Kuwaiti side, mentioned in press statement that this visit aims to find best possible solutions for challenges to achieve economic development between both nations.

Al-Sager commended the significant role of the French Embassy for their contributions, and added that he is looking forward towards meeting with the French side to look over economic, cultural and social opportunities.

As for the French diplomat, she expressed her gratitude for the swift response in forming the committee and heading over to the French capital for the first meeting, saying that the second meeting is set to be held in Kuwait next year. (KUNA)

Plan to impose new fees for use of public services

By Abdul Rahman Al-Shammari
Al-Seyassah Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 19: The Minister of Finance Fahad Al-Jarallah says the state is moving to impose new fees for the use of public facilities and services within the framework of starting to implement the projects included in the government's work program, with emphasis on the relevant government agencies in the event of pricing their services on the existence of the appropriate legal tool to impose fees.

He stressed that each entity is responsible for what concerns it in accordance with the laws of its establishment, and in a manner that does not conflict with law No. 79/1995 regarding the fees for the use of public facilities and services.

In response to a parliamentary question submitted by MP Muhallal Al-Mudhaf, Al-Jarallah explained that the government's work program for the 17th legislative term and within the first axis "Public Finance Stability" included a program to increase and develop state revenues. The program has three projects, which are launching a pricing mechanism for public services, the fees, and the violations (developed and renewed periodically), and issuing a general framework for reviewing and re-pricing the state's real estate properties on a periodic basis that takes into account the principles of justice and productivity rates.

The intention is to reconsider the current fees. The reasons go back to what was previously explained in the first paragraph above, that the government's work program includes the first axis of "stability of public finances" to increase and diversify state revenues with the aim of reforming the financial structure for the general public.

Study

The Ministry of Finance has directed all government agencies to study and reconsider the fees imposed by each agency in accordance with the laws of its establishment and in a manner that does not conflict with law No. 79/1995 regarding fees and financial costs, and in exchange for the use of public facilities and services.

Al-Jarallah said, "The Ministry of Finance is currently reconsidering ministerial resolution No. 40/2016 regarding issuing a list of fees for the use of private real estate state properties and service fees."

In response to another question by Al-Mudhaf, Al-Jarallah explained that the Public Institution for Social Security does not charge fees for the services it pro-

vides, other than what is stipulated in article 95 of the Social Security Law issued by the Amiri decree law No. 61/1976.

This includes the fees for issuing the certificate indicating the payment of the subscription to the institution amounting to KD 0.500 for each certificate or taken from it. The government agencies responsible for issuing specific licenses or certificates must condition the issuance of these licenses or certificates or their renewal on the applicant's submission of the aforementioned certificate or an extract thereof.

Imposing any increase or establishing a new fee requires a legislative amendment, and the institution has no intention of doing so.

Directives

In response to the question about the Amiri directives from the political leadership regarding granting retirees percentages of the institution's profits, and whether a portion of the institution's profits will be distributed to retirees, Al-Jarallah said, "Based on the noble desire, a grant was decided for retirees and those entitled to receive their effective shares at the rate of KD 3,000 by law No. 4/2022. The right to increase pensions on an annual basis by KD 20 was decided as of August 1, 2023, as the scheduled increase was KD 30".

He further explained that the social security laws included provisions requiring the establishment of funds, and precisely defined the sources of each fund and the methods of disbursing from it. They obligated the institution to implement the provisions of those laws, which means that the money of those funds should not be disposed of except in accordance with the provisions of the laws regulating them.

This also takes into account that investment returns are considered a resource from the funds' resources in accordance with the social security laws, and are allocated to finance funds based on the disbursement of pension rights to ensure their permanence and the continuation of performing the rights established pursuant to them, and that they may not be disposed of other than for the purposes prescribed by law.

Al-Jarallah stressed that there is no legal objection in the Social Security Law to giving grants to the beneficiaries of its provisions if it becomes clear that there is excess money in the funds after the approval of the institution's Board of Directors, but this is not achieved at the present time because there is a realistic obstacle, which is the actuarial deficit.

diwaniya ديوانية

A DIGEST OF PUBLIC OPINION

'Basic education teaching staff contribute great effort over new university proposal'

A proposal for legislation was put forth by a Member of Parliament advocating the creation of an "autonomous government university", columnist **Dr. Bahija Behbehani** wrote for **Al-Qabas** daily.

"Accompanying this proposal was an explanatory document comprising 37 articles, including Article 2, stipulating that the government should establish an independent government university within three years of the enactment of this law.

"This envisioned university was to be developed comprehensively in scientific, administrative, and financial aspects, with its headquarters situated in the residential city of Sabah Al-Ahmad.

"The executive regulations were to delineate their powers and responsibilities. Moreover, the competent minister was mandated to furnish the National Assembly with a report every three months detailing the actions taken towards the project's implementation and the current executive status.

"Article 3 outlined the university's objective, emphasized the production of proficient and distinguished professionals in the realms of science and development, crucial for bolstering the nation's developmental and economic sectors.

"Article 4 delineated the university's structure, comprising the College of Basic Education affiliated with the Public Authority for Applied Education and Training. Additionally, faculties in Engineering, Law, and Science were to be established, along with any other colleges falling under the purview of the Public Authority for Applied Education and Training. The completion of a bachelor's degree was envisioned to occur within three years from the law's implementation.

"The representative emphasized that faculty members in applied education, particularly the teams at the College of Basic Education, were entitled to protect their rights, having made substantial contributions to the formulation of "Jaber Al-Ahmad University" in a manner akin to the proposed legislation.

"This earlier initiative, under the moniker "Jaber Al-Ahmad University," had been prepared a decade ago and was suspended due to political interference. Notably, the National Assembly had sanctioned the issuance of the "Jaber Al-Ahmad University" law, introducing fundamental modifications to the proposal.

"Initially named "Jaber University of Science" during the first discussion, it was later renamed "Jaber Al-Ahmad University" in subsequent deliberations, with its designated headquarters in the Ardhiya area.

"According to the provisions of this prospective university law at that time, the government was obligated, within a three-year period, to establish an autonomous governmental university, encompassing scientific and administrative dimensions.

"It was to comprise the College of Basic Education, currently under the General Authority for Applied Education and Training, in addition to engineering, law, and administrative sciences colleges, and any other colleges under the Authority's jurisdiction. The completion of a bachelor's degree was to be facilitated within this new institutional framework.

"Unfortunately, the members of the Educational Committee in the National Assembly and the representatives at that time did not know the type of specializations that the labor market needed, and they did not request the preparation of a feasibility study on the new university and the specializations available in it, and the extent of the labor market's need for them, knowing that the creation of any university in the world requires the submission of these documents and data with the feasibility study. Certainly, the teaching staff in basic education will support the deputy's new university proposal because they contributed a great effort in preparing it!

Also:

"From Morocco to Libya, distances are no longer merely measured in kilometers, using common geographic coordinates. Though traditional geographical and temporal gaps once separated these two fraternal nations, they are now bound by a shared sorrow that deeply touches the hearts of people globally, especially within the Arab world. A tragedy has befallen them, affecting all," columnist **Abdullah Muhammad Al-Afasi** wrote for **Al-Rai** daily.

"The very ground shifted beneath Morocco, claiming thousands of lives and leaving around 50,000 individuals in desperate need of immediate shelter. Before the world could recover from the horror of this calamity, Hurricane Daniel unleashed its fury, wiping out a significant portion of Derna city and transforming into an uncontrolled natural disaster in Libya. The aftermath left thousands dead, with an unknown number of displaced people, lacking shelter and adequate relief.

"True to form, the Kuwaiti government, its people, and institutions acted swiftly, displaying solidarity with their brothers in Morocco and Libya. Contributions and relief campaigns promptly commenced, showcasing Kuwait's commitment to its humanitarian values and unity with its brethren.

"All we can do now is pray to God Almighty for mercy upon the departed in Morocco and Libya, for healing and patience for the wounded, and for strength for those enduring the affliction.

"Reflecting on Kuwait, our trials seem trivial compared to the luxury of political discord and rifts that have plagued the country for years. This chronic condition has worsened, diverting attention away from urgent economic and financial risks. We are in desperate need of a unified approach for rescue and consensus.

"In recent days, political disputes have escalated to a degree that echoes Kuwait's prolonged uncertainty, reinforcing negative indicators reminiscent of the past. These developments have diminished

the optimism that once prevailed when a new government was formed and the National Assembly rejoiced, heralding a theoretical course correction.

"A thorough analysis of the situation reveals that the challenge to correct the course remains fraught with challenges. Modern history seems to repeat itself, drowning in the cacophony of political entanglements and narrow calculations, far removed from the nation's and citizen's priorities.

"While we respect the right of politicians to exercise their legislative and oversight roles, we cannot turn a blind eye to the crisis of losing sight of priorities. Foremost among them is the urgency to address the fiscal deficit and achieve sustainable development, leveraging Kuwait's economic engines and human talent capable of effecting genuine transformation and propelling Kuwait from its confined situation to broader horizons in every aspect.

It's no secret that citizens are grappling with concerns about infrastructure, healthcare, education, and the economy. The overarching crisis looms as the spiraling budget deficit threatens the nation's financial capabilities, instilling fear of an economic downturn.

"Kuwait is no longer what it once was, and neither is the world. The disparity lies in their divergent trajectories. As the world steers towards new coordinates and future imperatives, Kuwait remains stuck in its place, entangled in political discord and a crisis that begets another.

"The gravity of the current situation is such that we cannot afford to waste any more time outside the realm of progress, compensating for missed opportunities essential for a deserved renaissance for today's Kuwaitis and future generations.

"In summary, the persistence of obstinacy and political intrigues serves as a warning to all politicians, urging them to swiftly unite in dismantling this dam and commence activating the necessary reform pathways. This action is imperative to prevent the situation from spiraling beyond control."

□ □ □

"Members of the National Assembly, we want you to issue a law that cares about citizens and the State, which is suffering from many problems. We have not heard any solution from you and the latest thing you have come up with is the mixing of students," columnist **Fatma Al-Khaldi** wrote for **Annahar** daily.

"This law is absurd, yet you have put it in place. It is not worthy of being under the dome of the Parliament. Mixing exists everywhere. It exists in Holy Makkah, Medina, markets and associations. Even the streets are mixed. You make separate associations, markets and streets for women and for men. You think you have won.

"In fact, everyone is watching and laughing at you. I believe MP Muhammad Haif presents this project in every council he enters. He has nothing but this project to present. He has no laws concerning the country, the foremost of which are the Bedouins, deteriorating condition of the streets, lack of medicines in the Ministry of Health and outdated ministries' buildings like the Capital passage, health services in the morning, increasing salaries and allowing employees to study while working.

"We do not want a guardian to teach us what is right and what is wrong. If you have a law that interests us, present it. If there is none, then silence is better than boiling laws that waste our time.

"Please, members of the National Assembly, enough of futile laws. I ask the Minister of Education not to implement the abovementioned law because it came from the same member, but no one listened or implemented it. Fear God, as no one among the people and this generation wants to be restricted by such laws."

□ □ □

"International communication bridges have a positive impact. They made the entire world stand with Kuwait during the Iraqi invasion," columnist **Mohammad Al-Jouma'a** wrote for **Al-Rai** daily.

"Bridges are continuously built with various countries around the world through diplomatic bodies, humanitarian, economic, cultural aid and other means of cooperation.

"However, in our time, these bridges must be made of iron, cement and other sturdy construction materials in order to create real bridges connecting the East and West, bridges that connect Kuwait to the commercial world through railways, suspension bridges, highways, and other quick and easy means of transportation.

"The Belt and Road Initiative or One Belt and One Road is a Chinese initiative based on the Silk Road Initiative, which was established in 2013 — 10 years ago. The implementation of this initiative has already begun. Bridges and highways were built between China and the neighboring countries like India, Pakistan, Afghanistan and others.

"This initiative aims to connect the East with the West, meaning to connect China with Asia, Europe and Africa for commercial and economic purposes and to promote the Chinese currency (Yuan). It is known that China's annual production started to grow significantly due to what has been accomplished in the huge project, which will be completed in 2048 approximately.

"It is noted that the road map for this huge project, especially the sea route (the road), does not stop at Arab ports, except the Suez Canal. It is also believed that the land route (the belt) does not pass through Arab land, because the purpose of this initiative is to pass through densely populated areas such as India, Pakistan and other countries that are far from cities.

"Is it not time to create a similar initiative for Arab countries to communicate with each other and with the outside world from East to West and create bridges and highways between Arab countries, Europe, Africa and Asia? Do Arabs lack money, equipment, men, technology and expertise in constructing highways and bridges?"

— Compiled by **Mai Elsoukary**



Kuwait Airforce personnel during the loading of relief aid destined for Libya.

KUNA photo

6th relief planeload headed for Libya

By **Salman Al-Mutairi**

Sixth planeload of aid left Kuwait to storm-struck Libya on Tuesday with tons of relief equipment and medical supplies onboard.

Deputy Director General of the Kuwait Relief Society, Omar Al-Thuwaini, told KUNA that the Libyan people affected by the storm are in dire need of medical supplies in light of the spread of various epidemics and

diseases due to the humanitarian disaster. The first batch of supplies took off from Kuwait last Wednesday, followed by second on Thursday and the third on Saturday, all carrying tons of necessary materials on board.

Since disaster struck last Sunday, perhaps the largest catastrophe to hit Libya in 30 years, leaving in its wake thousands dead and others missing and injured, Kuwaiti humanitarian bodies hastened to rile up efforts and provide urgent relief to the Libyan people. (KUNA)

1,066 'iqama' law breakers deported; 107 illegals held

Two Asians caught selling foreign liquor

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 19: In a painful blow dealt by the Ministry of Interior to violators of residence law, the Ministry of Interior has deported 1,066 violators during the past seven days, and also arrested 107 illegals during a security campaign in the vegetables market, reports **Al-Seyassah** daily.

A security source explained that among the deportees were 613 males and 453 females, stressing that the ministry continues to deport people to eliminate all violators of the Residence and Labor Law, those caught violating public morals, criminals and those who violate the country's laws.

In this context, the Residency Affairs Investigation Department launched a surprise security campaign on the vegetable market in the Kabd area, which resulted in the arrest of 107 violators of the Residency and Labor Law and seized people of various nationalities.

They were referred to the competent authority to take the necessary legal measures against them.

□ □ □

Asian bootleggers held: After several days of painstaking investigation and surveillance personnel from the Criminal Investigation Department have arrested two men for selling imported and locally-manufactured liquor in the city of Jaber Al-Ahmad, reports **Al-Anba** daily.

The daily added, the CID men have seized from the suspects about 1,500 bottles of imported and local alcohol during an ambush on their hideout.

A security source told the daily, the raid was conducted following a tip-off from an unidentified police informant who said the two Asians were selling booze to prospective customers in the city of Jaber Al-Ahmad.

Armed with a search and arrest warrant the place was raided and the suspects arrested and handed over with the contraband to the concerned authority.

□ □ □

Huge blaze tackled: On Monday evening four firefighting teams were able to control and extinguish a massive fire within record time, without causing any casualties that broke out in the offices and private residence of a contracting and construction company in the Kabd area, reports **Al-Anba** daily.

The daily said after a report was received from the General Fire Force Operations Room stating that a fire had occurred in the Kabd area firefighters from 4 stations — Kabd, Al-Istiqal, Al-Sulaibikhat, and Al-Isnad, rushed to the site and evacuated the workers and employees and fought the blaze from all sides and extinguished the fire using special materials before it spread to the rest of the existing buildings.

The Public Relations and Media Department of the General Administration of the Fire Force has called on owners and tenants of factories, industrial plots, and commercial and investment buildings to implement safety and fire prevention requirements, in order to achieve community security.

KD 586.8m set for new recruitment

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 19: The government has approved an additional budget of 586.8 million dinars to cover the appointments plan that will be announced during the remaining months of the current fiscal year, reports **Al-Anba** daily.

The sources explained that the Civil Service Commission will announce the opening of registration for job seekers during December and February, with 3 recruitment batches to be announced in October 2023, and January and March 2024.

The source added that the CSC, through coordination with ministries, institutions and government agencies, was able to nominate the names of 4,700 male and female citizens to work during the period from August 9 to Sept 3, with the aim of meeting the needs of these bodies and providing job opportunities.



An international academic honor for the Kuwaiti poet Abdulaziz Al-Babtain from the Armenian University of Yerevan.

KUNA photo

Yerevan University honors 'Al-Babtain'

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 19, (KUNA): A formal delegation from Yerevan State University (YSU) of Armenia on Monday honored chairman of Abdulaziz Saud Al-Babtain Cultural Foundation, poet Abdulaziz Al-Babtain with an Honorary Doctorate Degree.

The delegation chose to honor Al-Babtain in his home country in an unprecedented move to show appreciation for his prominent role in boosting the cultural, social and humanitarian aspects on an international level.

Speaking on this occasion, Al-Babtain said "to be honored by Yerevan university in my country brings me great pride" pointing out that serving communities in education, culture and humanitarian aid aims to incentivize individuals to Engage in such initiatives.

"Honorary Doctorate Degree is not a piece of paper to hang in my wall, but it is a message that human lives are valued by their willingness to give without expecting anything in return," Al-Babtain added.

He affirmed that such honor and other recognitions he won during his life are means of recognition of Kuwait's leading role in promoting humanitarian aid and an honor to Kuwaiti people as well.

The honoring ceremony was attended by cultural and public figures with professors from Yerevan State University

Yerevan State University is the first and leading higher education institution in Armenia.



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About 82.5 pc rise seen in expats employment as of last June: data

'India makes largest representation'



KUNA photo
Representative of His Highness the Amir, His Highness the Prime Minister, during the reception of the leaders of Microsoft Corporation.

HH the Amir's Representative receives Microsoft, Alphabet and Google chiefs

NEW YORK, Sept 19, (KUNA): Representative of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah received Monday Executive Vice President and President of Microsoft Global Sales, Marketing and Operations, Jean-Philippe Courtois.

The meeting was attended by Director General of the Direct Investment Promotion Authority, Sheikh Dr. Mishal Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ambassador Sheikh Jarrah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, and Undersecretary of the Prime Minister's Office, Sheikh Khaled Talal Al-Khaled Al-Sabah, and Director of the Office of His Highness the Prime Minister, Hamad Al-Amer.

During the meeting, the country's development plan for digital transformation and artificial intelligence solutions were discussed, and views were exchanged on the mechanism of creating a digital infrastructure capable of attracting investment assets and creating a pioneering and distinguished business environment that contributes to the development of the national economy.

His Highness also received the Chief Investment Officer of Alphabet and Google, Ruth Porat, and her accompanying delegation.

During the talks, developments in cooperation between Kuwait and Google Cloud were touched on after the recent signing of the strategic partnership agreement between the two sides to support digital transformation in the country.

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 19: Data released by the Central Administration of Statistics indicates that as of June 2023, Kuwait had a total of 2.43 million expatriates, both male and female, from 174 countries employed in various sectors, including domestic work. This number represents an increase of approximately 82.5% compared to the end of December 2022 when the expatriate workforce stood at 2.34 million, reports Al-Anba daily.

In terms of the broader labor market, which includes citizens and domestic workers, the total employment saw an increase of about 86.8 thousand male and female workers during the first half of 2023. This raised the total number of workers to around 2.877 million by the end of June 2023, compared to 2.79 million at the end of December 2022.

India had the largest representation in the Kuwaiti workforce, constituting 30.2% of the total. The number of Indian workers increased to about 869.82 thousand by the end of June 2023, a rise of 35.14 thousand compared to December 2022.

Egypt followed as the second-largest contributor, with a workforce of 483.45 thousand at the end of June 2023, a slight decrease of 808 Egyptians compared to December 2022. Kuwait ranked third, with approximately 447.06 thousand male and female citizens in the labor market by June 2023, reflecting a rise of 4,417 citizens compared to December 2022.

The Philippines and Bangladesh secured the fourth and fifth positions, with 269.48 thousand and 248.92 thousand workers, respectively, by the end of June 2023.

The data also revealed notable changes in the workforce from specific nationalities. Nepalese workers, for instance, moved up to the fifth position, surpassing Pakistanis. Meanwhile, the number of domestic workers increased by about 34.85 thousand during the first half of 2023.

Regarding salaries, the average salary for Kuwaiti citizens rose to 1,557 dinars per month during the first half of 2023. Kuwaiti citizens in the government sector had an average salary of 1,598 dinars per month, while those in the private sector earned an average of 1,342 dinars per month.

Expatriates' average salary increased to 343 dinars per month, with those in the government and private sectors earning 750 dinars and 323 dinars per month, respectively.

HH the Amir congratulates Saint Kitts and Nevis on National Day

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 19, (KUNA): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah has sent a cable to the Governor-General of the Federation of Saint Kitts and Nevis, Marecella Liburd, expressing congratulations on her country's National Day.

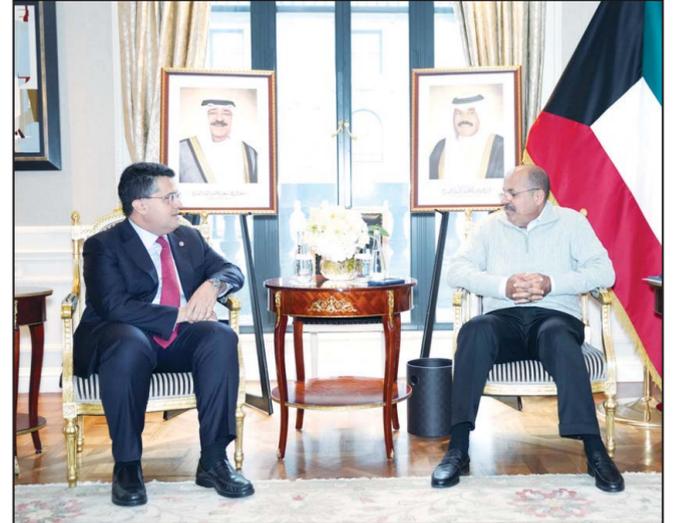
In the cable, His Highness the Amir wished her everlasting health and well-being, further progress and prosperity for her country and people.

Meanwhile, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-

Jaber Al-Sabah has sent a cable to the Governor-General of the Federation of Saint Kitts and Nevis, Marecella Liburd, expressing congratulations on her country's National Day.

In the cable, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Mishal wished her everlasting health and well-being.

Also, His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah has sent a cable to the Governor-General Marecella Liburd, expressing congratulations on her country's National Day.



KUNA photo
HH Amir's Representative receiving Kuwait's Surgeon Dr. Wadhah Al-Riffai.

Amir's Rep receives Kuwait's surgeon Al-Riffai

Representative of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah received Monday Head of the Departments of Surgery and the Department of Technical, Academic and Scientific Research at Creighton University Hospital, Dr. Wadhah Al-Riffai.

His Highness expressed his appreciation for Dr. Al-Riffai's achievement by being appointed as Chairman of the Board of Surgery Departments at the prestigious Creighton University Hospital, stressing the government's full support for national competencies in order to continue developing their professional careers at the highest levels. (KUNA)

Lawyer Elaf Al-Saleh file lawsuits

Courts issue several rulings against those accused of assaulting doctors

By Jaber Al-Hamoud

Al-Seyassah Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 19: The Criminal Court and the Court of Appeals issued several rulings to convict those accused of assaulting doctors while the latter are performing their duties. These lawsuits were filed by Lawyer Elaf Al-Saleh in her capacity as the legal representative of the Kuwait Medical Association.

In the first case, the Court of Appeals issued a ruling to impose a fine of KD 5,000 against a woman who was accused of assaulting an expatriate doctor and detaining her in the ultrasound room after she became angry and refused to undergo tests before the ultrasound. The court fined her, and referred the case to the competent civil court.

In the second case, the Criminal Court acquitted an Egyptian doctor and imposed a fine of KD 2,000 against a citizen after the two had an altercation in which the patient assaulted the doctor.

During the court session, Lawyer Elaf Al-Saleh said her client, the doctor, was the one who was assaulted publicly, adding that the medical report and witness testimony are in favor of her client.

In the third case, the Court of Appeals ruled to issue a suspended prison sentence of two years against a citizen, releasing him on a bail of KD 500 and obliging him to vow to maintain good conduct for a period of three years. This citizen was found guilty of publicly assaulting an expatriate doctor while the latter was performing his duty.

In the fourth case, the Misdemeanor Court fined a woman a sum of KD 500 for insulting a Kuwaiti doctor at Farwaniya Hospital.

In these cases, Lawyer Elaf Al-Saleh stated that she is continuing as a legal representative for the Kuwait Medical Association in filing complaints against those who assaulted medical staff and doctors in various hospitals.

She emphasized that the deterrent penal

Power supplied to Khaitan blocks 1, 2

By Mohammed Ghanem

Al-Seyassah Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 19: The Ministry of Electricity, Water and Renewable Energy yesterday announced the launch of supply of electricity to the Khaitan Residential Project in parts of Block 1 and 2.

The ministry will receive requests to supply electricity to 168 plots in Block 1, which are plots from 191 to 201, plot No. 402 and plots from 506 to 549, and from 564 to 604. In Block 2, electricity will be supplied to plots from 494 to 510 and 512, 514, 516, 518, 531, 533, 535, from 537 to 574, 576, 578, 580, 582, 584, and from 596 to 601.

In another development, informed sources in the ministry revealed that 208 citizens were appointed to the various sectors of the ministry in August through the Civil Service Commission (CSC), which nominates for jobs in the ministry in accordance with the annual requirements determined by the ministry at the beginning of the fiscal year.

They explained that the total number of employees in the ministry is 33,559, with 32,667 Kuwaitis, representing 97.3 percent, and 892 non-Kuwaitis.

rulings will be followed by compensation claims of large sums for psychological and moral damages.

Lawyer Elaf Al-Saleh called on the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Interior to tighten the security of medical personnel in hospitals by intensifying the presence of police officers or members of security guard companies.

Co-education ...

Continued from Page 1

After the Minister of Education and Higher Education submitted to the parliament's Ethics Committee, some parliamentarians have now begun to threaten university lecturers. This is what we had warned against, but it fell on deaf ears, while all explanations to prevent co-education arouse ridicule from Kuwaitis and the entire world, as if Kuwait intends to return "reverse".

All of this is because the executive authority has not performed its role to the fullest. Rather, it quickly acquiesces to some parliamentarians, and the ministers compliment the parliamentarians at the expense of the state as a whole.

Therefore, when the profiteers impose their point of view on the state, this indicates the weakness of the state, and leads to more crises and divisions in society.

The solution will only be achieved by a strong hand, whose decision is strict, stopping everyone in their tracks, and ending what the country is suffering from.

This is because the situation has reached a point where it is affecting Kuwait's reputation and presence abroad as well as its internal stability.

Kuwait hits

Continued from Page 1

The meeting discussed a variety of issues including cooperation and strategic partnership between the GCC and the UK.

Elsewhere, the head of the Iraqi Supreme Judicial Council, Judge Faiq Zaidan, stressed Tuesday, during a meeting with Kuwaiti Ambassador to Iraq, Tariq Al-Faraj, "Iraq's respect for the State of Kuwait's history, present and future, and the independence of Kuwait through various historical eras."

He also affirmed "the importance of respecting and implementing the agreements and treaties between Iraq and Kuwait in accordance with the constitutional and legal contexts and respecting the implementation of relevant Security Council resolutions."

According to the Judicial Council's statement, Zaidan emphasized "the depth of relationship between the two brotherly peoples and Iraq's appreciation for Kuwait honorable stance in helping Iraq get rid of the dictatorial regime."

Otherwise, the statement did not address the judicial decision aftermath, issued by the Iraqi Federal Court ruling, which invalidated the Khor Abdullah Agreement between Iraq and Kuwait.



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'Forum a great opportunity to make deals with participating companies'

US diplomat hails health cooperation with Kuwait

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 19, (KUNA): The US Charge d'affaires in Kuwait James Holtsnider on Tuesday lauded the deep-rooted Kuwait-US relations and the cooperation between the two countries in the health sector.

Speaking to reporters after inaugurating "the forum of the Kuwaiti-US partnership in the health sector," Holtsnider said the event would witness display to state of art medical innovations.

It is a great opportunity for expanding cooperation, he said indicating at the prospects to make deals with participating companies to address the local health sector in treating diverse cases and diseases.

The participating American delegation represents 12 health systems, he said, expressing aspiration to enhance further the cooperation with Kuwait under sponsorship of the Minister of Health Dr. Ahmad Al-Awadhi.

Elaborating, he indicated that the coop-

eration would broaden at the levels of data swap, expertise transfer, modern technology, cooperation with private hospitals, treating children cancer, organs transplants and chronic cases.

The forum is organized by the embassy in cooperation with the USCIPP -- the US Cooperative for International Patient Programs, an organizational membership program of the National Center for Healthcare Leadership (NCHL), a Chicago-based non-profit institution.

USCIPP is composed of US academic medical centers, hospitals, and health systems that operate in the international patient care and global healthcare collaborations market.

Founded in 2010 with support from the International Trade Administration's Market Development Cooperator Program, the consortium now represents nearly 60 US healthcare provider organizations.



Group of the participants in the forum of the Kuwaiti-US partnership in the health sector.

KUNA photo

Kuwait Deputy Foreign Minister lauds first GCC and ACS meeting

NEW YORK, Sept 19, (KUNA): Deputy Foreign Minister Ambassador Sheikh Jarrah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah lauded late Monday the first meeting of the GCC-Association of Caribbean States (ACS), expressing desire to expand cooperation between the two sides.

A statement by the Foreign Ministry said that Sheikh Jarrah also reflected

at the meeting, held of the sideline of the 78th UN General Assembly in New York, Kuwait's keenness to see the two sides coordinate on issues of mutual interest.

The GCC Secretariat and the ACS had signed during the meeting a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) as well as approving a joint action plan between the two sides.



KUNA photo

Sheikh Jarrah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, Deputy Foreign Minister Ambassador during his participation in the ministerial meeting.

Guest
Anita Merchant
Artist

Mohammed Merchant
Founder & Chairman House of Steel General Trading and Contracting Company W. L. L.

Sadaaqa
A show that celebrates India-Kuwait friendship

with Host
Chaitali B Roy
Author / Broadcaster / Journalist
September 27th 2023
8 pm

Podcast on:
Chaitali B Roy

Sadaaqa poster

Sadaaqa presents the Merchants

Sadaaqa the show that documents and celebrates India Kuwait relationship by focusing on individual experiences features Mohammed and Anita Merchant on September 27.

In many ways, Mohammed and Anita represent the best of India. Mohammed is a Muslim and Anita is a Hindu. Together, they formed a perfect partnership that reflects the secular values of India.

Mohammed came to Kuwait in 1965. In 1971, he started venturing into business. Years later, he set up the House of Steel. During the crash of Souq Mannakh, Mohammed was the first Indian to fight his own legal case in the Court of

Justice because of his fluent grasp over Arabic. He also represented Kuwait in Bridge in many international tournaments and won many awards.

His wife Anita is an artist who was the first Indian woman to showcase her work at the Kuwait National Gallery. A diplomat's daughter Anita exhibited in many countries.

For the Merchants, like the other Indians we showcased, Kuwait is home. They spent more time in Kuwait than they have in India or in any other part of the world and the love and connections they built with the local community only strengthened with time. This episode of Sadaaqa highlights their journey.

«Mujezat Al-Shifa»: Bee bread enhances visual acuity in children

The nutrition consultant at Mujezat Al Shifa Company revealed a study conducted at the University of Louisiana in 2012,



which was applied to 34 children between 6-17 years old who suffer from thyroid diseases that affect the shape of the eyes and thus reduce visual acuity.

During the study, all children underwent treatment using the electromagnetic field method, and 18 children were selected from them to eat bee bread in addition to this aforementioned treatment. After three weeks, visual acuity and fundus examinations were repeated and it was found that the children who ate bee bread had a significantly increased visual acuity compared to the group that did not. She deals with bee bread, stressing that this is because bee bread is distinguished by containing a huge group of flavinoids.

KSE, SMEs fund sign MoU to support entrepreneurs

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 19: The Kuwait Society of Engineers and the Kuwait Fund for Small and Medium Enterprises Development have reached an agreement to establish a center to support entrepreneurs and provide them engineering guidance. This initiative falls within the scope of the memorandum of understanding signed between the two entities, reports Al-Rai daily.

This decision was reached following a meeting at the Association's headquarters between Faisal Al-Attal, the President of the Association, and Dr. Barjas Al-Dosari, the Director of the Fund's Land and Facilities Department, along with Engineer Basma Al-Jassim, the Director of the Engineering Affairs Department.

After the meeting, the association's president expressed their readiness to collaborate in the realms of training, skill enhancement, and professional growth for engineering personnel.

They also pledged to extend engineering consultations to entrepreneurs seeking to operate under the Fund's auspices.

Al-Attal commended the enthusiastic commitment shown by the Fund's leadership to leverage the expertise held by volunteer personnel within the association.

He called upon both public and private entities to engage with non-profit professional associations dedicated to public welfare, stressing their significant contribution to bolstering the endeavors of public and private institutions in advancing human development and creating opportunities for young individuals, especially those in the field of engineering.

Kuwait's real estate market holds steady in 2023 amid housing financing changes

Financing figures see month-on-month increase of 29.4 percent

By Ahmad Fathi
Al-Seyassah Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 19: Local banks have reported a significant decline in financing provided to the residential sector, with a consolidated monthly decrease of 38.6 percent or approximately 766.1 million dinars. This drop is substantial, bringing the financing from 1.85 billion dinars during the first seven months of 2022 down to 1.08 billion dinars for the same period in 2023, as per data from the Central Bank of Kuwait for July.

Interestingly, these financing figures saw a month-on-month increase of 29.4 percent, rising from 133.6 million dinars in June to 172.9 million dinars in July. However, on a year-on-year basis, there was a 17.5 percent decrease, equivalent to 36.8 million dinars, down from 209.7 million dinars in July 2022.

Housing financing encompasses long-term personal loans with a maximum duration of fifteen years, offered by banks to customers for the purpose of purchasing, constructing, or renovating their private residences.

Impacted

Unlike many other sectors that were impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, the private housing sector has continued to thrive, witnessing a substantial increase in prices over the last three years due to high demand and limited supply. This sector has maintained its momentum and growth, remaining unaffected by the pandemic.

In contrast, the total accumulated financing balance provided by local banks to the housing sector experienced a 3.9 percent year-on-year increase, reaching 598.9 million dinars. This balance grew from 15.74 billion dinars in July 2022 to 15.885 billion dinars in July 2023, marking a 0.4 percent increase compared to June 2023, when the balance was 15.82 billion dinars.

The financing balance exhibited consistent growth throughout 2022, starting at 14.390 billion dinars in December 2021 and steadily climbing to 15.74 billion dinars by December 2022. The trend continued into 2023, with the balance

Strategies necessary to ensure perpetual dev't

ARADO pushes digital drive amid AI advances

CAIRO, Sept 19, (KUNA): The chief of a pan-Arab administrative body urged governments in the wider Arab region to accelerate digital transformation plans given the rapid growth of the Artificial Intelligence (AI) market, saying such strategies are necessary to ensure perpetual development.

The status quo shows an inextricable link between administrative growth and sustainable development,

the Egypt-based Arab Administrative Development Organization's (ARADO) director general Dr. Nasser Al-Qahtani told a regional gathering over the role of administrative institutions in civil service laws.

The ARADO-organized talks, attended by a number of Kuwaiti bodies, aim to ratchet up the services of administrative institutions in the region in a bid to cater to the needs of the public, he underlined.

reaching 15.827 billion dinars in May.

Over the past five years, the housing financing balance provided by banks has surged by 30.3 percent, amounting to about 4.767 billion dinars, from 10.972 billion dinars in December 2017 to 15.74 billion dinars in December 2022.

On the other hand, financing for "private and model housing" witnessed a 1.8 percent monthly decrease, falling by 5.6 million dinars from 306.2 million dinars

in June to 300.6 million dinars in July. On an annual basis, this financing decreased by 6.8 percent, down from 322.8 million dinars in June 2022.

Real estate experts have confirmed that the Kuwaiti real estate market remained stable during the first half of 2023. Despite a continuous rise in housing prices, with the average price per square meter of private residential land increasing by 16.4 percent in 2022 to 1,274 thousand dinars, liquidity in the

private housing sector decreased by 32 percent in 2022 compared to 2021. Contracts and agency volumes amounted to approximately 2.009 billion dinars, contributing only about 53.4 percent to the market liquidity, a decrease from its 2021 contribution of 75.1 percent. Meanwhile, investment housing activity witnessed a 43.3 percent increase to about 1.116 billion dinars, contributing approximately 29.6 percent to market liquidity, compared to 19.8 percent in 2021.

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Monday Sept 18 marked a significant milestone as the Petroleum Corporation and the Organization of Arab Petroleum Exporting Countries (OAPEC) formalized their commitment to advancing scientific, research, and technical collaboration. The occasion was marked by the signing of a memorandum of understanding (MoU) aimed at fostering the exchange of knowledge, experiences, and achieving mutual benefits.

In an official statement provided to KUNA, The Foundation articulated the

key objectives of the MoU. It emphasized the spirit of cooperation between the two entities, focusing on the exchange of best practices, a concerted effort to bolster technical capabilities and expertise, and a shared mission to cultivate awareness of technological advancements. The MoU also outlines plans for collaborative research and development projects, a commitment to stay abreast of the latest innovations and technical achievements, and an endeavor to maximize the benefits derived from existing technical projects

within the Kuwait Petroleum Corporation.

The CEO of the Petroleum Corporation, Sheikh Nawaf Saud Al-Nasser Al-Sabah, reaffirmed the organization's dedication to expanding its research and development capabilities. Sheikh Nawaf Al-Sabah expressed the Corporation's eagerness to collaborate with strategic partners and internationally acclaimed oil organizations, including OAPEC, which have established their prowess in the field of research. He stated, "Through this memorandum of understanding, our journey of progress and

mutual advancement with OAPEC continues to propel our oil industry forward."

On the other side, Jamal Al-Loughani, Secretary-General of OAPEC, lauded the Kuwait Petroleum Corporation's proactive steps in enhancing cooperation with the organization. OAPEC, which has had its permanent headquarters in the State of Kuwait since its inception in 1968, affirmed its unwavering commitment to translating every provision of the agreement into practical actions that benefit both parties.

The signing ceremony witnessed the participation of the Kuwait Petroleum Corporation's Deputy Chairman of the Board of Directors and CEO, Sheikh Nawaf Saud Al-Nasser Al-Sabah, representing the Corporation, and Secretary-General Jamal Al-Loughani representing OAPEC.

Moreover, during the forty-third session of the Oxford Energy Symposium, Sheikh Nawaf Al-Saud, the CEO of the Kuwait Petroleum Corporation, delivered a lecture outlining the corporation's strategic approach to energy transformation.

Market Movements

19-09-2023

	Change	Closing pts		Change	Closing pts
UAE - DFM	+0.65	4,074.72	JAPAN - Nikkei	-0.87	33,242.59
PAKISTAN - KSE 100	+0.17	45,914.97	PHILIPPINES - PSEi	-1.25	6,047.97
SAUDI - Tadawul	+0.31	11,070.77			
EGYPT - EGX 30	+1.03	19,954.30			

Business

Easing inflation worries notwithstanding

Global growth to stay under pressure

By National Bank of Kuwait

The global economy continues to hold up better than expected, with resilient consumer spending and still-tight labor markets helping growth in developed markets, especially the US, and severe recession fears waning. Inflation has receded from its highs, supporting consumer and business confidence, and bolstering expectations that aggressive policy tightening by major central banks is at or near its end. However, the recent climb in oil and global food prices, together with still well above-target underlying inflation rates in the US and Europe, are likely to rule out early rate cuts in 2024, which could add to growth headwinds there next year. Meanwhile, weak economic growth figures in China may have helped trigger firmer government policy support recently. If successful in boosting growth, this will have positive knock-on effects on European and Japanese exports though also risks pushing global inflation up.

US shows resilience, Fed rate hikes seen near their end
The US economy has outperformed expectations, with GDP growth surprising positively and dissipating chances of recession this year. GDP growth accelerated slightly to 2.1% q/q (annualized) in Q2 2023 from 2% in Q1 on higher business investment and relatively robust household spending. (Chart 1.) The positive momentum has continued into Q3, with strong increases in industrial production and retail sales in July-August. Sales of new homes have also recovered, helped by a tight supply of existing single-family units. The ISM services activity index in August climbed to a solid 54.5, and even its manufacturing equivalent at 47.6 signaled a slower pace of contraction. The consensus is for another strong GDP print of 2.8% in Q3, though growth in Q4 could be hit by the resumption of student debt repayments in October.

The tight job market remains at the core of the US economy's resilience. Although monthly job gains have eased from their unsustainable rates of last year, the unemployment rate at 3.8% is at near historic lows and real wage growth is now in positive territory. Unless we see widespread cracks in the labor market, consumer spending and the economic outlook should continue to hold up, offsetting the impact of higher interest rates.

Consumer price inflation remains on a broadly slowing path, with core CPI inflation still above target at 4.3% y/y in August but well off its 6.5% peak last year and further softening seen ahead as the lagged impact of earlier falls in shelter costs feeds through. With the Fed funds target interest rate now at 5.25-5.50%, real policy rates are in positive territory and the Fed is seen delivering perhaps one final 25bps rate hike in November. However, with the economy growing at or above its trend rate, wage growth still high, commodity prices rising again and some narrower measures of inflation remaining sticky, the Fed will be unable to declare victory over inflation very quickly and interest rate cuts are likely to be delayed until the second half of next year.

Europe's economy loses steam

Europe's economy is witnessing growing signs of weakness on a steep rise in policy rates and a fragile recovery in China. The Eurozone's services sector, which was outperforming manufacturing for a long period, has now also come under pressure with both sectors' PMIs coming below the 'no change' 50 mark in August. (Chart 2.) In Q2 2023, Eurozone GDP grew just 0.1% q/q, following a similar rise in Q1. Moreover, a softening global outlook amid ongoing weakness in Chinese demand are likely to weigh on the region's exports. In September, the European Commission cut its growth outlook for the Eurozone for 2023 (to 0.8% from 1.1% in the Spring) and 2024 (to 1.3% from 1.6%), as Germany slips into recession on a slump in manufacturing and exports. Mean-

- The global economy has held up better than expected, especially in the US, where resilient consumer spending and a still-tight labor market continue to support at-or-above-trend economic growth.
- Europe's economy has so far avoided a widely-anticipated recession, though remains pressured by high interest rates and the fragile Chinese recovery weighing on exports.
- Japanese GDP grew strongly in Q2 as inbound tourism rebounded, but lingering doubts about the domestic economy are making an early reversal of ultra-loose monetary policy less likely.
- Recent policy support measures should help China's economy, which grew a modest 0.8% q/q in Q2. A rebound in domestic demand, however, could pose upside risks to global inflation and commodity prices.
- With inflation broadly easing, major central banks such as the Fed and the ECB seem near the end of their current hiking cycle. But with oil and food prices rising, early interest rate cuts seem unlikely.

while, having also escaped recession so far by a narrow margin, the UK economy faces a similarly soft outlook: GDP contracted 0.5% m/m in July versus +0.5% in June and could rise just 0.1% q/q in Q3 (+0.2% in Q2).

Eurozone inflation has halved from its peak in October last year (5.1% y/y from 10.6%), though remains well above the ECB's 2% target. Given high but easing inflation and a weak economic outlook, the bank increased its policy deposit rate by 25 bps in September to 4.0%, but hinted at no change going forward. Inflation in the UK has eased at a much slower pace (currently at 6.4% y/y), but as economic growth loses steam, the Bank of England governor has hinted that the rate-hike cycle is also ending. Another 25 bps increase in the policy rate to 5.5% in September could be the final hike in the current cycle.

External sector lifts Japan's Q2 GDP growth

Japan's economy continues its struggle for a robust post-pandemic recovery amid a weaker yen and a softening global outlook. GDP growth in Q2 2023 was revised sharply lower in the final reading, albeit still high at an annualized 4.8%. This was a solid upgrade from Q1, but growth was solely driven by a strong performance in the external sector (helped by a recovery in inbound tourism) while domestic consumption and business investment were weak. Moreover, real wages continued to fall for the 16th consecutive month in July (-2.6% y/y), boding ill for underlying domestic demand.

In light of the mixed data, the Bank of Japan (BOJ) has reaffirmed its stance on maintaining an ultra-loose monetary policy. However, BoJ governor Kazuo Ueda has hinted at shifting away from negative interest rates if the data by the year-end suggest that current high inflation (3.1% y/y in July) looks like being sustained. The BOJ had earlier tweaked its yield curve-control policy to allow up to 1% yields on 10-year government bonds from 0.5% earlier, but hasn't let yields to rise anywhere near this. As Japan is a net creditor to international markets, any repatriation of overseas funds due to higher rates could have a large impact on the global financial system. Ueda's signal on ending negative interest rates seems a step in preparing markets for a policy reversal sometime in 2024 rather than earlier. The signals may also have been aimed at stemming weakness in the yen, which is hovering close to 30-plus-year lows versus the US dollar.

Chinese government continues to ramp up support
Following an initial post-Covid rebound, economic

Chart 1: US real GDP and personal consumption growth

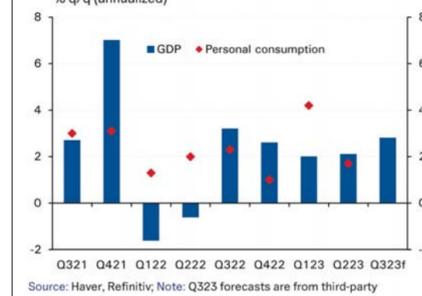


Chart 3: China GDP growth

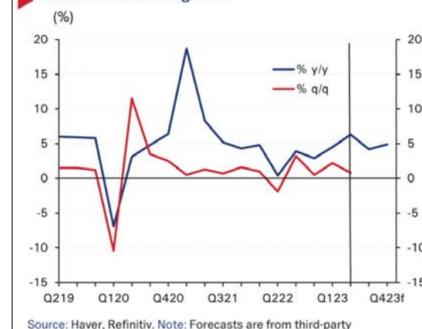


Chart 2: Europe PMI Indices

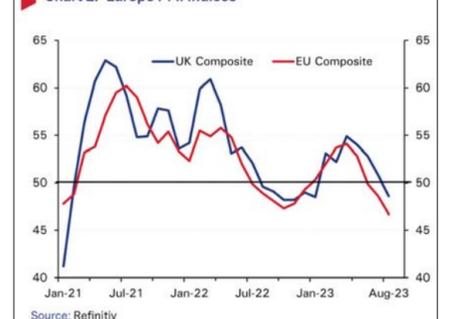


Table 1: Real GDP growth rate

	2022	2023f	2024f
US	2.1	2.0	0.9
Eurozone	3.5	0.6	0.9
UK	4.1	0.3	0.5
Japan	1.0	1.8	0.9
China	3.0	5.0	4.5
India*	7.2	6.2	6.3

Source: Refinitiv (third-party forecasts) Note: * fiscal year ending March of the following year

momentum in China has slowed amid ongoing problems in the real estate sector, softer manufacturing activity, and declining exports. GDP growth slowed to just 0.8% q/q in Q2 2023 from 2.2% in Q1, though a base effect pushed growth up to 6.3% in year-on-year terms. (Chart 3.) Pressures on the real estate sector include falling home valuations that have hit homebuyer confidence, declining property investment, and rising liquidity and solvency risks for developers. Falling land prices have reduced local government revenues and raised concerns about the ability of their financing vehicles to service debt, estimated by the IMF to stand at \$9 trillion (55% of GDP). The real estate slump has also heightened risks in the country's \$2.9 trillion shadow banking sector.

Nevertheless, while the prevailing sentiment on the economy remains negative, there have been a few encouraging signs of late. CPI inflation turned positive again in August at 0.1% y/y, having been negative in July. Retail sales growth accelerated to 4.6% y/y in August, while industrial production edged up 4.5%, signaling stabilizing economic activities. The pace of contraction in both exports and imports softened in August, while the official composite PMI rose for the first time since March, though at 51.3 is still signaling only modest growth.

Importantly too, the government continues to roll out measures to support the economy. The central bank slashed the 1-year loan prime rate by 15bps in August, both mortgage rates and down payment requirements for homebuyers have been cut and the government is extending loan relief to troubled developers. The government is also trying to diversify household wealth away from real estate, as it passed some measures to boost stock market performance. These steps, coupled with tentative recent

improvements in some economic indicators, suggest that the government could achieve its targeted 5% GDP growth this year.

India's Q1 growth surges, but challenges ahead

India's GDP growth beat forecasts in Q1 FY23/24 (fiscal ending March) at 7.8% y/y versus 6.1% in Q4 FY22/23. A sharp recovery in private consumption growth and elevated investment spending provided impetus. The government has reiterated its forecast of around 6.5% growth for the current fiscal year and leading indicators, including recent PMI surveys, have been robust.

However, signs of fatigue are also emerging, with indirect tax collections exhibiting slowing growth in recent months. Moreover, monsoon rains have been erratic, impacting agricultural production and prompting authorities to control exports of main agri-commodities, including wheat, rice, and sugar. The effects have been felt both locally and overseas, with global food prices spiking. For example, following the ban, Asian white rice prices jumped by around 20% in early August. With a general election scheduled for next year, the government may announce other populist measures to support the rural sector, perhaps pushing government spending higher, despite its goal of narrowing the fiscal deficit to 5.9% of GDP this fiscal year from 6.4% last year.

Higher agri-commodity prices steeply reversed the softening trend in consumer prices, with headline inflation standing at 6.8% y/y in August versus 4.9% in June. The Reserve Bank of India left the repo rate on hold (at 6.5%) at its August meeting but tightened liquidity by increasing the banking sector's cash reserve ratio. The bank also upgraded its inflation outlook for this year to 5.4% from 5.1% earlier.

Asian shares weaker ahead of Fed interest rate decision

Wall St slips as oil prices keep rising

NEW YORK, Sept 19, (AP): Stocks were slipping Tuesday, and oil prices keep rising while Wall Street waits for the Federal Reserve's latest decision on interest rates.

The S&P 500 was 0.6% lower in midday trading, a day after barely budging. The Dow Jones Industrial Average was down 232 points, or 0.7%, at 34,391, as of 11:30 a.m. Eastern time, and the Nasdaq composite was 0.8% lower.

Stocks have been see-sawing for weeks on uncertainty about whether the Fed is done with its market-shaking hikes to interest rates. By pulling its main interest rate to the highest level in more than two decades, the Fed has helped inflation to cool from its peak last year but at the cost of hurting prices for investments and damaging some corners of the economy.

The Fed is beginning its latest meeting on interest rates Tuesday, with an announcement scheduled for Wednesday. The overwhelming expectation is for the Fed to announce no change to rates. More focus will be on updated projections Fed officials give for where they see rates heading in upcoming years.

Traders are split on whether the Fed may raise rates one more time this year, but they're largely expecting the Fed to begin cutting rates next year. Such cuts can act like steroids for financial markets, giving a lift to all kinds of investments.

Optimists say inflation has come down enough for the Fed to cut rates meaningfully next year, while the economy continues to hum due to a solid job market. Pessimists say the Fed may need to keep rates higher for longer than investors expect to get inflation down to its 2% target, while the threat of a recession still looms.

A soft landing, where inflation gets back to the Fed's target without the economy having to suffer a painful recession, "is still possible, but not probable in our view," according to Joe Davis, chief

global economist and head of Vanguard's investment strategy group.

A risk remains that the Fed could misread a temporary slowdown in inflation as having accomplished its mission, which could lead to a cycle reminiscent of the late 1960s where inflation reaccelerates, the Fed hikes rates further and a recession eventually hits.

High rates have already hit the manufacturing and housing industries. A report Tuesday showed that homebuilders broke ground on fewer new homes in August than economists expected. The 11.3% drop from July's level was much worse than the 0.8% forecasted. But activity for building permits, a possible indicator of future activity, rose more than expected.

On Wall Street, shares of Instacart are set to begin trading later in the day after pricing its stock at \$30 in an initial public offering. It raised \$660 million and quickly follows after another highly anticipated IPO by Arm Holdings.

The offerings could mark a warming environment for IPOs, which fell off sharply after stocks tumbled last year with worries about higher interest rates. Arm jumped in its first day of trading on Thursday but followed that up with two days of losses.

Instacart's IPO valued the company at around \$10 billion. It was thought to be worth \$39 billion in 2021.

The Walt Disney Co. fell 3.5% for one of the largest losses in the S&P 500 after it announced a big investment plan for its theme parks and cruise lines. It plans to double its investment in its parks, experiences and products business to \$60 billion over the next 10 years versus the prior decade.

Shares of AutoZone swung between losses and gains after the auto parts retailer reported stronger profit for the latest quarter than analysts expected. It fell in the morning after it said growth in its do-

mestic commercial business was weaker than expected, but its stock later recovered to rise 0.1%.

Europe

France's CAC 40 added 0.2% to 7,292.91 in early trading. Germany's DAX fell nearly 0.1% to 15,716.61. Britain's FTSE 100 was little changed, rising less than 0.1% to 7,659.91.

Asia

Asian shares were mostly lower in cautious trading Tuesday ahead of the Federal Reserve's upcoming decision on interest rates. Japan's benchmark Nikkei 225 dropped 1.1% to 33,160.03. Australia's S&P/ASX 200 lost 0.5% to 7,196.70. South Korea's Kospi edged down 0.7% to 2,556.42. Hong Kong's Hang Seng slipped 0.2% to 17,893.99, while the Shanghai Composite fell 0.1% to 3,122.21.

The Fed is due to wrap up a two-day meeting on Wednesday. Japan's central bank will meet Thursday-Friday as observers speculate that it might gradually begin to adjust its longstanding negative interest rate policy.

"Market sentiment remained in its usual wait-and-see ahead of the Federal Open Market Committee meeting this week," said Yeap Jun Rong, market analyst at IG.

Oil

In energy trading, benchmark U.S. crude added 95 cents to \$92.43 a barrel in electronic trading on the New York Mercantile Exchange. It rose 71 cents to \$91.48 Monday. That's up from less than \$70 in July. Brent crude, the international standard, rose 55 cents to \$94.98 a barrel.

Currencies

In currency trading, the U.S. dollar rose to 147.80 Japanese yen from 147.58 yen. The euro cost \$1.0680, down from \$1.0691.

ASM Global named the operator of Dubai's 'Connect Conference Centre'

LOS ANGELES, Sept 19, (Business Wire): ASM Global, the world's preeminent venue-management company and the leading global live-events producer, has secured venue operations and management rights for Connect Conference Centre - known as "C3" - becoming the second addition to the company's Dubai portfolio that includes the iconic Coca-Cola Arena, which the company opened in 2019.

Rendering courtesy of ASM Global. It also joins what is already the largest portfolio of conference and convention centres on Earth.

Situated within Expo City Dubai, C3 has undergone an impressive repositioning following its previous life as the Opportunity Pavilion during the historic Expo 2020.

C3 is poised to assume a pivotal role in hosting a variety of meetings, conferences and cultural gatherings as part of the upcoming COP28, which will take place within Expo City Dubai from Nov. 30 to Dec. 12, 2023.

Sholto Douglas-Home, chief sales and marcomms officer, Expo City Dubai, said, "A distinctive, adaptable space, C3 is a welcome addition to Dubai's mid-sized venue market and opens up even more exciting options for business, entertainment and community events at Expo City Dubai. The Opportunity Pavilion was a popular destination during Expo 2020, and we look forward to seeing it come to life again as a lively hub in our growing city."

Harvey Lister, ASM Global's APAC chairman and chief executive, said, "This endeavour underscores ASM Global's unwavering commitment to furthering our presence in the MENA region. Our pursuit

aligns seamlessly with the UAE's consistent expansion and pursuit of excellence within the live-event sector. As pioneers in recognizing this potential within a rapidly expanding complex, we eagerly anticipate continued growth opportunities."

The venue's remarkable versatility allows it to cater to a wide range of events, ranging from summits, conferences and meetings to dynamic live-entertainment shows and exclusive corporate events.

Lister said C3's significance extends beyond its offerings and will assume a central role in the company's regional future operations and event schedule. The recent success in securing the management and operations rights for this venue by ASM Global not only sets the stage for the upcoming expansion plans within Expo City Dubai but also paves the way for the broader growth strategy within the UAE and the Middle East.

Other Middle East venues operated by ASM Global include Shaker's Exhibition World Bahrain, Jeddah Arena Airport City and International Convention Centre Jeddah Airport City.

ASM Global is the world's leading producer of entertainment experiences. It is the global leader in venue and event strategy and management - delivering locally tailored solutions and cutting-edge technologies to achieve maximum results for venue owners. The company's elite venue network spans five continents with a portfolio of more than 350 of the world's most prestigious arenas, stadiums, convention and exhibition centres, and performing arts venues.

Follow us on Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn and Twitter. Visit asmglobal.com.

Saudi Arabia to host 2024 World Environment Day

The United Nations Environment Program (UNEP) announced that the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia will host the 2024 World Environment Day, highlighting the Kingdom's pioneering efforts locally, regionally, and internationally and leading initiatives to raise awareness and promote action for the protection of our environment.

With a focus on land restoration, desertification, and drought resilience, the event, marked annually on 5 June, will reiterate the pressing need for global cooperation and concerted efforts in implementing the right policies and actions to protect and restore

nature and ensure a sustainable future.

World Environment Day was established by the United Nations General Assembly to emphasize the importance of participatory action to protect the environment. In line with this philosophy, Saudi Arabia has exerted diligent efforts, locally and regionally, by launching the Saudi Green and Middle East Green initiatives and implementing a set of initiatives under its National Environment Strategy. The Saudi government adopted the new Environmental law and the National Environmental Awareness program, to ensure

the protection of the environment in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

The Kingdom also launched the National Environment Week and established five environmental centers to conserve the environment in Saudi Arabia, as well as the Environment Fund. Globally, and under Saudi Arabia's G20 presidency, the Coral Research and Development Accelerator Platform and the Global Initiative on Reducing Land Degradation and Enhancing Conservation of Terrestrial Habitats were launched, to protect and restore both marine and terrestrial habitats. (AP)

EU clears creation of joint venture

The European Commission Tuesday announced the approval, under the EU Merger Regulation, the creation of a joint venture by Baoshan Iron & Steel Co. Ltd. (Baosteel) of China, Saudi Arabian Oil Company (Saudi Aramco) and Public Investment Fund (PIF), both of Saudi Arabia.

The joint venture will manufacture and supply direct reduced iron and heavy steel plates to third parties and to Saudi Aramco, PIF and their

affiliates under long-term supply agreements, it said in a statement.

It will be active in the countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council, primarily in Saudi Arabia, as well as in other countries of the Middle East and North Africa region. The EUs executive body concluded that the notified transaction would not raise competition concerns, given that the joint venture has negligible foreseen activities within the territory of the European Economic Area. (KUNA)

Aims to export 200m euros in 2 years to boost food security

UAE based LuLu Group launches food processing & export hub in Italy

MILAN, Sept 19: To further boost its sourcing operations and to bring in high quality products for its large chain of hypermarkets, Abu Dhabi based retail giant LuLu Group today officially opened its world-class sourcing, food processing & export hub in Italy.

Y International Italia, the sourcing division of Lulu Group was inaugurated by Guido Guidesi, Italian Minister of Economic Development in the presence of Yusufali MA, Chairman and Managing Director of Lulu Group. Also present on the occasion were Roberto Rizzardo, Head of FDI Department of Invitalia, Valerio Soldani, Director of Italian Trade Agency, Naser Al Khaja, Charge d'affaires at the UAE Embassy in Italy, Dr. Nasser Al Baloochi, Bahrain Ambassador to Italy, Cesare Trevisani, Chairman of Arab Chamber of Commerce of Italy, Mohamed Althaf, Director of Lulu Group, Alessandro Simone, Country Head of Lulu Group in Italy and other officials.

This move by the Lulu Group will further boost its sourcing operations not only from Italy but also from nearby European countries to ensure uninterrupted supply and price stability of food products.

Ideally located ideally at World Trade Center Malpensa Airport in Milan, the state-of-the-art facility will primarily focus on sourcing, processing, storing, packaging and exporting of top quality food products from Italy to more than 255 Lulu Hypermarkets spread across GCC countries, Egypt, India, Indonesia and Malaysia.

The focus categories will be varieties of cheeses, chocolates, fruit jams, sweet and puff pastries, organic pasta, infused extra-virgin olive oil, high-quality sea-salt from well-known Italian brands. Apart from packed food the center will also source and export a wide range of fruits & vegetables

mainly apples, grapes, kiwi, olives, etc.

Chief Guest, Mr. Guidesi expressed his excitement in having Lulu Group's this new project in Italy and assured highest level of support and cooperation that will further enhance trade tie between Italy and the Arab world.

Speaking at the inauguration, Yusufali MA, Chairman of Lulu Group said "as a key partner in the "food security" sector in the Middle East, it is our ongoing strategy to set up our own sourcing & food processing units around the world to ensure uninterrupted supply and ensure competitive pricing by eliminating middlemen.

"Italy has some unique cuisines, vast variety of fruits, vegetables and various commodities and we are working closely with the Italian Trade Agency to boost the export of these products to our hypermarkets. We will be working closely with all stakeholders to promote the Italian brands by organizing "Italian Food Festivals" across our hypermarkets" said Yusufali.

"We will be initially exporting worth 50 million euros and expect to reach 200 million euros in 2 years. We are tying up with farmers cooperative societies to source fruits & vegetables, which will surely have a very positive impact on the Agricultural sector of Italy. In addition this project will also generate significant employment in Italy" added Yusufali.

Headquartered in Abu Dhabi, capital of United Arab Emirates, Lulu Group has an annual turnover of US\$8 billion and employs over 65,000 people from 43 different countries ranked as the No.1 retailer in the Middle East & North Africa region and as one of the Top 50 fastest growing retailers in the world by Deloitte.

Lulu Group has similar food processing centers in UK, USA, Spain, Turkey, Vietnam, Thailand, China, South Africa among others.



The Lulu Group officials and invited guests pose in front of Y International Milano.

What happened to Germany?

From envy of the world to the worst

ESSEN, Germany Sept 19, (AP): For most of this century, Germany racked up one economic success after another, dominating global markets for high-end products like luxury cars and industrial machinery, selling so much to the rest of the world that half the economy ran on exports.

Jobs were plentiful, the government's financial coffers grew as other European countries drowned in debt, and books were written about what other countries could learn from Germany.

No longer. Now, Germany is the world's worst-performing major developed economy, with both the International Monetary Fund and European Union expecting it to shrink this year.

It follows Russia's invasion of Ukraine and the loss of Moscow's cheap natural gas - an unprecedented shock to Germany's energy-intensive industries, long the manufacturing powerhouse of Europe.

The sudden underperformance by Europe's largest economy has set off a wave of criticism, handwringing and debate about the way forward.

Germany risks "deindustrialization" as high energy costs and government inaction on other chronic problems threaten to send new factories and high-paying jobs elsewhere, said Christian Kullmann, CEO of major German chemical company Evonik Industries AG.

From his 21st-floor office in the west German town of Essen, Kullmann points out the symbols of earlier success across the historic Ruhr Valley industrial region: smokestacks from metal plants, giant heaps of waste from now-shuttered coal mines, a massive BP oil refinery and Evonik's sprawling chemical production facility.

Blackened

These days, the former mining region, where coal dust once blackened hanging laundry, is a symbol of the energy transition, dotted with wind turbines and green space.

The loss of cheap Russian natural gas needed to power factories "painfully damaged the business model of the German economy," Kullmann told The Associated Press. "We're in a situation where we're being strongly affected - damaged - by external factors."

After Russia cut off most of its gas to the European Union, spurring an energy crisis in the 27-nation bloc that had sourced 40% of the fuel from Moscow, the German government asked Evonik to keep its 1960s coal-fired power plant running a few months longer.

The company is shifting away from the plant - whose 40-story smokestack fuels production of plastics and other goods - to two gas-fired generators that can later run on hydrogen amid plans to become carbon neutral by 2030.

One hotly debated solution: a government-funded cap on industrial electricity prices to get the economy through the renewable energy transi-

tion.

The proposal from Vice Chancellor Robert Habeck of the Greens Party has faced resistance from Chancellor Olaf Scholz, a Social Democrat, and pro-business coalition partner the Free Democrats. Environmentalists say it would only prolong reliance on fossil fuels.

Kullmann is for it: "It was mistaken political decisions that primarily developed and influenced these high energy costs. And it can't now be that German industry, German workers should be stuck with the bill."

The price of gas is roughly double what it was in 2021, hurting companies that need it to keep glass or metal red-hot and molten 24 hours a day to make glass, paper and metal coatings used in buildings and cars.

Slowdown

A second blow came as key trade partner China experiences a slowdown after several decades of strong economic growth.

These outside shocks have exposed cracks in Germany's foundation that were ignored during years of success, including lagging use of digital technology in government and business and a lengthy process to get badly needed renewable energy projects approved.

Other dawning realizations: The money that the government readily had on hand came in part because of delays in investing in roads, the rail network and high-speed internet in rural areas. A 2011 decision to shut down Germany's remaining nuclear power plants has been questioned amid worries about electricity prices and shortages. Companies face a severe shortage of skilled labor, with job openings hitting a record of just under 2 million.

And relying on Russia to reliably supply gas through the Nord Stream pipelines under the Baltic Sea - built under former Chancellor Angela Merkel and since shut off and damaged amid the war - was belatedly conceded by the government to have been a mistake.

Now, clean energy projects are slowed by extensive bureaucracy and not-in-my-backyard resistance. Spacing limits from homes keep annual construction of wind turbines in single digits in the southern Bavarian region.

A 10 billion-euro (\$10.68 billion) electrical line bringing wind power from the breezier north to industry in the south has faced costly delays from political resistance to unsightly above-ground towers. Burying the line means completion in 2028 instead of 2022.

Massive clean energy subsidies that the Biden administration is offering to companies investing in the U.S. have evoked envy and alarm that Germany is being left behind.

"We're seeing a worldwide competition by national governments for the most attractive future technologies - attractive meaning the most profitable, the ones that strengthen growth," Kullmann said.

Ukraine complains to the WTO about countries banning its farm products

Hungary, Poland and Slovakia cited

GENEVA, Sept 19, (AP): Ukraine is filing a complaint at the World Trade Organization against Hungary, Poland and Slovakia after they banned grain and other food products coming from the war-torn country, Ukrainian Prime Minister Denys Shmyhal said Tuesday.

It lays bare a widening rift with the three members of the European Union, which has been a pivotal backer of Kyiv as it works to fight off Russia's invasion.

In a break with the wider EU, Poland, Hungary and Slovakia have announced bans on grain and other food from Ukraine, a major agricultural supplier to parts of the world where people are going hungry. The 27-nation bloc last week lifted restrictions on Ukraine's exports to five member states, also including Romania and Bulgaria.

Imports

Farmers in eastern Europe have railed against the imports from Ukraine, saying grain has gotten stuck inside their borders and driven down prices for local growers. Farmers in Bulgaria protested Monday after their government cited higher food costs in lifting the ban on Ukrainian products.

The WTO confirmed that it received a Ukrainian request for talks with Hungary, Poland and Slovakia over the dispute, a first step toward a possible showdown through the Geneva-based trade body.

Shmyhal blasted the "unfriendly" actions by the three countries and announced an investigation of possible discriminatory practices.

But the Ukrainian prime minister also floated a possible "compromise scenario" that would control four groups of exported farm products, aiming to limit

Delegation pays visit

Hainan promotes trade cooperation with UAE

HAIKOU, China, Sept 19, (PR Newswire): A report from Hainan International Media Center (HIMC): From September 13 to 15, a delegation from southern China's Hainan Province visited the United Arab Emirates (UAE) to enhance bilateral trade relations and boost industrial, cultural, and technological cooperation under China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI).

The tropical island province signed a memorandum of understanding with DP World, a leading local port operator in Dubai, and other agreements with the UAE companies in tourism, aviation, logistics, technology, and other services.

During the delegation's visit, the Hainan Free Trade Port (FTP) Promotion Conference was held, attended by representatives from the UAE's Ministry of Economy, Ministry of Energy & Infrastructure, Abu Dhabi Department of Economic Development, and the World Free Zones Organization, as well as from the Chinese Embassy in the UAE, Consulate-General of China in Dubai, and other Chinese companies and associations in the UAE.

Investors from the Jebel Ali Free Zone, Abu Dhabi Ports and Airport, Dubai International Airport Duty-free Store, DP World, Group 42 (a UAE artificial intelli-



The delegation from south China's Hainan Province signed agreements with the UAE during the Hainan Free Trade Port Promotion Conference held on September 15. (Photo: Hainan Daily App)

gence and cloud computing company), Dubai UAS International Trip Support, and other UAE companies were welcomed to invest in the Hainan FTP.

Since the UAE joined the China-proposed BRI, the two countries have witnessed their partnerships extend into many fields. Bilateral trade between Hainan Province and the UAE has seen growth spurts over the past few years, with the two sides being a good match in terms of natural resources and industrial structures.

Breaking the numbers down

hal said.

In July, Russia pulled out of a U.N.-brokered deal allowing Ukraine to ship grain safely through the Black Sea. Routes through Europe have become the primary way for Ukraine to export wheat, barley, corn, vegetable oil and more to developing nations in need.

Ukraine in recent days has been pushing ahead with limited exports through its own maritime

further by years, the trade volume between the two places in 2021 had increased 10 times since 2020, further doubling in 2022. The first half of 2023 saw trade volume surpass that of the whole of 2021.

During this year's Boao Forum for Asia annual conference, the Hainan FTP joined Dubai's Jebel Ali Free Zone, along with other free trade zones (ports) in China and around the world, in an initiative calling for partnerships between free trade zones (ports) worldwide.

channel despite the risks. Infrastructure Minister Oleksandr Kurbakov wrote Tuesday on Facebook that a vessel carrying 3,000 tons of Ukrainian grain left the port of Chornomorsk on its way across the Black Sea.

The ship was one of two to enter Chornomorsk through a corridor for civilian vessels set up by the Ukrainian Navy, he wrote.



Zain Beban Bootcamp 2023

Zain Innovation Campus hosts bootcamp of regional TV show Beban

Through their partnership with Beban, the regional entrepreneurship-themed reality TV show, Zain and Sabah Al Ahmad Center for Giftedness and Creativity (SACGC) - a center of the Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sciences (KFAS) - announce the hosting of the show's bootcamp at the Zain Innovation Campus (ZINC). From over 75 applicants, 40 Kuwaiti startups were selected to enroll in the intensive bootcamp for the chance to be one of 5 startups from Kuwait to join Beban's upcoming third season.

The bootcamp, which runs for two weeks at ZINC, offers invaluable training material presented by industry experts, and covers a wide range of topics that are key to any aspiring business owner, like understanding funding sources, business models, market research and go to market strategy, business strategy and risk management, and more.

The bootcamp also covers company identity and values, crowdfunding, strategy planning, investor relations, business financials, financial statements, valuations and forecasting, corporate governance and term sheets, and more.

At the end of the bootcamp, the participants will learn how to pitch their businesses to investors and potential business partners, an invaluable skill they will need should they be selected to join the third season of Beban,

where they will have the chance to pitch in front of a panel of regional investors for equity investment and strategic business development opportunities.

Zain and SACGC's partnership with Beban comes under the umbrella of the award-winning Zain Great Idea (ZGI) tech startup accelerator program, which was recently named Ecosystem Enabler of the Year in the Region by the prestigious Entrepreneur Middle East magazine. This award recognized the program's leadership in promoting a vibrant tech startup acceleration ecosystem. It also attests to Zain's endless efforts to empower Kuwaiti entrepreneurs, accelerate hundreds of startups, and embrace thousands of aspiring minds for 13 years.

The new season of ZGI comes with a fresh approach that is more flexible, giving entrepreneurs and startup owners more freedom to join the programs, sessions, bootcamps, and workshops at their own pace. Since each participant is unique in their schedule, business size, and needs, they will no longer have to commit to a fixed schedule of training. The partnership with Beban is the first of ZGI's many programs in its new season, which will feature even more bootcamps, regional accelerators, and other leading programs.

Beban, an entrepreneurship-themed reality TV show, is one of the top

programs of its kind in the region where entrepreneurs pitch to investors for immediate investment offers and strategic business opportunities. The program is a production of Hope Ventures, the investment arm of Hope Fund, established by His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa of Bahrain. Beban is aired on Shahid and a number of major regional TV channels.

Zain and SACGC's partnership with Beban as Country Partners from Kuwait reflects their shared commitment and interest to nurture the growth of the local entrepreneurship ecosystem and empower aspiring Kuwaiti talents to embark and build on their business journeys by providing them with the tools and resources needed to scale their businesses to new markets across the GCC.

In its previous seasons, Beban aired on Shahid, the region's first and biggest video-on-demand platform, as well as leading regional TV channels such as Al Rai TV, Dubai TV, and Bahrain TV. It featured a total of 62 businesses of various sizes and resulted in successful co-investments by the private and public sectors that exceeded USD 6 million in GCC-based startups.

Season 3 of Beban is anticipated to feature 40 regional opportunities from the Sultanate of Oman, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, the Kingdom of Bahrain, and the State of Kuwait.

Leading travel marketplace joins in celebration

Wingie witnesses 70 pct increase in bookings during Saudi National Day

DUBAI/BERLIN, Sept 19, (PR Newswire): Saudi Arabia prepares to celebrate its National Day on September 23, with the theme of "We Dream and We Achieve". This year marks the 93rd year of Saudi Arabia's independence and will be celebrated with festivities and activities to commemorate this historic day. Leading travel marketplace Wingie.com joins in the celebration of this significant occasion and highlights the remarkable increase in flight bookings during this period.

The annual celebration pays homage to the formation of the modern Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, symbolizing the Kingdom's unity and progress. This pivotal holiday is celebrated with numerous events, captivating firework displays, drone shows, special sales, and adorning Saudi cities with celebratory flags.

Saudi Travelers Travel to both International and Domestic Destinations during National Day

According to the Ministry of Human Resources and Social Development of the Kingdom, National Day is an official holiday for the private and non-profit sectors. Wingie is thrilled to reveal a skyrocketing 70% increase in bookings during this period. Saudi Arabia is a popular destination during National Day and many travelers who want to seize the opportunity to travel benefit from the official holiday to book flights.

Travelers chose to fly both domestic and international routes during National Day. The top countries with the highest number of bookings from Saudi Arabia are Egypt, India, the United Arab Emirates, Jordan, and Morocco, while the top destinations with the most bookings to Saudi Arabia are Egypt, the United Arab Emirates, Jordan, Kuwait, and Qatar.

About Wingie Enuygun Group
Wingie Enuygun Group is a popular travel marketplace in the MENA region focusing mainly on flights operating under wingie.com, sa.wingie.com, wingie.ae and enuygun.com domains. The company offers a range of products including flights, bus tickets, hotels, and rental cars. Wingie Enuygun Group has been one of the most innovative players in the MENA online travel space, with the aim of pioneering technological developments and leading the transformation of the travel industry with the approach of thinking digitally.

Wingie.com is a leading flight booking platform with its inclusion in the development of virtual interlining for flights, offering a diverse range of airline tickets and other travel content to enhance the user experience by providing the best



Group Warba

Warba organizes an awareness seminar on children's health, proper nutrition for clients

KUWAIT CITY Sept 19: Warba Bank organized an awareness seminar for its female clients entitled "Your children's mental health and their healthy nutrition are the basis of their academic excellence," in which the educational consultant and researcher in the field of childhood and adolescence, Nada Al-Mudhaf, and the certified health and wellness trainer, Maryam Al-Jarallah, lectured, with the participation of a large number of the Bank's female clients.

Senior Director of Branches and Private Banking Services at Warba Bank, Abdullah Nasser Al-Shuail, stated, "The Bank's management organized this seminar to provide advice and solutions for improving the quality and lifestyle and following an appropriate healthy diet to preserve the general health of children," praising the positive response of the Bank's female clients to this seminar. "The Bank seeks to organize various activities and events that aim to enhance health awareness and encourage healthy behaviors and habits for its clients and employees, emphasizing that prevention is better than treatment."

He pointed out that the seminar included a set of effective tips and guidelines that help the Bank's female clients maintain the general health of their children, improve their abilities and raise their efficiency, and also

options.

Wingie.com is available in 6 languages, employs over 300 people, and has around 165 million visitors to its platforms annually.

Also

RIYADH: On October 11th, 2023, ETH Riyadh 2023, presented by Tharawat Technology, Studio 23, ChainIDE, Coffee with Crypto, and Mask, is poised to assemble developers, innovators, and the global blockchain community in a dynamic exchange of ideas and technological advancements. Riyadh is once again primed to assert itself as a global epicenter for blockchain innovation with the imminent arrival of the ETH Riyadh 2023 conference.

Riyadh represents a burgeoning center for digital innovation, with a

growing tech-savvy community and an environment conducive to the adoption of emerging technologies. The strategic location in the heart of the Middle East makes Riyadh an ideal meeting point for blockchain enthusiasts from diverse regions, fostering international collaboration and innovation.

EthRiyadh 2023 is a series of hybrid events, hosted both online and offline, featuring three distinct stages. It kicks off with the META to Global Web3 Builder Competition, taking place from September 18th to October 12th. This competition will feature multiple tracks focusing on the latest innovations in the web3 industry and blockchain technology, encouraging developers and innovators to showcase their skills and creativity.

enable them to acquire healthy habits that maintain their vitality.

Al-Shuail highlighted Warba Bank's interest in participating in various seminars and awareness campaigns that are no less important than promotional campaigns for products and services, out of its belief that these participations contribute to the advancement of individuals and society.

He stated that, as part of social responsibility, Warba Bank is concerned with various areas of life, including health, education, security, people with disabilities, supporting youth initiatives, awareness campaigns, and everything that would achieve the public benefit and interest for the community.

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

Following with the Builder Conference that Scheduled for October 11th. This part of the event promises captivating talks and panel discussions led by leaders and visionaries in the blockchain field. Attendees will have the opportunity to gain valuable insights into emerging trends and groundbreaking technologies that are shaping the future of web3 and Ethereum.

The event culminates with the on-line Builder Mixer, taking place on October 12th. This is a unique opportunity for participants to connect with a vibrant community of builders, fostering growth and mutual success. Attendees can share stories about their experiences in building and forging meaningful connections that may lead to future achievements in the blockchain industry.

A chance to win 50 gold bars

stc launches an exciting 'Scan and Win' campaign

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 19: Kuwait Telecommunications Company - stc, a world-class digital leader providing innovative services and platforms to customers, enabling the digital transformation in Kuwait, announced the launch of its latest campaign for new stc prepaid customers under the slogan "Scan and Win". Designed to enhance the experience of its prepaid customers, the new campaign presents new subscribers with a chance to win one of the valuable prizes, falling in line with the Company's commitment to continuously enhance the services and solutions it provides.

In a statement, stc highlighted that the 'Scan and Win' campaign is open to any new customer that purchases one of stc's prepaid lines with a plan of KD6 or above. The duration of the campaign will span from August 31st until December 1st, 2023. Those interested in participating for a chance to win one of the valuable prizes can do so by purchasing a prepaid line from any of stc's branches or through the mystc mobile app. In addition to a chance of winning one of the prizes, new subscribers will enjoy a complimentary 6-month subscription to stc tv, and a 3-month subscription to Anghami Plus.

The 'Scan and Win' campaign is unique in kind considering the range of prizes that customers can win instantly. Subscribers have the chance to win one of 50 gold bars, the main prize highlighted under the campaign. For those who value quality entertainment, stc will be offering exclusive entertainment packages, completely free. Additionally, prizes such as extra credit, extended validity, and additional GBs

have been introduced, catering to a broad audience.

The campaign was launched by stc to showcase the various benefits the Company offers under its attractive 'go' prepaid plans. stc designed 'go' to offer a selection of customizable yet affordable digital plans and add-ons. Customers will be able to take control of their spending and usage with no commitments, tailoring their prepaid plans to suit their lifestyle needs and choices. stc indicated that the strategy behind 'go' falls in line with the Company's core strategy which focuses on enabling the digital transformation in Kuwait, which now presents new subscribers with the golden opportunity to win one of the valuable prizes.

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.

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

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

scan and win
50 gold bars and other prizes

Starting
KD 6
new prepaid line

S&W-launch visual

STL starts to 'Make in America'

COLUMBIA, S.C./LONDON/MUMBAI, India, Sept. 19, (PR Newswire): STL (NSE: STLTECH), a leading global optical and digital solutions company, today formally announced the launch of its state-of-the-art manufacturing facility in Lugoff, South Carolina - The Palmetto Plant. Named after the state tree of South Carolina, this facility, also designated as STL's North American Headquarters, symbolizes STL's commitment to the US market.

The Palmetto Plant was inaugurated by Hon. Henry McMaster, Governor

of South Carolina, in the presence of government dignitaries, key customers, and representatives from the local Chambers of Commerce.

This strategic investment and expansion efforts in the U.S. further reinforce STL's commitment to the Make in America vision. Addressing the market demand for 5G, FTTx, and the push for rural broadband, The Palmetto Plant, spanning over 168,000 sq. ft will specialize in future-ready optical solutions, including high fiber count cables with smaller diameters.

BUSINESS

Microsoft's chief product exec to step down

A top product executive at Microsoft who launched its Surface line of computers and Windows 11 is leaving the company. Panos Panay is stepping down after nearly two decades at Microsoft, most recently as chief product officer, according to a staff memo Monday. "Under Panos' leadership, the team created the iconic Surface brand with loved products," said the message to employees from Rajesh Jha, executive vice president of Microsoft's experiences and devices group. Another longtime executive, Yusuf

Mehdi, who is currently chief marketing officer for consumer products, will take lead on the Windows and Surface businesses and products, Jha said. The note said Panay would be helping with the transition. "After 19 incredible years at Microsoft, I've decided to turn the page and write the next chapter," said a social media post from Panay on X, formerly Twitter. He didn't say what his next undertaking would be. The first Surface device, a tablet computer, was unveiled in 2012 in a mar-

ket dominated by Apple's iPad. It was unusual for software-focused Microsoft, which makes money from other computer manufacturers running its Windows operating system, to start designing and selling its own line of high-end computers. Surface devices make up just a small fraction of the personal computer market. Panay joined Microsoft's team in 2004 as a group program manager, responsible for managing various premium products. (Agencies)



Microsoft's Chief Product Officer Panos Panay holds a Surface Duo, (left), and Surface Neo at an event, Wednesday, Oct. 2, 2019, in New York. Panos Panay is stepping down after nearly 20 years at Microsoft, according to a staff memo Sept 18. (AP)

Prevent competitive threats from Open AI and Microsoft

Google brings AI chatbot Bard to Gmail, Maps and YouTube

NEW YORK, Sept 19, (AP) - Google is introducing Bard, its artificially intelligent chatbot, to other members of its digital family - including Gmail, Maps and YouTube - as it seeks ward off competitive threats posed by similar technology run by Open AI and Microsoft.

Bard's expanded capabilities announced Tuesday will be provided through an English-only extension that will enable users to allow the chatbot to mine information embedded in their Gmail accounts as well as pull directions from Google Maps and find helpful videos on YouTube. The extension will also open a door for Bard to fetch travel information from Google Flights and extract information from documents stored on Google Drive.

Privacy

Google is promising to protect users' privacy by prohibiting human reviewers from seeing the potentially sensitive information that Bard gets from Gmail or Drive, while also promising that the data won't be used as part of the main way the Mountain View, California, company makes money - selling ads tailored to people's interests.

The expansion is the latest development in an escalating AI battle triggered by the popularity of OpenAI's ChatGPT chatbot and Microsoft's push to infuse similar technology in its Bing search engine and its Microsoft 365 suite that includes its Word, Excel and Outlook applications.

ChatGPT prompted Google to release Bard broadly in March and then start testing the use of more conversational AI within its own search results in May.

The decision to feed Bard more digital juice in the midst of a high-profile trial that could eventually hobble the ubiquitous Google search engine that propels the \$1.7 trillion empire of its

Accenture invests in Writer to accelerate enterprise use of AI

NEW YORK, Sept 19: Accenture (NYSE: ACN) has made a strategic investment, through Accenture Ventures, in Writer, a platform using generative AI to help enterprises create and shape content in the ways people already work.

Writer is designed to help organizations deploy AI-driven applications that can increase productivity and drive significant business impact across enterprise functions including support, operations, product, sales, HR, marketing, and more. Enterprises can integrate generative AI into their content creation and other workflows, as well as generate insights from their internal data, safely and securely.

"Our continued investments in generative AI platforms will empower clients across all industries to transform how they create, personalize and distribute content at pace, but also safely, securely and with brand integrity," said Baiju Shah, chief strategy officer of Accenture Song. "We've entered a new era of tech-powered creativity and believe Writer's enterprise-ready platform is a strong addition to Accenture's comprehensive set of generative AI capabilities, tools and expertise, helping our clients capitalize on a wide range of uses across marketing and sales."

corporate parent, Alphabet Inc.

In the biggest U.S. antitrust case in a quarter century, the US Justice Department is alleging Google has created its lucrative search monopoly by abusing

its power to stifle competition and innovation. Google contends it dominates search because its algorithms produce the best results. It also argues it faces a wide variety of competition that is be-

ing more intense with the rise of AI. Giving Bard access to a trove of personal information and other popular services such as Gmail, Google Maps and YouTube, in theory, will make

them even more helpful and prod more people to rely in them. Google, for instance, posits that Bard could help a user planning a group trip to the Grand Canyon by get-

ting dates that would work for everyone, spell out different flight and hotel options, provide directions from Maps and present an array of informative videos from YouTube.

Enterprise enables organizations to execute generative AI use cases designed to meet their specific workflow needs. These AI-driven applications sit securely on an organization's own on-premises systems or private clouds, using their own proprietary data and conforming to their specific style and brand guidelines.

Integrated

"It's pretty simple. Enterprises want impactful and secure generative AI applications, they want them integrated into their tools and workflows, and they want it soon. Writer is the only generative AI platform, and that is why our customers' generative AI use cases actually make it to production," said May Habib, CEO and co-founder of Writer. "Joining Accenture's 'Project Spotlight' program will enable Writer to benefit from Accenture's expertise from decades of deploying AI across industries and functions, and help us grow by driving broader awareness of our capabilities."

Writer is the latest company to join Accenture Ventures' Project Spotlight, an engagement and investment program that connects emerging technology startups with the Global 2000 to fill strategic innovation gaps. Project Spotlight offers extensive access to Accenture's domain expertise and its

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Streamline money movement

Visa, Swift unite for fast, secure B2B transactions

TORONTO, Sept 19: Visa and Swift has announced a collaboration to streamline international business-to-business (B2B) payments by strengthening connectivity between their networks that move trillions in value globally. Working together, the organizations aim to provide financial institutions and their customers with more choice when sending money across borders, while improving the end-to-end speed and transparency of their transactions.

As part of the joint effort, announced in Toronto at the annual Sibos conference, Visa will deploy capabilities developed by Swift that can help increase the speed and certainty of cross-border money movement. This includes Swift Payment Pre-validation to enable upfront checks of Visa B2B Connect payments, reducing unnecessary delays by catching potential errors before the payment is initiated. Additionally, the networks plan to work together to increase end-to-end transaction visibility by using high-speed Swift GPI capabilities and tracking data. Visa will migrate its connection to Swift through Alliance Cloud, a scalable, secure cloud-based channel for connecting to Swift's network, as well as messaging services, standards and solutions.

Options

Through this collaboration, financial institutions on both networks will have more routing options for their business customers, with real-time status and updates. In a world facing increased fragmentation, these efforts advance the goals of both organizations to keep the world's financial infrastructure connected with the right levels of security, resiliency, reliability and compliance.

Unions have concerns

A railroad worker dies after being struck by remote-controlled train

NEW YORK, Sept 19, (AP) - A railroad worker died over the weekend after he was struck by a remote-controlled train in a CSX railyard in Ohio, raising concerns among unions about such technology.

The death highlights the need for an in-depth review of the use of remote-controlled locomotives, the Transportation Communications Union and Brotherhood of Railway Carmen said in a news release Sunday. Every major railroad has used such locomotives inside, and increasingly outside of, railyards across the country for years.

The National Transportation Safety Board is investigating the death, which happened shortly before 4 a.m. Sunday in Walbridge, Ohio. Spokesperson Keith Holloway said the worker was

"Many businesses continue to face complexities while making cross-border payments that hurt their bottom lines. By working with Swift, Visa will help enhance our financial institution clients' offerings to their corporate customers. The collaboration will help provide clarity and enhanced data, while removing errors before, during and after the payment."

"Expectations for international payments are rising as the complexity of moving money across borders is intensifying. Our work with Visa helps address both challenges, providing new connectivity and capabilities in the backend to drive exciting innovation in front-end customer channels. It's part of our strategic focus on payment optionality, enabling value in all forms to move seamlessly around the world with strong peace of mind on security and trust and, through collaborations like this, consistently elevating the customer experience."

Transparency

Swift provides best-in-class infrastructure with unrivalled reach, transparency, security, and trust - infrastructure that interoperates seamlessly across geographies, networks and technologies while neutrally supporting fiat or digital currencies. It supports an inclusive and sustainable global finance system, securely interconnecting more than 11,500 institutions across more than 200 countries and territories to move the equivalent of world GDP roughly every three days. Through strong focus on innovation, and aligned with G20 goals, it is consistently raising the bar on the cross-border experience with advanced capabilities that remove friction, accelerate speed and increase security and transparency.

struck and fatally injured when he walked into the path of a moving locomotive that was being operated by remote control.

Fred Anderson is the third carman killed in an incident involving a remote-controlled locomotive, the unions said.

"Enough is enough. A full-scale review of the use and practices around remote-control locomotives is long overdue. CSX - and every railroad - must evaluate their use of these supposed technological advancements to ensure they are actually making our members safer, and not merely replacing people to continue lining the pockets of Wall Street," Transportation Communications Union National President Artie Maratea said in the news release.

the year. We take that risk as a company to provide fast charging availability that's crucial to EV adoption, because when you're pulling up in a vehicle on a highway route, you're not thinking about all those variables. You want that fast charge as quickly as your vehicle can accept it.

Q: Do you try to negotiate better rates?

A: Many of those quarter-million dollar examples, for example, are now zero because of testifying in front of public utility commissions to have rate reform to support direct current fast charging. We also use behind-the-meter energy storage to bridge that gap. We have over 160 deployed, so 35 megawatts worth. Think about a different rate for that one megawatt peak that I was describing. Instead of all that coming from the utility at once, most of that will come from the storage system next to our chargers. Once those vehicles leave, the storage system will charge back up again.

Q: Can you say what your monthly electric bill is?

A: It's fair to say it's in the millions.

Q: How does this affect what EV owners pay per charge?

A: We've recently announced that we're going to site-specific pricing. There are a lot of utility areas where some of those rates weren't designed to support this type of fast-charging. There isn't the state backing the mission to support EV adoption. Some of those rates are problematic even with the storage systems. So we are increasing pricing in certain areas to accommodate what our actual economics are, and in other cases we're reducing prices substantially to accommodate that policy movement.

Q: What's the cost per kilowatt hour now?

A: It's around 41, 42 cents per kilowatt in kilowatt hour in some states. In certain states there's a price per minute, and that's 30 cents per minute.

Q: So I don't know how much this

Energy service director on balancing EV charging costs

Electrify America charging network must navigate utility rates & rules

NEW YORK, Sept 19, (AP) - If Jigar Shah doesn't do his job correctly, the company with the second-highest number of fast-charging electric vehicle plugs could lose money or EV owners could have to pay more to fill up.

As director of energy services at Electrify America, Shah is in charge of navigating a wide range of rates charged by more than 200 electric utilities in areas where the company has stations.

Electrify America, a subsidiary of Volkswagen formed as part of the settlement for its diesel emissions cheating scandal, has more than 3,600 fast-charging plugs in the US and Canada. It's second only to Tesla with more than 22,000 ports.

Shah talked about the cost of charging and regulations that vary by state and local government. His comments are edited for length and clarity.

Question: Fast-charging stations often need line extensions, transformers and other things because they use a lot of electricity. How do you work all of this out?

Answer: We have relationships with utilities to go through the line-extension process. We make capacity requests to say we're putting in four chargers with approximately a megawatt worth of demand, and how long is it going to be and how much would it cost. So there's definitely this matching game that happens between assessing how difficult from a timing and cost perspective it is to get utility infrastructure in that area versus pivoting to another location that may be more grid-friendly or already has infrastructure nearby that may be more cost-effective. I'm responsible for everything after the point that the site is live and managing all our energy costs.

Q: You have to worry about fluctuating rates, including costs that rise with higher demand?

A: One of the key variables is something called a utility demand charge. This is very different from what you're used to in your home electricity bill. You typically just pay for kilowatt hours, plus a few fixed charges. In the commercial world, usually utilities have a demand charge, which is based on peak kilowatts drawn in usually a 15- or 30-minute period in a given month or sometimes a year. If I have four vehicles charging at once for 15 minutes and a station shut down for the rest of the year, my costs from that one 15-minute amount may be above a quarter-million dollars. Four vehicles, when they draw that amount of power at once, that could be approximately a megawatt of demand. So you get billed based on that spike and that's carried through the rest of

Mobility & utility management platform launched

Rhythmos collaborates with KUB to enhance EV charging infrastructure

BOULDER, Colo., Sept 19: Without innovative electric vehicle (EV) charging solutions, the average utility will need to invest thousands of dollars in grid upgrades per EV. To support utilities and consumers with increased EV charging capabilities, Rhythmos has announced the commercial deployment of its mobility and utility network management platform in East Tennessee, which is sponsored by the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) and the Electric Power Research Institute (EPRI). Knoxville Utilities Board (KUB) will be the first utility system to implement Rhythmos' innovative predictive analytics software solution to provide vital data such as EV detection, charging characterization, day-ahead forecasting, and transformer loading. Rhythmos' data offers unprecedented visibility into the electric grid and will allow KUB to identify, quantify, forecast, and control EV charging needs to minimize grid impact. This data also informs operational planning, procurement and rate design. This project, made possible by EPRI's Incubator@ Labs (IEL) program, marks a significant step towards enhancing EV infrastructure in the state.

"Today's utilities are doing everything they can to support electric mobility and to meet charging demand in

time to scale up in tune with the EV industry," said James Linder, program manager of innovation scouting for TVA. "TVA's commitment to working with local power companies to keep service steady and reliable means investing in technologies that support our customers' evolving needs. We look forward to doing that in our hometown by sponsoring this smart charging deployment between KUB and Rhythmos."

Transformer

A key feature of the Rhythmos solution is its ability to provide comprehensive loading analysis on each distribution service transformer in KUB's distribution system. This includes a meticulous assessment of the impact of EV loading on service transformers. By ingesting data from KUB's 250,000 Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI) meters and Geographic Information System (GIS) data, Rhythmos will analyze meter intervals to precisely detect EV charging points within the distribution system. Rhythmos will also characterize EV charging behavior - such as frequency and time of day - based on historical meter data, which will provide KUB with unparalleled insight into EV charging load projections for the next day.

Q: Can you say what your monthly electric bill is?

A: It's fair to say it's in the millions.

Q: How does this affect what EV owners pay per charge?

A: We've recently announced that we're going to site-specific pricing. There are a lot of utility areas where some of those rates weren't designed to support this type of fast-charging. There isn't the state backing the mission to support EV adoption. Some of those rates are problematic even with the storage systems. So we are increasing pricing in certain areas to accommodate what our actual economics are, and in other cases we're reducing prices substantially to accommodate that policy movement.

Q: What's the cost per kilowatt hour now?

A: It's around 41, 42 cents per kilowatt in kilowatt hour in some states. In certain states there's a price per minute, and that's 30 cents per minute.

Q: So I don't know how much this

"KUB empowers electric vehicle adoption throughout our service territory by improving infrastructure, reducing demand charges for separately metered EV stations, providing residential customers with EV charging incentives, and supporting commercial fleet electrification," said Mathew Stinnett, manager of electric engineering at KUB. "By deploying Rhythmos' software, we gain powerful insight into our customers' needs so that we are better prepared to manage EV charging loads. This deployment signifies a step towards a more intelligent and responsive energy grid."

To earn this rapid deployment demonstration with KUB, Rhythmos was one of only 16 companies to earn a place in EPRI's 2023 IEL Cohort. EPRI provides rigorous technical validation of Rhythmos' energy management analytics and algorithm performance based on EPRI's evaluation of the effectiveness of Rhythmos' EV detection and day-ahead forecasting functionalities. The assessment of this demonstration will extend to exploring the potential impact on utility rates, resulting in a comprehensive report outlining the rate implications of the solutions presented. The results of this partnership will be presented on November 1st at EPRI's Incubator@Labs Demo Day.

is going to cost me when I roll up to one of these?

A: It's on the Electrify America mobile app. That pricing will always be transparent to the customer, especially before they start charging, so that there's never a case where there's a surprise bill. We recommend that when we've made the change to site pricing, that people look at the app to see what it is in advance.

Q: Does putting lithium-ion battery storage units on your sites slow your expansion?

A: Any time we're making an investment in energy storage, that is an investment that could have gone to more fast-charging deployment. One thing to keep in mind is 70% to 80% of charging still occurs at home. And so folks are using our DC fast-charging network primarily for long distances. It's important to keep in mind in terms of the price premium compared to charging at home and the service and experience that we provide.

GE HealthCare gets \$44m to develop AI ultrasound tech

MH002 safe, effective in mild-to-moderate Ulcerative Colitis patients

GHENT, Belgium, Sept 19: MRM Health NV, a clinical-stage biopharmaceutical company focused on developing next-generation live microbiome consortia therapeutics, has reported positive topline results from its Phase 2a clinical trial with MH002 in mild-to-moderate Ulcerative Colitis (UC).

MRM Health's MH002-UC-201 study was a multi-center, double-blind, randomized, placebo-controlled trial in 45 UC patients at multiple clinical sites in Belgium, Poland and Czech Republic. The study was designed to evaluate safety (primary endpoint), initial efficacy and mechanistic effects of MH002 over eight weeks, with a further eight-week extension period.

The primary endpoint was met with an excellent safety profile and tolerance at a fixed dose of 400mg per day over 16 weeks administration. Treatment-Emergent Adverse Events (TEAE) were reported in 35% of patients allocated to MH002 treatment compared to 57% when treated with placebo and there was no evidence of adverse reactions related to MH002.

Improvement

Initial efficacy on disease activity was evidenced in clinically relevant parameters, including a 12% improvement in Mayo Endoscopic Severity (MES) score (p=0.05, 1-sided Wilcoxon rank sum test), while placebo worsened by 5%. Stool consistency significantly improved in the MH002 treatment group as from week 2 (p=0.006; 1-sided Student t-test). At the end of the eight-week period, 18% of subjects achieved clinical remission compared to 0% of the placebo group (Per-protocol analysis). As opposed to previous trials with other live biotherapeutics in UC, this study was performed successfully without vancomycin preconditioning.

At a mechanistic level, anti-inflammatory effect was demonstrated with 42% decrease in median fecal calprotectin (a clinically relevant bowel inflammation marker) compared to 18% in placebo at week 8.

"These early results indicate that MH002 is safe and well tolerated by patients, and has potential efficacy in mild-to-moderate UC patients who have not responded sufficiently to first-line treatment," commented Séverine Vermeire, coordinating investigator of study MH002-UC-201 and Professor of Medicine at the KU Leuven, Belgium. "There is a significant absence of treatments for UC patients, particularly in this population, so I look forward to conducting the full analysis of the data and following MH002's progression through the clinic."

Bruce Sands, Professor of Medicine at the Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai, New York and paid consultant to MRM Health, added: "MH002's mechanism of action and anti-inflammatory effect in UC look very promising, with the potential of a highly favorable benefit/risk balance, pending larger confirmatory studies. These topline results also suggest that this formulation could have applications across a wider range of other inflammatory bowel disorders, including pouchitis, in which MH002 is also being tested."

Ludo Haazen, Chief Medical Officer at MRM Health, added: "This first clinical study enables us to move forward with our clinical programme in UC. We are excited to see that MH002 differentiated in this early study significantly and consistently from placebo in clinically relevant parameters, including the centrally assessed MES, which was supported by the mechanistic parameters we have measured."

MH002 is currently the most advanced rationally-designed consortium therapy in the UC field. It was developed through MRM Health's proprietary CORAL® Technology and comprises six well-characterized commensal strains, selected and optimized to tackle key disease-driving mechanisms with enhanced potency, resiliency, and engraftment. Production is via

MRM Health's breakthrough scalable and standardized cGMP manufacturing platform, allowing the manufacturing of complete consortia as a single drug substance. The ability of CORAL® to enable scalable, cost-effective manufacturing of complete optimized consortia in a single process is expected to provide both key regulatory and patient compliance advantages.

In addition to the recently completed UC trial, MH002 is being tested in an ongoing multi-center, open label Phase 2 study enrolling patients with acute Pouchitis, a rare disease with high unmet medical need.

Sam Possemiers, Chief Executive Officer at MRM Health, said: "These early clinical data are very important for the Company, since they further validate our proprietary CORAL® technology which underlies our portfolio of live biotherapeutic products. The data enables us to take the next steps in our business strategy where we will be engaging with regulatory agencies in all territories and potential new partners as well as driving forward the rest of our development portfolio."

GE HealthCare (Nasdaq: GEHC) has announced it received a grant from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation for more than \$44 million to create user-friendly, artificial intelligence (AI)-assisted ultrasound imaging auto-assessment tools. These tools will seek to aid healthcare professionals—even those without specialized training or experience with ultrasound—with clinical decision information to support more effective obstetric and lung screening ultrasound scans across maternal and fetal care as well as pediatric lung health, with a goal of expanding access to low-and-middle income countries (LMIC) and across diverse sites of care.

Accessible

Caption Health, a leader in medical AI acquired by GE HealthCare in February 2023, will design this technology to run across a range of ultrasound devices and probes, including lower-cost handheld devices.

"We are proud and excited to have received this grant from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation to make ultrasound more accessible in low-and-middle income countries. Ultrasound is an essential tool for screening and diagnosis of various medical conditions, including the health of expectant mothers and managing respiratory diseases," said Roland Rott, President and CEO, Ultrasound, GE HealthCare. "However, a key limitation is the guidance of lesser-skilled users to effectively apply affordable point-of-care ultrasound in their care environment. This grant will help bring Caption Health's leading AI technology customized to more users, and therefore contribute to increased access to higher-quality medical care."

Maternal and child mortality is a critical healthcare issue around the world. In 2020, almost 800 women died every day from preventable causes linked to pregnancy and childbirth, with approximately 95 percent of all maternal deaths occurring in LMIC. In 2019, 2.4 million children around the world died in their first month of life. Ultrasound technologies are used in maternal care to determine fetal health markers and conditions like gestational age, fetal presentation, multiple gestation (more than one fetus), fetal viability, umbilical blood flow, and ectopic pregnancy.

For children younger than five years old, pneumonia is the leading cause of death worldwide. Because symptoms of pneumonia can develop suddenly, early diagnosis is vital to effective treatment and preventing complications. Point of care lung ultrasound can provide physicians with a view of the entire lung, is easily repeatable and can diagnose pneumonia with greater accuracy compared with a bedside chest X-ray.

'Breakthrough CAR-T cell therapy for childhood leukemia'

ADSCC successfully manufactures UAE's first CAR-T cell to treat boy

'Prioritize climate-health investments'

Health will be at center of COP28 climate discussions – Dr Al Jaber

ABU DHABI, UAE, Sept 19: Abu Dhabi Stem Cells Center (ADSCC), a PureHealth subsidiary and the largest healthcare platform in the Middle East, has successfully manufactured the UAE's first CAR-T cells to treat an 11-year-old boy with leukemia. Engineered CAR-T cells therapies are recognized as a breakthrough in blood cancer treatment.

The child, Murad, was diagnosed with leukemia more than five years ago and went into remission, but unfortunately, the leukemia returned approximately six months ago. Murad underwent chemotherapy, as per standard protocols for his case, but did not respond to that treatment. At that point, CAR-T cell therapy was the only treatment option available for him.

The procedure involved manufacturing the cellular product (CAR-T), which relies on the use of immune cells from the patient, at ADSCC's Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP) laboratories - one of very few laboratories in the Middle East. The treatment took five weeks, during which Murad was admitted at ADSCC, the only accredited Centre of Excellence in Hematopoietic Stem Cell Transplantation in Abu Dhabi. Physicians withdrew the cells from the patient and genetically modified his immune cells in the laboratory to fight the cancer cells after intravenously injecting them into the patient.

Enhance

Her Excellency Dr. Noura Khamis Al Ghaithi, Undersecretary of the Department of Health - Abu Dhabi said: "Under the directives of our wise leadership, Abu Dhabi continues to cement its position on the global healthcare map. Through its capabilities and continuous innovation and research efforts in the field of life science, we are able to enhance the health and safety of members of our community, and beyond. Today, Abu Dhabi's healthcare sector is built on several pillars that make the emirate a leading destination for healthcare, especially given the strong governmental support and guidance, along with the emirate's advanced infrastructure, its healthcare facilities, and skilled workforce."

Dr. Yendry Ventura, CEO of ADSCC, said: "Our success in creating CAR-T therapy right here in Abu Dhabi marks a momentous leap in our commitment to making a profound impact on a regional level. CAR-T therapy is a remarkable advancement for fighting diseases using the body's

NEW YORK, Sept 19: The COP28 President-Designate Dr. Sultan Al Jaber has vowed that COP28 will drive international action on climate and health, with the first-ever Health Day and climate-health ministerial at a COP acting as a ground-breaking opportunity to determine steps towards equitable, climate-resilient health systems and mobilize vital investment in the sector.

Speaking against the backdrop of the United Nations General Assembly and New York Climate Week, alongside Dr. Tedros Ghebreyesus, Director-General of the World Health Organization (WHO) and Dr. Lazarus McCarthy Chakwera, President of Malawi, Dr. Al Jaber called on the international community to support the day and ministerial, which will be co-hosted with the WHO and several countries.

Dr. Al Jaber stressed the importance of addressing the crucial connection between climate change and health. He said: "The connection between health and climate change is evident, yet it has not been a specific focus of the COP process - until now. This must change."

He continued, "As we prepare for the groundbreaking Health Day at COP28, we are resolute in our determination to address the challenges posed to health by climate change and encourage ambitious investment in the health sector. Our goal is to build resilient, equitable health systems capable of withstanding the impact of climate change."

He went on to thank the country champions, Brazil, the UK, the USA, the Netherlands, Kenya, Fiji, India, Egypt, Sierra Leone, and Germany for their work to lead the climate health discussions at COP28.

immune system, and there was a pressing need to make CAR T cells available in UAE. This achievement not only brings hope to countless patients but also strengthens our position as pioneers in cutting-edge medical innovation, right here in the heart of the UAE.

During his remarks, Dr. Al Jaber highlighted the risks climate change poses to human health, including shifting disease patterns, expanding vectors, and the resurgence of previously contained diseases.

He noted that WHO statistics reveal that air pollution alone leads to seven million excess deaths annually and that vector-borne diseases, such as Malaria, are expanding their reach due to rising temperatures and changing weather patterns, disproportionately affecting vulnerable communities.

Adapt

Alongside this growing threat, the COP28 Health Day - scheduled for the 3rd December - will also take into account the fragility of public health systems worldwide, as exposed by the COVID-19 pandemic, and the urgent need for transformative changes to adapt these systems in response to climate change.

"COP28 is determined to shine a light on these issues and to bring together partners who can make a positive difference. We are determined to reverse these trends by bringing the world together around an inclusive action agenda centered around a just transition, fairer climate finance and improved lives and livelihoods." Dr. Al Jaber said.

Finance will also be a priority during COP28's Health Day. The financial toll of health crises attributed to climate change is estimated to reach between \$2-4 billion annually by 2030, exacerbating poverty, particularly in disadvantaged regions. The World Bank projects that nearly 40 percent of climate-related poverty will result from the direct health impacts of climate change, impacting productivity,

income, and health expenses.

In his remarks, Dr. Al Jaber called for increased concessional funds to the Global South to lower risks and attract private capital. He emphasized the need to rebalance finance and called on governments to double adaptation finance by 2025, urging them to contribute generously to replenish the Green Climate Fund.

Dr. Al Jaber also underscored the significance of investing in health as a crucial aspect of climate resilience, emphasizing that these expenses should be viewed as investments rather than costs. According to the World Bank, every dollar invested in building climate resilience yields an average benefit of four dollars.

As such, he called on financial institutions, including development banks, to prioritize climate-health investments. Dr. Al Jaber commended the leadership of organizations such as the World Bank, the Asian Development Bank, the Green Climate Fund, the Rockefeller Foundation for their commitment to closing the climate-health financing gap at COP28.

During the session, Dr. Al Jaber highlighted the UAE's legacy and leadership to safeguard human health. He underscored the commitment of Founding Father His Highness Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan and President His Highness Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan to prioritize the lives and livelihoods of people.

He highlighted initiatives such as 'Reaching the Last Mile', which, through His Highness Sheikh Mohamed Bin Zayed, has committed over \$455 million to improve global health outcomes, with an emphasis on supporting resilient health systems that best serve vulnerable communities.



Murad upon discharge from hospital.

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People

HOUSTON, Sept. 19. (AP) - Rap superstar Travis Scott was questioned for several hours on Monday in a civil deposition he gave in connection with hundreds of lawsuits that were filed against him and others over the deaths and injuries at the 2021 Astroworld festival.

Lawyers and others connected to the civil lawsuits are under a gag order, preventing them from saying little beyond what happens during court hearings.

"Travis Scott's deposition is typical legal procedure. What is not typical is how the media continues to focus on him despite being cleared of any wrongdoing by extensive government investigations, including by the Houston Police Department," Ted Anastasiou, a spokesperson for Scott, said in a statement. "Travis is fully cooperating with the legal process while still remaining committed to his tour in support of his record-breaking album, 'Utopia,' and his charitable efforts to support at-risk communities."

Following an investigation by Houston Police, no charges were filed against Scott after a grand jury in June declined to indict him and five other people on any criminal counts related to the deadly concert. Police Chief Troy Finner declined to say what the overall conclusion of his agency's investigation was.

In July, the police department made public its nearly 1,300-page investigative report in which festival workers highlighted problems and warned of possible deadly consequences.

According to a summary in the investigative report of a police interview conducted two days after the concert, Scott told investigators that although he did see one person near the stage getting medical at-

attention, overall the crowd seemed to be enjoying the show and he did not see any signs of serious problems. This was the first time Scott was questioned by attorneys for those who have filed lawsuits since a crowd surge at his Nov. 5, 2021, concert in Houston killed 10 festivalgoers.

Those killed, who ranged in age from 9 to 27, died from compression asphyxia, which an expert likened to being crushed by a car.

Similar crushes have happened all over the world, from a soccer stadium in England to the hajj pilgrimage in Saudi Arabia to Halloween festivities in the South Korean capital. Most people who die in crowd surges suffocate.

Scott's deposition comes as a judge earlier this year scheduled the first trial from the lawsuits for May 6, 2024. That first trial would take place nearly 2.5 years since the deadly concert.

Distress

Documents filed in court in April listed more than 1,500 active cases, many of which were filed against Scott and Live Nation, the concert promoter.

Of these, 992 were cases with physical injuries and 313 were cases of "emotional distress, pain, suffering and mental anguish." Orthopedic surgeries have been completed in 17 of these cases, with other surgeries recommended in another 21.

Some of the lawsuits have since been settled, including those filed by the families of three of the people killed during the concert.

Scott's deposition on Monday took place on the same day that hip-

hop artist Drake, who performed several songs with Scott during the Astroworld concert, was performing in Houston. Drake was also sued in connection with the deadly concert.

Also:

NEW YORK: Bill Maher has delayed returning to his HBO talk show during the ongoing strike by writers and actors, a decision that follows similar pauses over the weekend by "The Drew Barrymore Show," "The Talk" and "The Jennifer Hudson Show."

Maher last week said he would bring his show back into production, but on Monday said he'll wait because talks are scheduled to begin between producers and writers on Wednesday.

"My decision to return to work was made when it seemed nothing was happening and there was no end in sight to this strike," Maher said via social media. "Now that both sides have agreed to go back to the negotiating table I'm going to delay the return of 'Real Time,' for now, and hope they can finally get this done."

Barrymore, who drew criticism for taping new episodes of her daytime talk show despite the ongoing writers and actors strikes, said Sunday she'll wait until the labor issues are resolved.

"I have listened to everyone, and I am making the decision to pause the show's premiere until the strike is over," Barrymore posted on Instagram on Sunday. "I have no words to express my deepest apologies to anyone I have hurt and, of course, to our incredible team who works on the show and has made it what it is today."

Variety



This image released by Focus Features shows Carey Mulligan, left, Emerald Fennell and Laverne Cox on the set of 'Promising Young Woman.' Fennell's upcoming film 'Saltburn,' releases Nov 24. (AP)

Film

'Promising' director's cinematic evolution

Fennell crafts dark drama in 'Saltburn'

NEW YORK, Sept. 19, (AP): Countless English protagonists have for decades been making their way to grand country estates where their lives are irrevocably changed. "Brideshead Revisited." "The Go-Between." "Remains of the Day." "Rebecca."

These are some of the books that Emerald Fennell grew up devouring. And when the dust had settled on "Promising Young Woman," her incendiary Oscar-winning directorial debut, Fennell, too, wanted to make her way to a fictional stately manor.

"I really wanted to make a movie that was a take on the classic English gothic story," Fennell says. "It felt like an incredibly well-worn and therefore intriguing genre to start looking at and applying pressure to."

In "Saltburn," which opens in theaters Nov. 24, Fennell applies her particular and potent brand of pressure to the one of the longest standing British genres. And given the bleakly vengeful conclusion of her provocative debut, it's safe to say that things get quite a bit bumpier at Saltburn than they ever did at Downton Abbey.

Fennell has already been a memorable part of one conversation-starting film this year. That was her as Midge, the pregnant doll, in Greta Gerwig's "Barbie."

Like that film, "Saltburn," which Fennell wrote and directs, includes Margot Robbie as a producer. It stars Barry Keoghan as Oliver Quick, an Oxford University freshman on a scholarship who's drawn to a dashing, aristocratic classmate named Felix Catton (Jacob Elordi). Their relationship has strong echoes of "The Talented Mr. Ripley" to it.

In the summer of 2006, Felix invites Oliver to his family's estate where he fits in sometimes awkwardly and sometimes smoothly but increasingly eerily with the extravagant flow of life. Things get steamy, weird and dark as Fennell toys with class as she did with gender in "Promising Young Woman."

Several in the cast give standout performances - especially Rosamund Pike, who plays Felix's

mother. But it's also a rare leading performance for Keoghan, himself coming off an Oscar nomination for "The Banshees of Inisherin." Already some of his scenes - one involving some leftover bathtub water, one a fresh grave - have added to the early buzz around "Saltburn."

"I saw Barry in 'Killing of a Sacred Deer' and I just couldn't believe it," Fennell said in a recent interview from London. "That performance was so amazing. It's a kind of once-in-a-lifetime arresting performance. I just thought immediately: Who is that?"

The opportunities were many for Fennell after the success of "Promising Young Woman." The film, a blackly comic feminist revenge thriller starring Carey Mulligan, was one of the most talked about movies of 2020. In that first pandemic year, it went on to be nominated for five Oscars including best picture and best director. Fennell won for her script.

Surreal

"None of us had anticipated how amazing the response would be," Fennell says. "Because of COVID, I was in a bubble with my young family. So it maybe didn't feel as surreal as it might. I mean, everything was surreal, so it kind of felt like another surreal thing."

Once the pandemic subsided, Fennell's focus turned to "Saltburn," a film that seemingly could have pulled from her own experiences. Fennell, who attended the elite boarding school Marlborough College and studied at Oxford, is the daughter of jewelry designer and socialite Theo Fennell and author Louise Fennell.

Fennell, though, is reluctant to draw any connections between the high society of her youth and "Saltburn." Yes, the 37-year-old grants, she attended Oxford around the same time as the characters in the film.

"But I'm afraid the similarities end there," she says. "It definitely wasn't quite as sexy."

Did she consider herself an outsider like Oliver or more of an insider like Felix?

"I was kind of like Oliver, mostly outside of it but occasionally having seen it as well," Fennell says. "The fascinating thing about these sorts of systems in general, both in America and in England, is that nobody ever really knows whether they're in or out."

To her, "Saltburn" is more about those anxious undercurrents among family, friends and hangers-on, each playing by unspoken codes of money, class and privilege.

"There was a world where 'Saltburn' might have been set in the Hamptons," Fennell says. "If you're allowed in these places, it's never a one-way ticket. Honestly, it could be set anywhere. It could be set in Los Angeles and the court, rather than being a stately home, is a compound of an incredibly famous actor and actress. It all works the same way. It's power. Who wants it and who's got it."

Fennell, who was the showrunner and an executive producer for the second season of "Killing Eve," often used the phrase "poison popcorn movie" to describe "Promising Young Woman" - an entertainment laced with more disturbing issues to contemplate.

She remains committed to eliciting that kind of dual response - something that people are eager to watch and just as eager debate after on their way home. Her current favorite film, which she says she's seen 20 times, is Ari Aster's "Beau Is Afraid." "I think it's truly the greatest film of the last 10 years and I'm obsessed with it," Fennell says.

It would be giving too much away to describe how "Saltburn" unspools. But to Fennell, it's ultimately about the deep longing and ambition of Oliver, a young man yearning to live. It's a love story, she says.

"This movie feels to me like the closest thing to wanting something," says Fennell. "There's a particular type of need and want that you feel at a certain point in your life when it's the first time you felt it, whether it's about a person or a place. The intensity of the desire to make yourself. That, to me, is what the film is about."

LACONIA, NH: Marilyn Manson was sentenced to 20 hours of community service and a fine on Monday after pleading no contest to blowing his nose on a videographer at a 2019 concert in New Hampshire.

The shock rocker, 54, wanted to appear via video for his hearing on the misdemeanor charge, but the judge required him to be in the courtroom in Laconia, about 30 miles north of Concord, the state capital.

Manson, whose legal name is Brian Warner, was charged with two misdemeanor counts of simple assault stemming from the encounter with the videographer at the Bank of New Hampshire Pavilion in Gilford on Aug. 19, 2019.

Manson pleaded no contest to just the nose-blowing charge in a fully negotiated plea agreement with prosecutors. The prosecutors agreed to dismiss the other charge, which alleged that he spit on the videographer. A no contest plea means Manson is not contesting the charge and does not admit guilt.

Manson was fined a little more than \$1,400 as part of the deal, with \$200 suspended. He needs to remain arrest-free and notify local police of any New Hampshire performances for two years.

The judge, who called Manson's acts "egregious," agreed to allow Manson to do his community service in California. Manson mentioned to reporters that he might choose to work with people in recovery. He has to give proof of his community service by Feb. 4.

According to a police affidavit, Manson approached videographer Susan Fountain in the venue's stage pit area, put his face close to her camera and spit at her. She was struck on both hands with saliva. He approached her again later, kneeling and covering one nostril before blowing the other on her arms and hands.

Manson "blows a significant amount of mucous at Fountain," a police sergeant who reviewed concert video footage said in the affidavit. After that, the camera view changes and people can see Manson "point and laugh at Fountain as she gets down and walks away," the affidavit said.

Fountain was not in court, but submitted a statement that was read aloud. Several women have sued

Manson in recent years with allegations of sexual and other abuse. Most have been dismissed or settled, including a suit filed by "Game of Thrones" actor Esme Bianco. (AP)

JOINT BASE ELMENDORF-RICHARDSON, Alaska: Two bears on an Alaska military base



Bianco

Manson

raided a Krispy Kreme doughnut van that was stopped outside a convenience store during its delivery route.

The driver usually left his doors open when he stopped at the store but this time a sow and one of her cubs that loiter nearby sauntered inside, where they stayed for probably 20 minutes Tuesday morning, said

Shelly Deano, the store manager for Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson JMM Express. The bears chomped on doughnut holes and other pastries, ignoring the banging on the side of the van that was aimed at shooing them away, Deano said.

"I was beating on the van and they're not moving. I could hear them breaking open the packages

and everything," she said. "I was like, 'They don't even care.'"

When the bears couldn't be roused, base security was called and sounded sirens meant to scare away the bears, she said.

The bears eventually came out and wandered in front of the convenience store and gas station a bit before heading into the woods. (AP)

People & Places

Music

The Who's masterpiece

Rootsy harmonies on Millers' 'Throes'

Buddy and Julie Miller have been wed for 40 years. Their latest album, "In the Throes," celebrates the marvelous marriage of his rustic, raspy tenor and her eternally youthful alto.

The 12-song set, which will be released Friday is filled with the Tennessee duo's rootsy harmonies that bridge genres and are a model of an equal partnership. At times, either vocal line could be the melody, as with some Everly Brothers songs.

The Millers also shine singing solo. Buddy's at his plaintive, full-throated best on the ballads "Don't Make Her Cry" and "I'll Never Live It Down," which showcase the Ohio native as a Southern soul man. His distinctive electric guitar work is equally compelling.



Julie

Julie takes the lead vocal on "I've Been Around," a delightful slice of bluesy bravado, dissonance and distortion punctuated by her antic shouts of "Hey! Hey!" She says the song came to her in her sleep, and she awoke to record it immediately in one take, which is just how it sounds.

By contrast, "Don't Make Her Cry" required years to complete - Julie, Bob Dylan and Regina McCrary passed it around and share composing credit.

Julie is the sole songwriter on the other cuts, and there's a recurring spiritual strain. "Niccolo" mixes sweet and savory pop and finds comfort in angels, while "The Last Bridge You Will Cross" pays reverent tribute to the late Rep. John Lewis for making love a weapon. The infectious country gospel singalong "We're Leavin'" offers uplift, as does the simple ballad "I Love You," where the Millers harmonize about the permanent bond that is a happy marriage.



"Who's Next/Life House" - The Who's massive new box set - dives deep down the archival rabbit hole to shed light on the development of one of the band's greatest records - and one grandiose idea that (mostly) slipped away.

The 10-disc, 155-track collection shows how Pete Townshend's self-described "mad idea" for a science fiction rock opera "Life House" project, which was abandoned and eventually became 1971's "Who's Next."

But the sprawling original concept from The Who's songwriter, lead guitar player and vocalist never left his mind and got refashioned numerous times in various formats over the ensuing half century.

At its most basic, Townshend's original "Life House" concept foresees a future where an autocratic government, in a land ravaged by pollution, enforces a national lockdown where every person is hooked up to an entertainment grid to distract them. Music becomes an inconvenient diversion to the powers that be, while inhabitants search for the perfect note to create a sort of musical rapture.

More or less.

The exhaustive box set allows the listener to observe the evolution of some of The Who's best and most well-known songs, including "Won't Get Fooled Again," "Baba O'Reilly" (aka "Teenage Wasteland"), "Behind Blue Eyes" and "Goin' Mobile."

While first envisioned for "Life House," the songs eventually were released on "Who's Next," a record that to the uninitiated may appear to be a greatest hits compilation, it's just that good.

There's plenty here for Who nerds to take a deep dive. One fascinating bit is hearing the difference in the demos, sung by Townshend, and the versions that were ultimately released with Roger Daltrey's signature vocals - including the epic scream that defined the official version of "Won't Get Fooled Again."

Townshend writes the liner notes for the original "Life House" demos he recorded at his home studio, working tirelessly with some of the earliest synthesizer technology. His devotion to the material is reminiscent of other artists from that time, most notably Brian Wilson and the Beach Boys' "Smile" sessions, who struggle to translate the ideas and songs in their head into a finished product.

In fact, Townshend reportedly came close to having a nervous breakdown while working out the material.

"I have to say I am still so deliriously proud of the work I did on this music," Townshend writes. "When The Who perform it on stage, I sometimes give a little prayer of gratitude to that young man I once was who worked so hard on this for several weeks in that tiny studio full of dozens of excluded lengths of tape edited out to make it fly."

As an added bonus, the box set also includes other songs recorded in the era, a "Life House" graphic novel and two complete 1971 concerts that showcase The Who in their prime debuting the material with some crowd pleasers like "Pinball Wizard" and "My Generation" sprinkled in.

Also:

LOS ANGELES: Drake has finally announced a release date for his highly anticipated eighth studio album: "For All the Dogs" will drop Sept. 22.

The follow-up to 2022's "Honestly, Nevermind" - which released without warning - was announced on the Canadian rapper's Instagram on Wednesday night. Drake wrote the release date in the caption of the post, which featured video footage depicting his father, Dennis Graham.

A representative confirmed the date on Thursday. Drake - who is currently on his "It's All a Blur" tour - had teased the project for a few months, including at a July 2023 New York City concert, where the rapper told the capacity-filled Barclays Center crowd his next album would drop in approximately "a couple of weeks."

The 36-year-old megastar, known for surprise releasing music, teased the potential project at his intimate Apollo show in January.

The new album features several collaborations Drake has mentioned live on stage in the last few months, including one with Nicki Minaj and another track with reggaetonero Bad Bunny.



Jon Batiste performs during the Bourbon and Beyond Music Festival, Sunday, Sept. 17, at the Kentucky Exposition Center in Louisville, Ky. (AP)

Music

Country legends take on new genres

A-listers back in full force after yrs

LOS ANGELES, Sept. 19, (AP) - Music fans, it is time to bid adieu to the sunny, slow summer months, and welcome fall - historically, one of the busiest times in the calendar year for new albums, EPs, and mixtapes.

Trends have already begun to reveal themselves: Some of the biggest names in pop (and in pop's future) are gearing up for back-to-school releases. A-listers are returning after years. Country legends are taking on new genres. And hip-hop heavyweights are back in full force.

Others defy categorization - like a new Pretenders record ("Relentless"), the swoon-worthy "Live for Me" EP from Omar Apollo, and Steve Aoki's "HIREQUEST: Double Helix" - and even more have yet to be announced. Take a look at what's in store with The Associated Press' 2023 fall music preview - a collection of releases scheduled to arrive between September and November.

After a summer full of superstar tours - Taylor Swift, Beyoncé, and Drake among them - surely, it's time to dive deep into a new hook or two. The season is stacked: Olivia Rodrigo will drop her highly anticipated sophomore album. Kylie Minogue's more than "Padam Padam," with her new athletic-pop album "Tension." Doja Cat's "Scarlet" arrives.

Ed Sheeran has seemingly run out of mathematical symbols to name albums after and will return with an autumnal release. After HBO's "The Idol," Troye Sivan gears up to release his third full-length album. If the rest of the tracks contain songs half as sexy as the football chant homoeroticism of the lead single "Rush," listeners are in for a treat.

BTS member V will release his debut solo album; Korean American popstar Eric Nam will drop another self-released record, centered on a pandemic-induced existential crisis.

Demi Lovato is reimagining some of her pop tunes as rock anthems; Taylor Swift's re-recording series continues with "1989 (Taylor's Version)."

Watch

As for ones to watch: Chappell Roan, your favorite pop star from the future, will release her debut album. Madriño Ralphie Choo is also gearing up for his debut, and La Doña's new EP promises to weave together cumbia, salsa, oldies and reggaeton.

Sept. 8: Olivia Rodrigo, "Guts" Sept. 8: V, "Layover" Sept. 8: Eric Nam, "House on a Hill" Sept. 15: Demi Lovato, "Revamped" Sept. 15: Ralphie Choo, "Supernova" Sept. 15: La Doña, "Can't Eat Clout" Sept. 22: Kylie Minogue, "Tension" Sept. 22: Doja Cat, "Scarlet" Sept. 22: Chappell Roan, "The Rise and Fall of a Midwest Princess" Sept. 29: Ed Sheeran, "Autumn Variations" Oct. 13: Troye Sivan, "Something to Give Each Other" Oct. 27: Taylor Swift, "1989 (Taylor's Version)"

Blink, and you might miss a shifting release date: In 2022, rumors swirled

that Kid Cudi would take a hiatus from music making. They proved to be just that - rumors - and a new album was announced for September. However, a little over a week before it was scheduled to arrive, the rapper announced the release would be pushed back to January.

A few days later, Drake announced a release date for his highly anticipated eighth studio album, "For All the Dogs." Are the days of dropping records without warning behind him?

Elsewhere, Vic Mensa has explored social work, sobriety, Ghana and himself, leading to an ambitious and self-reflective new record.

The legendary Gucci Mane returns; Chief Keef is also back.

Flo Milli's forthcoming album delivers her idiosyncratic - at times, absurdist - and certainly hard-as-hell raps. South African rapper Nasty C continues his global growth.

Releases

And that's not even including all of the surprise releases that may drop in the next few weeks.

Sept. 15: Vic Mensa, "Victor" Sept. 15: Nasty C, "I Love It Here" Sept. 22: Drake, "For All the Dogs" Oct. 13: Gucci Mane, "Breath of Fresh Air" Oct. 13: Chief Keef, "Almighty So 2" TBD: Flo Milli, "Fine Ho, Stay" Delayed until January: Kid Cudi, "Insano"

Reinvention and experimentation is in the air. Willie Nelson will release his first bluegrass record; Dolly Parton will release her first rock album.

Ashley McBryde will release her fourth studio album, and if the single "Light on in the Kitchen" is any indication, we can't wait for more mandolin.

Reba McEntire returns with her first album in five years; a few months post-Super Bowl anthem performance, Chris Stapleton is back. Margo Price prep a double album in three acts.

Sept. 8: Ashley McBryde, "The Devil I Know" Sept. 15: Willie Nelson, "Bluegrass" Oct. 6: Reba McEntire, "Not That Fancy" Oct. 13: Margo Price, "Strays II" Nov. 10: Chris Stapleton, "Higher" Nov. 17: Dolly Parton, "Rockstar"

Cool air and a heavy riff - few partnerships make more sense. For metalheads, it is a stacked season: Baroness and Cannibal Corpse return, as do Pittsburgh punks Code Orange.

For the alternative crowd: Poppy continues her Nine Inch Nails-inspired industrial streak, Beartooth's melodic screamo powers on and Jared Leto's Thirty Seconds to Mars bring an optimistic take on the apocalypse.

Deftones fans will have to continue to wait for a new record from the only nu-metal act able to transcend the limitations of that genre - the California band is celebrated for taking an artful approach to a musical genre most commonly associated with backwards baseball caps and machismo. In the meantime, they can enjoy a new one from +++ (Crosses), the dark wave side project of frontman Chino Moreno and

Far guitarist Shaun Lopez.

Sept. 15: Baroness, "Stone" Sept. 15: Thirty Seconds to Mars, "It's the End of the World but It's a Beautiful Day" Sept. 22: Cannibal Corpse, "Chaos Horrific" Sept. 29: Code Orange, "The Above" Oct. 13: +++ (Crosses), "Goodnight, God Bless, I Love U, Delete" Oct. 27: Poppy, "Zig"

At some point in the last few years, "indie" has morphed into a genre designation (think Taylor Swift's "folklore" and "evermore") instead of shorthand for "independent" artists - you know, acts who self-release their own music and/or work with a niche record label. Despite that confusion, truly "indie" releases aren't going anywhere, with forthcoming releases from established voices Sufjan Stevens (Asthmatic Kitty Records), Teenage Fanclub (Merge) and Wilco (released on the band's dBpm Records).

Nostalgia runs deep for Puerto Rican reggae artist PACHYMAN, who preps the sentimental "Switched-On" for a late September release. Lead single "Trago Coqueto" is all vintage Korg Poly-800 synths and sunshine.

Most fascinating of all are the newer class of talents, driven by women: Mitski (Dead Oceans), Cherry Glazerr (Secretly Canadian), L'Rain (Mexican Summer), Vagabon (Nonesuch), and the Indonesian power-pop-punk group GRRRL Gang (Kill Rock Stars).

Albums

Sept. 15: Vagabon, "Sorry I Haven't Called" Sept. 15: Mitski, "The Land Is Inhospitable and So Are We" Sept. 22: Teenage Fanclub, "Nothing Last Forever" Sept. 22: GRRRL Gang, "Spunky!" Sept. 29: Wilco, "Cousin" Sept. 29: PACHYMAN, "Switched-On" Sept. 29: Cherry Glazerr, "I Don't Want You Anymore" Oct. 6: Sufjan Stevens, "Javelin" Oct. 13: L'Rain, "I Killed Your Dog"

Nostalgia rules the entertainment industry, but that doesn't necessarily make for derivative work. Often, it means celebrating the artists we love after years of inactivity, or a simply a break between albums. Such is the case in this grouping. Diddy will release his first full-length album since 2006's "Press Play."

In fact, it's a strong season for R&B returns: Jorja Smith will release her first album since 2018; Jamila Woods follows up 2019's "Legacy! Legacy!" with "Water Made Us."

Elsewhere, the Bruce Springsteen-approved New Jersey band The Gaslight Anthem will release their first album in nearly a decade, "History Books."

And Nicki Minaj, leader of the Barbz, will bring back with "Pink Friday" franchise with "Pink Friday 2," her fifth full-length album and first since 2018's "Queen."

Sept. 15: Diddy, "The Love Album: Off the Grid" Sept. 29: Jorja Smith, "Falling or Flying" Oct. 13: Jamila Woods, "Water Made Us" Oct. 27: The Gaslight Anthem, "History Books" Nov. 17: Nicki Minaj, "Pink Friday 2"



A model wears a creation for the Ksenia Schneider collection on Tuesday, Sept. 19, 2023 in London. For Ksenia Schneider and other Ukrainian designers, the fashion show must go on, despite the war in their country or precisely because of it. Schneider may have fled to the UK as a refugee, but her team still makes every garment in Kiev, often under incessant air raid sirens and lengthy power cuts. (AP)

Variety

LOS ANGELES: Kim Petras fans, the wait is over. The Grammy-award winning German popstar has surprise released her previously shelved and partially leaked debut album, "Problematic."

Across 10 tracks inspired by French house music released Monday, Petras makes a bold reclamation of her artistic autonomy: from the funk-y "Born Again," to the smooth retro-pop of "Dirty Things" and the playfully materialistic "All She Wants," which features "Stars Are Blind" singer Paris Hilton.

"It was shocking when I found out part of the album leaked - at the time - that it wasn't ever going to come out, especially as I poured so much of myself into it. I was heartbroken but, at the same time, it was really exciting to see my fans listening to the tracks and loving them," Petras said in a statement to The Associated Press.

"Now that I'm able to put them out, it's just so freeing to have more music that I love out in the world and officially share them in a way that all my fans can hear them."

That opinion is shared by Hilton. "Recording 'All She Wants' at Kim's house was so much fun," she said in a statement. "The song is all about being unapologetically fabulous, a sentiment both Kim and I live by."

The road to "Problematic" has been a difficult one. In 2021, Petras signed with major label Republic Records and announced the album - then scheduled to be her full-length debut - but it was eventually scrapped and leaked.

It was a disappointing turn of events for Petras and her fans, who had long awaited her first album. It wasn't until June that she released what would become her actual debut, the Eurodance-pop "Feed the Beast."

Releasing "Problematic" now, in some ways, is a way to keep her fans on their toes - and a way of taking something that was stolen from her and packaging it in a way that feels true.

The album was released due to fan demand and in advance of her "Feed the Beast" world tour, which kicks off on Sept. 27 in Austin, Texas, and concludes in Milan on March 5. Petras says fans can expect to hear some of their favorite tracks from across her vast discography. (AP)

LONDON: British police said Monday that they had received a sexual assault allegation after media outlets published claims by several women against Russell Brand. Promoters postponed the remaining dates in a string of live gigs by the comedian, who denies the allegations.

A talent agency and a publisher also parted company with Brand over the claims, which have left the UK entertainment industry facing questions about whether the comedian's bad behavior went unchallenged because of his fame.

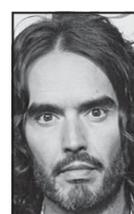
Brand, 48, denies allegations of sexual assault made by four women in a Channel 4 television documentary and The Times and

Sunday Times newspapers. The accusers, who have not been named, include one who said she was sexually assaulted during a relationship with him when she was 16. Another woman says Brand raped her in Los Angeles in 2012.

London's Metropolitan Police force said that since the allegations were made public it had received "a report of a sexual assault which was alleged to have taken place in Soho in central London in 2003." That is



Hilton



Brand

three years before the earliest of the alleged assaults reported by the media outlets.

The police force said "officers are in contact with the woman and will be providing her with support." It did not identify the alleged perpetrator as Brand, but referred to the newspaper and TV allegations in its statement. Police urged "anyone who believes they may have been a victim of a sexual offence, no matter how long ago it was, to contact us." (AP)

Education

'Effective teaching'

Use 'science of math' in US classrooms: experts

NEW YORK, Sept 19, (AP): For much of her teaching career, Carrie Stark relied on math games to engage her students, assuming they would pick up concepts like multiplication by seeing them in action. The kids had fun, but the lessons never stuck.

A few years ago she shifted her approach, turning to more direct explanation after finding a website on a set of evidence-based practices known as the science of math.

"I could see how the game related to multiplication, but the kids weren't making those connections," said Stark, a math teacher in the suburbs of Kansas City. "You have to explicitly teach the content."

As American schools work to turn around math scores that plunged during the pandemic, some researchers are pushing for more attention to a set of research-based practices for teaching math. The movement has passionate backers, but is still in its infancy, especially compared with the phonics-based "science of reading" that has inspired changes in how classrooms across the country approach literacy.

Math is hard — even for teachers. What if they conquered their math anxiety?

Experts say math research hasn't gotten as much funding or attention, especially beyond the elementary level. Meanwhile, the math instruction

schools are currently using doesn't work all that well. The US trails other high-income countries in math performance, and lately more students graduate high school with deficits in basic math skills.

Advocates say teaching practices supported by quantitative research could help, but they are still coming into focus.

"I don't think the movement has caught on yet. I think it's an idea," said **Matthew Burns**, a professor of special education at the University of Florida who was among researchers who helped create a Science of Math website as a resource for teachers.

There's a debate over which evidence-based practices belong under the banner of the science of math, but researchers agree on some core ideas.

Principle

The foremost principle: Math instruction must be systematic and explicit. Teachers need to give clear and precise instructions and introduce new concepts in small chunks while building on older concepts. Such approaches have been endorsed by dozens of studies highlighted by the Institute of Education Sciences, an arm of the US Education Department that evaluates teaching practices.

That guidance contrasts with exploratory or inquiry-based models of education, where students explore and discover concepts on their own, with the teacher nudging them along. It's unclear which approaches are used most widely in schools.

In some ways, the best practices for math parallel the science of reading, which emphasizes detailed, explicit instruction in phonics, instead of letting kids guess how to read a word based on pictures or context clues. After the science of reading gained prominence, 18 states in just three years have passed legislation mandating that classroom teachers use evidence-backed methods to teach reading.

Margie Howells, an elementary math teacher in Wheeling, West Virginia, first went researching best practices because there weren't as many resources for dyscalculia, a math learning disability, as there were for dyslexia. After reading about the science of math movement, she became more explicit about things that she assumed students understood, like how the horizontal line in a fraction means the same thing as a division sign.

"I'm doing a lot more instruction in vocabulary and symbol explanations so that the students have that built-in understanding," said Howells, who is working on developing a science-based tutoring program for students with dyscalculia and other learning differences.

Some elements of math instruction emphasize big-picture concepts. Others involve learning how to do calculations. Over the decades, clashes between schools of thought favoring one or another have been labeled the "math wars." A key principle of the science of math movement is that both are important, and teachers need to foster procedural as well as conceptual understanding.

"We need to be doing all those simultaneously," Stark said. When Stark demonstrates a long division problem, she writes out the steps for calculating the answer while students use a chart or blocks to understand the problem conceptually.

Stark helps coach fellow teachers at her school to support struggling students — something she used to feel unequipped to do, despite 20 years of teaching experience. Most of the resources she found online just suggested different math games. So she did research online and signed up for special trainings, and started focusing more on fundamentals.

For one fifth grader who was struggling with fractions, she explicitly re-taught equivalent fractions from third grade — why two-fourths are the same as one-half, for instance. He had been working with her for three years, but this was the first time she heard him say, "I totally get it now!"

"He was really feeling success. He was super proud of himself," Stark said.

Algorithms

Still, skeptics of the science of math question the emphasis placed on learning algorithms, the step-by-step procedures for calculation. Proponents say they are necessary along with memorization of math facts (basic operations like 3x5 or 7+9) and regular timed practice — approaches often associated with mind-numbing drills and worksheets.

Math is "a creative, artistic, playful, reasoning-rich activity. And it's very different than algorithms," said Nick Waserman, a professor of math education at Columbia University's Teachers College.

Supporters argue mastering math facts unlocks creative problem-solving by freeing up working memory — and that inquiry, creativity and collaboration are still all crucial to student success.

"When we have this dichotomy, it creates an unnecessary divide and it creates a dangerous divide," said Elizabeth Hughes, a professor of special education at Penn State and a leader in the science of math movement. People feel the need to choose sides between "Team Algorithms" and "Team Exploratory," but "we really need both."

Best practices are one thing. But some disagree such a thing as a "science of math" exists in the way it does for reading. There just isn't the same volume of research, education researcher Tom Loveless said.

"Reading is a topic where we have a much larger amount of good, solid, causal research that can link instruction to student achievement," he said.

To some, the less advanced state of research on math reflects societal values, and how many teachers themselves feel more invested in reading. Many elementary school teachers doubt their own math ability and struggle with anxiety around teaching it.

"Many of us will readily admit that we weren't good at math," said Daniel Ansari, a professor of cognitive neuroscience at Western University in Canada. "If I was illiterate, I wouldn't tell a soul."

Still, Ansari said, there is enough research out there to make a difference in the classroom.

"We do understand some of the things that really work," he said, "and we know some of the things that are not worth spending time on."



Burns



Germany's Health Minister Karl Lauterbach receives a COVID-19 booster vaccination at the military hospital in Berlin, Germany, Monday, Sept. 18. New omicron variant makes its way across the globe. (AP)

The Conversation

Health experts on alert as COVID hospitalizations rise

'BA.2.86 variant can dodge immunity'

By Suresh V. Kuchipudi
University of Pittsburgh

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

The latest variant, or sublineage, of SARS-CoV-2 to emerge on the scene, BA.2.86, has public health experts on alert as COVID-19 hospitalizations begin to rise and the new variant makes its way across the globe.

The Conversation asked Suresh V. Kuchipudi, a virologist and infectious disease expert at the University of Pittsburgh School of Public Health, to explain what researchers know about BA.2.86's ability to dodge immune protection and whether it causes more severe infection than its predecessors.

BA.2.86, nicknamed Pirola, is a highly mutated new omicron sublineage of SARS-CoV-2 that was first detected in Denmark in July 2023. The World Health Organization announced that, as of Sept. 6, 2023, BA.2.86 has been detected in 11 countries.

A variant is an alternate version of a virus — in this case, the SARS-CoV-2 virus that causes COVID-19 — that has some mutations or changes in its genetic code, compared with the original. Mutations can alter the behavior of the viruses in various ways, such as how effectively they break into cells and how rapidly they can replicate.

The WHO names these variants using Greek alphabet letters, like alpha, delta and omicron. However, another naming system called the PANGO, or pangolin — short for phylogenetic assignment of named global outbreak lineages — tracks variants and their offshoots by way of a lineage system.

Think of it as a family tree for the virus, which is grouped into different lineages, like branches on a tree. The omicron variant is like a big family, and its known family members — BA.2, BA.2.86 and XBB.1.5 — are all branches — or lineages and sublineages — on the same tree.

After the omicron variant showed up in November 2021, it didn't stay the same for long. It kept changing, and soon we got different sublineages of it, such as BA.2, BA.4 and BA.5. The one that's been dominant globally for most of 2023, called XBB.1.5, originated from the mixing, or recombination, of two separate sublineages.

But what's interesting is that

BA.2.86, the newest sublineage on the scene, seems to have come from the older BA.2 omicron lineage that was dominant in early 2022 and not from the newer omicron offshoots.

A preliminary study reported that BA.2.86 features 33 distinct spike mutations when compared to its precursor, BA.2. The spike proteins, which form the knobby protrusions coming off the main body of the virus, are like a key that the virus uses to unlock our cells, which is how a new infection begins.

After an infection by one of the variants that cause COVID-19, our bodies create antibodies that target the spike protein to help neutralize the virus and prevent it from infecting cells. So, numerous changes in the spike protein of BA.2.86 could potentially affect how well it evades antibodies as well as the degree of disease severity it causes.

Among the new mutations that BA.2.86 carries, 14 reside within an area of the spike protein called the receptor binding domain, which binds to the receptors on host cells. This suggests that BA.2.86 could have a greater capacity for infecting than its predecessor.

Infectious

In addition, the new sublineage, BA.2.86, is even more dissimilar when compared to the most recent sublineage, XBB.1.5, with 35 new mutations in the spike protein — including some unusual mutations — than to its precursor, BA.2. These alterations intrigue infectious disease specialists like me, and we are working to understand how they might affect this new variant's behavior.

We researchers do not yet fully understand what these changes might mean and the degree to which BA.2.86 can get around our protective defenses.

Scientists and health authorities closely monitor all emerging variants and lineages for changes that can affect how easily the virus is transmitted, what it might mean for vaccine effectiveness and the severity of disease it can cause. While mutations can be cause for concern, it's important to remember that not all mutations lead to increased danger.

The earlier-mentioned preliminary study found that BA.2.86 can escape the protective defenses of antibodies against the recent XBB sublineages.

However, in contrast, another new study that has not yet been published found that neutralizing antibody responses against BA.2.86 were comparable to or slightly higher against the recent XBB sublineages. Hence further studies are needed to understand BA.2.86's ability to escape antibody protection.

The emergence of BA.2.86 underscores the need for flexibility in current vaccine strategies to ensure continued effectiveness against these new variants. The newly FDA-approved fall 2023 COVID-19 booster shots are formulated to target XBB.1.5, which was dominant in early 2023 when public health officials made the reformulation decisions. The 2022 booster shot was designed to target both the original strain of SARS-CoV-2 as well as the BA.4 and BA.5 omicron lineages.

We researchers have much more to learn about BA.2.86's capacity to evade antibody protection from prior infection or vaccination, its transmissibility and its ability to cause severe disease. It is too early to determine whether the late summer rise in hospitalizations is being caused by this new sublineage.

The fact that the new highly mutated SARS-CoV-2 variant traces its origins back to an omicron variant that circulated more than a year ago is a stark reminder of the complex evolutionary pathways that SARS-CoV-2 can undertake as it adapts and changes. It also underscores the critical need for a more comprehensive understanding of the health threats posed by continually emerging SARS-CoV-2 variants.

This is particularly important as there has been a significant reduction in global SARS-CoV-2 genomic surveillance, which tracks the genetic changes over time and identifies new versions. Losing this type of monitoring hampers the process of working to understand the origins of novel SARS-CoV-2 variants. This critical information helps scientists and doctors make better decisions to protect public health.

COVID-19 variants continue to stay one step ahead of our efforts at combating them, so it will become increasingly important that the US step up its genomic surveillance efforts and stay committed to working collaboratively with other countries. (AP)



Britain's Prince William, Prince of Wales examines oyster samples in the East River with students from the Urban Assembly New York Harbor School in New York on Monday, Sept. 18. Prince William got a first-hand look at the waters of New York City on Monday on a visit to an oyster reef restoration project, after arriving in the United States for an environmental summit connected to a global competition for solutions to climate change challenges. (AP)



Heinzen



Guterres

Discovery

William sees oyster reef project: Prince William got a first-hand look at the waters of New York City on Monday on a visit to an oyster reef restoration project, after arriving in the United States for an environmental summit connected to a global competition for solutions to climate change challenges.

William was taken to Governors Island in New York Harbor to see the efforts of the Billion Oyster Project. The organization is trying to rebuild the oyster reefs that were once abundant in New York waters, and which can help with water filtration and protect against storm damage.

William also met Monday with UN Secretary-General **António Guterres**, according to the UN. It said the two discussed efforts needed to step up the fight against climate change, as well as ways to finance development and improve implementation of key UN goals.

On Tuesday, William is scheduled to speak at the Earthshot Prize Innovation Summit. He founded the prize, which looks for ways to address problems created by climate change, and is announcing a second group of finalists.

The summit is taking place during New York Climate Week and the 78th convening of world leaders at the United Nations General Assembly. (AP)

Wild black bear captured: It wasn't an escapee from the Country Bear Jamboree attraction, but a wild black bear managed to be the star of its own show Monday at Walt Disney World.

The presence of the black bear in a tree in the Magic Kingdom delayed the opening of three lands Monday morning — Frontierland, Liberty Square and Adventureland.

Staffers with the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission were at the park, attempting to capture and relocate the bear, Disney World said in a statement. The bear was eventually captured Monday afternoon.

The bear was likely in search of food as it looks to pack on fat reserves for the winter, the wildlife commission said in a statement.

"In most cases, it is best for bears to be given space and to move along on their own, but given this situation, staff are working on capturing and relocating the bear," the wildlife commission said.

The wildlife commission estimates there are more than 4,000 black bears in Florida, with the most located in central Florida. (AP)

Groups sue EPA: A coalition of environmental groups is seeking to force the Environmental Protection Agency to strengthen its regulation of large livestock operations that release pollutants into waterways.

Food & Water Watch and a dozen other environmental and community groups filed a lawsuit in the 9th Circuit Court of Appeals

in San Francisco. The lawsuit came nearly a month after the EPA denied two petitions filed by the groups in 2017 that sought tighter oversight of the largest US cattle and chicken operations.

The suit asks the court to reconsider changes the groups sought in those petitions, including clarification about what



Climate activists blockade the Federal Reserve Bank of New York to call for an end to the use of fossil fuels, Monday, Sept. 18, in New York. (AP)

farms must comply with federal regulations and what kinds of discharges are exempt from regulations.

The EPA said in an Aug 15 response to the groups that it would study its program for regulating the livestock farms and existing pollution limits before deciding whether it should change its regulations. The agency said it would establish a panel comprised of representatives of environmental groups, agriculture and researchers to delve into the matter over 12-18 months.

The groups that filed the lawsuit rejected the need for additional study and on Monday accused the EPA of enabling polluters by refusing to take action.

"Factory farms are polluters by design — true environmental protection requires a willingness by EPA to confront this industry head on," **Tarah Heinzen**, legal director of Food & Water Watch, said in a statement. "It is high time EPA addressed the crisis it has spent decades enabling." (AP)

Gator finds new home: A Florida reptile park has taken in an alligator that lost its nose and upper jaw to a fight or boat propeller.

Gatorland Orlando said over the weekend that the injured alligator came from a lake in nearby Sanford, about 20 miles (32 kilometers) northeast of Orlando.

"She had basically no chance of surviving in the wild with such a severe injury," the park said in a social media post. (AP)

'This conduct is a clear violation of the union's agreement'

Grievance filed by NFL says players' union leaders advised RBs to fake injuries

WASHINGTON, Sept. 19, (AP) — The NFL has filed a grievance against the NFL Players Association, alleging that union leaders, including President JC Tretter, have advised running backs to "consider feigning or exaggerating injuries" to help increase their leverage in contract negotiations.

The grievance was filed on Sept. 11 and will be reviewed by an arbitrator.

FOOTBALL

In a memo sent to the league's management council executive committee and obtained by The Associated Press, the NFL said the union made the suggestion to running

backs during a Zoom meeting before the season.

Any player who took the union's advice and faked an injury would be violating the collective bargaining agreement, the league argued.

"This conduct is a clear violation of the union's agreement to use 'best efforts to faithfully carry out the terms and conditions of the (CBA)' and 'to see that the terms and conditions of all NFL Player Contracts are carried out in full by players,'" the memo said. "The union's conduct is also reckless as any player that chooses to follow this advice and improperly withhold services under his player contract will be subject to discipline and financial liability under the CBA, club rules, and/or the player's contract."

The league's grievance seeks for the union to "cease

and desist from such improper conduct as well as other remedies that the arbitrator may deem appropriate."

Giants star running back Saquon Barkley and Raiders All-Pro Josh Jacobs refused to sign their \$10.1 million franchise tags and were unhappy about not getting long-term contracts.

Colts RB Jonathan Taylor has been involved in a contract dispute and was placed on the physically unable to perform list to start the season because he's recovering from offseason ankle surgery.

Tretter spoke openly about the contract issues running backs are facing on former NFL player Ross Tucker's podcast in July.

"You need to try to create as much leverage as you pos-

sibly can," Tretter said. "And that's the tough thing with the franchise tag, or being restricted in movement, is it decreases your leverage, but then you have to find creative ways to build leverage elsewhere. I think we've seen issues - now, I don't think anybody would say they were fake injuries, but we've seen players who didn't want to be where they currently are, have injuries that made them unable to practice and play, but you're not able to get fined, and you're not able to be punished for not reporting."

"So there are issues like that. I don't think I'm allowed to ever recommend that, at least publicly, but I think each player needs to find a way to build up leverage to try to get a fair deal. And that's really what all these guys are looking for, is to be compensated fairly."

Tonga replace 2 players

Baille and Jonathan return to France team for 3rd pool game vs Namibia

MARSEILLE, France, Sept. 19, (AP) — Prop Cyril Baille has recovered from a calf injury and returns to the France team along with center Jonathan Danty for the team's third Rugby World Cup pool game against Namibia on Thursday.

France coach Fabien Galthié had included Baille, Danty and backrower Anthony Jelouch in his initial World Cup squad, even though they were working their way back from injury.

"Jo, Cyril and Anthony are all coming back, it's good news for us," Galthié said. "They have been regulars in the side for the past four years. They've been in most of our battles, notably when we won the (Six Nations) Grand Slam in 2022. They are very important players with a lot of experience."

Danty picked up a hamstring strain after a try-scoring appearance in the final warmup game against Australia and wins his 24th cap in Marseille.

"Our team has been built during four years of battles and Danty played an essential part in that," Galthié said. "He brings us his power at key moments, in attack or defense."

Baille - one of the quickest props in world rugby - will be making his 45th appearance. He last played on Aug. 12 against Scotland.

Jelouch captained Les Tricolores in the 27-12 win against Uruguay last week and remains at No. 8 with Grégory All-dritt rested and not among the reserves after feeling some knee pain during training on Monday.

Former captain Charles Ollivon is alongside fellow flanker François Cros and Jelouch in a strong back row.

The sloppy performance against Uruguay drew some heavy criticism after France had beaten three-time champion New Zealand 27-13 in the tournament's opening game, generating a wave of euphoria.

Peato Mauvaka, who came on against the All Blacks and then against Uruguay to score his seventh international try, gets the nod ahead of Pierre Bourgarit.

Galthié has selected his first-choice halves pairing of Antoine Dupont, who returns as captain, and Matthieu Jalibert.

Louis Bielle-Biarrey keeps his spot on the left wing after scoring a try against Uruguay.

"All of his performances have been good, he deserves to wear the jersey again," Galthié said, adding that Gabin Villière's omission from the matchday 23 was merely to rest him.

The 20-year-old Bielle-Biarrey made his debut during the warmups in August and has not looked back, with two tries in four games so far for Les Tricolores.

"It's evident that things are happening very fast for me, so it's probably better if I don't think about it too much," he said.

Galthié's big hitters return to the backs with veteran Gaël Fickou partnering Danty in midfield, the prolific Damian Penaud on the right wing and Thomas Ramos at fullback.

Penaud is currently enjoying a five-game try-scoring streak, the longest of his career. He has 30 tries overall for France - including nine this season - and is looking to become the first Frenchman to score 10 tries in a calendar year

RUGBY

since Phillipe Saint-André scored 12 in 1995.

Ramos is averaging 17 points per game in 2023, and has not missed more than two kicks at goal in a single test this season.

Danty's return sees Yoram Moefana drop to the reserves along with fullback Melvyn Jaminet, who kicked against Uruguay. Baptiste Couilloud takes over from Maxime Lucu and provides cover at scrumhalf as one of three backs.

Namibia lost 52-8 to Italy and was overwhelmed 71-3 by the All Blacks.

France Squad: Thomas Ramos, Damian Penaud, Gaël Fickou, Jonathan Danty, Louis Bielle-Biarrey, Matthieu Jalibert, Antoine Dupont (captain); Anthony Jelouch, Charles Ollivon, François Cros, Thibaud Flament, Cameron Woki, Uini Atonio, Peato Mauvaka, Cyril Baille. Replacements: Pierre Bourgarit, Réda Wardi, Dorian Aldegheri, Romain Taofifenua, Paul Boudehent, Baptiste Couilloud, Yoram Moefana, Melvyn Jaminet.

Tonga brought two injury replacements into its Rugby World Cup squad on Tuesday, with prop Feao Fotuauka and flyhalf Otumaka Mausia out the tournament.

Tonga coach Toutai Kefu named Siate Tokolahi and Patrick Pellegrini as replacements. Tokolahi will be one of six props in the Tongan squad. Pellegrini will back up first-choice No. 10 William Havili, whose older brother David is in the New Zealand squad.

Neither Fotuauka nor Mausia played in Tonga's 59-16 loss to Ireland on Saturday.

Tonga faces Scotland next on Sunday in Nice and also will play defending champion South Africa and Romania in Pool B.

Wainwright earns 200th win as Cardinals 'pip' Milwaukee



Cincinnati Reds relief pitcher Alex Young throws against the Minnesota Twins in the ninth inning of a baseball game in Cincinnati. (AP)

Mariners blank A's 5-0 to move closer in AL West and tie for final wild card

ST. LOUIS, Sept. 19, (AP) — Adam Wainwright earned his 200th win, pitching seven innings of four-hit ball in a vintage performance as the St. Louis Cardinals beat the Milwaukee Brewers 1-0 on Monday night.

It was the longest outing this season for the 42-year-old Wainwright (5-11), who struck out three and walked two. He has won consecutive starts - both against first-place teams - after going 0-10 with a 10.72 ERA over his previous 11 games between June 24 and Sept. 7.

The right-hander became the 38th pitcher in NL history to reach 200 wins, and the 24th major league pitcher to achieve the milestone since 2000.

Willson Contreras homered off Freddy Peralta (12-9) in the fourth. Milwaukee lost its second straight and its magic number to clinch the NL Central remained at seven. The Brewers hold a six-game lead over the Chicago Cubs with 12 to play.

Mariners 5, Athletics 0
In Oakland, Mariners rookie Bryan Woo had six strikeouts over five sharp innings in a successful homecoming, and Seattle pulled even for the third AL wild card by beating last-place Oakland.

José Caballero homered for the first time in two months, and J.P. Crawford walked three times and delivered an RBI single to help the Mariners win the opener of their final road trip.

Seattle moved into a tie with skidding Texas for the final American League playoff berth. Both teams are 1 1/2 games behind first-place Houston in the AL West.

Woo (4-4) was born in Oakland and attended high school in nearby Alameda. A sixth-round draft pick in 2021 who made his major league debut June 3, the 23-year-old righty allowed three hits and overcame four walks to win back-to-back starts for the first time this season.

Orioles 8, Astros 7
In Houston, Cedric Mullins hit a three-run homer in the ninth inning to rally the Baltimore Orioles past the Houston Astros 8-7 on Monday night in a matchup of American League division leaders.

Houston led by two entering the ninth before closer Ryan Pressly (3-5) allowed consecutive singles to Ryan O'Hearn and Austin Hays with one out. Mullins then hit his 15th homer into the seats in right field to put the Orioles on top.

Yordan Alvarez reached second to start the bottom of the ninth on a throwing error by Gold Glove third baseman Ramón Urías. Pinch-runner Jake Meyers advanced when José Abreu lined out to right field, but held at third when Kyle Tucker grounded out to second. Cionel Pérez was replaced by Yennier Cano,

who struck out Chas McCormick to get his seventh save.

Baltimore moved 2 1/2 games ahead of second-place Tampa Bay.

Houston has lost three of four but maintained a 1 1/2-game lead in the AL West thanks to a fourth straight loss by Texas on Monday night against Boston.

Reds 7, Twins 3
In Cincinnati, rookie Connor Phillips pitched three-hit ball over seven innings for his first major league win. Will Benson drove in three runs and Cincinnati beat Minnesota in a game with postseason implications for both teams.

Cincinnati (79-73) won for the fifth time in seven games and trails Chicago (78-72) by .0003 for the NL's final wild-card berth, both a half-game behind Arizona (79-72). Miami (78-73) dropped a half-game behind the Reds with a 2-1 loss to the New York Mets.

Minnesota (79-72), nearing its third division title in five years, maintained a seven-game lead over second-place Cleveland in the AL Central with 11 games left.

BASEBALL

Phillips (1-0), a 22-year-old right-hander, hadn't gotten past five innings in either of his first two big league starts. He gave up solo homers by Royce Lewis in the fourth and Alex Kirilloff in the seventh. Phillips matched his season high with seven strikeouts and walked one.

Phillies 7, Braves 1
In Atlanta, Kyle Schwarber hit a 483-foot, two-run homer, and the Phillies went deep four other times to back Zack Wheeler in a win over Atlanta.

Schwarber's 45th long homer of the season gave the Phillies a six-run lead in the sixth, a drive that cleared the top of the Chop House restaurant in right field at Truist Park. It was the second-farthest ball hit at the home



Boston Red Sox left fielder Willyer Abreu slides to contain the ball on a single by Baltimore Orioles' Adam Frazier during the fifth inning of a baseball game at Fenway Park in Boston. (AP)

of the Braves and the second-longest homer by Schwarber in his career, 5 feet shy of the ball he hit off Yu Darvish in the NL Championship Series at San Diego last year.

Philadelphia opened a 3 1/2-game lead over Arizona for the top NL wild card.

Atlanta lost its fourth straight but was assured a bye in the Wild Card Series and home-field advantage in the Division Series when Milwaukee lost 1-0 at St. Louis.

Bryce Harper, J.T. Realmuto, Nick Castellanos and Johan Rojas also homered to send the major league-leading Braves to their fourth straight loss.

Red Sox 4, Rangers 2
In Arlington, Rob Refsnyder hit a go-ahead two-run single in the eighth inning and Boston snapped a four-game losing streak by beating playoff-chasing Texas, which lost its fourth in a row even after getting two All-Star players back in the lineup.

Boston rallied against reliever Will Smith (2-7), who walked No. 8 batter Luis Urias and then gave up a double that snapped No. 9 batter Connor Wong's 0-for-17 slide. Refsnyder's one-out hit that made it 3-2 came after Rafael Devers, with 10 hits his previous 23 at-bats, was intentionally walked. Adam Duvall followed with a sac fly.

Marcus Semien, the only Rangers player to start all 150 of their games, hit another leadoff homer and had an RBI single.

Mets 2, Marlins 1
In Miami, Jeff McNeil hit a tie-breaking homer leading off the ninth inning and New York knocked Miami out of playoff position.

Mark Vientos had an RBI single and José Butto pitched six stingy innings to help the fourth-place Mets play spoiler again with their second consecutive win over a postseason contender. New York also beat the Cincinnati Reds at home on Sunday.

Miami fell a half-game behind the idle Chicago Cubs for the third and final National League wild card. Cincinnati is also a half-game in front of the Marlins after defeating Minnesota on Monday night.

Dodgers 8, Tigers 3
In Los Angeles, J.D. Martinez homered twice off Eduardo Rodriguez and drove in five runs as Los Angeles rolled over Detroit.

Rodriguez (11-9), who used his no-trade rights to nix a deal to the Dodgers on Aug. 1, lasted just three-plus innings. He exited in the fourth with back spasms during Chris Taylor's at-bat.

White Sox 6, Nationals 1
In Washington, Mike Clevinger pitched a six-hitter for his third career complete game, and Chicago beat Washington.

Luis Robert Jr. hit a three-run homer for Chicago, which improved to 5-12 in September. Tim Anderson had four of the team's 15 hits.

Padres 11, Rockies 9
In San Diego, Luis Campusano hit a go-ahead three-run home run and Garrett Cooper and Eugy Rosario

MLB Results/Standings

WASHINGTON, Sept. 19, (AP) — Results and standings from MLB games on Monday.

Kansas City	6	Cleveland	4
Cincinnati	7	Minnesota	3
Chicago W. Sox	6	Washington	1
Boston	4	Texas	2
Baltimore	8	Houston	7
Seattle	5	Oakland	0
LA Dodgers	8	Detroit	3
NY Mets	2	Miami	1
Chicago W. Sox	6	Washington	1
Philadelphia	7	Atlanta	1
St. Louis	1	Milwaukee	0
San Diego	11	Colorado	9

American League				
East Division				
W	L	Pct	GB	
z-Baltimore	94	56	.627	—
z-Tampa Bay	92	59	.609	2-1/2
Toronto	83	67	.553	11
New York	76	74	.507	18
Boston	75	76	.497	19-1/2

Central Division				
W	L	Pct	GB	
Minnesota	79	72	.523	—
Cleveland	72	79	.477	7
Detroit	70	80	.467	8-1/2
Chicago	58	93	.384	21
Kansas City	49	102	.325	30

West Division				
W	L	Pct	GB	
Houston	84	67	.556	—
Seattle	82	68	.547	1-1/2
Texas	82	68	.547	1-1/2
Los Angeles	68	82	.453	15-1/2
Oakland	46	104	.307	37-1/2

National League				
East Division				
W	L	Pct	GB	
x-Atlanta	96	54	.640	—
Philadelphia	82	68	.547	14
Miami	78	73	.517	18-1/2
New York	70	80	.467	26
Washington	66	85	.437	30-1/2

Central Division				
W	L	Pct	GB	
Milwaukee	84	66	.560	—
Cincinnati	79	73	.520	6
Chicago	78	72	.520	6
Pittsburgh	70	80	.467	14
St. Louis	67	83	.447	17

West Division				
W	L	Pct	GB	
x-Los Angeles	92	57	.617	—
Arizona	79	72	.523	14
San Francisco	76	74	.507	16-1/2
San Diego	73	78	.483	20
Colorado	56	94	.373	36-1/2

also connected for San Diego, which beat Colorado to extend its winning streak to a season-best five games.

The high-priced Padres, who have been a massive disappointment this year coming off a stirring run to the NL Championship Series, became the last team in the majors to win four straight games on Sunday when they swept the Oakland Athletics, who have baseball's worst record. The Rockies have the NL's worst record.

Royals 6, Guardians 4
In Kansas City, Drew Waters hit a go-ahead double during a two-out rally in the eighth inning Monday, and Kansas City rallied to beat Cleveland in their series-opening matinee.

The Royals trailed 4-2 when Kyle Isbel drew a leadoff walk against Trevor Stephan. The reliever retired the next two batters before walking MJ Melendez and hitting Nelson Velázquez, loading the bases for Michael Massey, whose own walk off Stephan (6-7) scored a run to get Kansas City within one.

Change Name

I, Huzaira S/o Kaid Johar Behrinwala R/o Mohalla Kadirpura, Rampura, MP 458118 have changed my name and shall hereafter be known As Huzaira Behrinwala.

PARIS, Sept. 19, (AP) — Anti-doping regulators are appealing a decision that exonerated world-record hurdler Tobi Amusan from a violation for missing drug tests that could have cost her a year or more out of the sport.

The Athletics Integrity Unit said Monday it filed its appeal to the Court of Arbitration for Sport last week.

The AIU provisionally suspended Amusan for missing three tests in the span of a year, but an appeals panel overturned the suspension,

which allowed her to compete earlier this summer at world championships, where she finished sixth.

"I'm here competing and that's all that matters. Next," she said, in a testy series of exchanges with reporters after the opening heats, when she was repeatedly asked whether the uncertainty had bothered her.

On Sunday, the Nigerian hurdler closed out the Diamond League season with a victory at the Prefontaine Classic.

On the same track in Eugene, Oregon, at worlds in 2022, Amusan shocked fans by running a world record 12.12 seconds in the 100 hurdles in the semifinal round. She won the gold in a time of 12.06 that did not go into the record books because the tailwind was too strong.

Two months ago, she took to social media to announce she had been accused of a so-called whereabouts violation. Elite athletes have to provide detailed logs of where they'll be during parts of each day so they can be approached for "no-notice" tests. Those who miss three tests in the span of the year can be sanctioned.

Her suspension was lifted just before the championships, where AIU chair David Howman said an appeal to CAS was possible. He said the decision that cleared Amusan left AIU with "some concern that it might set a precedent that would make it difficult for future cases."

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SPORTS

Al-Ittihad triumph as Al-Hilal 'secure' draw

Iraqi Air Force hold Sepahan

RIYADH, Sept 19: Romarinho netted a brace to steer Al-Ittihad to a commanding 3-0 triumph over AGMK, their Uzbekistani counterparts, in the AFC Champions League group stage. Remarkably, they achieved this victory despite the absence of their striker Karim Benzema just the day before.

The Saudi league champions surged to the top of Group Three, securing three points. This followed a thrilling 2-2 draw between the Iraqi Air Force and Iran's Sepahan.

Al-Ittihad demonstrated their dominance by scoring two goals in a span of four minutes during the first half. Haroun Kamara broke the deadlock in the 11th minute, and Romarinho further extended their lead.

Romarinho later added to his tally by converting a penalty three minutes before halftime.

In the same group, the Iraqi Air Force settled for a 2-2

draw against Sepahan Isfahan in the opening round of AFC Champions League football matches.

This exciting match unfolded at the Franso Hariri Stadium in Erbil, the capital of the Kurdistan Region.

Meanwhile, Al-Hilal narrowly escaped a trap set by Uzbek side Navbahor, as they managed to secure an equalizer in the 11th minute of injury time. Consequently,

SOCCER

both teams advanced together in Group Four of the AFC Champions League competition.

In Group Two, the contest between the UAE's Sharjah and Qatar's Al-Sadd concluded in a goalless stalemate. Nasaf leads Group Two after clinching a 1-0 victory over Jordan's Al-Faisaly with a goal in the seventh minute of injury time.

Al-Sadd faces a challenging task against Nasaf on October 2, while Sharjah will host Al-Faisaly from Jordan.

Al-Atar takes active role in advancing 'Asian Parkour'

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 19: Mohammed Al-Atar, a member of the technical committee for parkour at the Asian Gymnastics Union, actively participated in the inaugural meeting of the committee held in Tashkent, Uzbekistan.

As an international judge, Al-Atar attended the meeting

through video conferencing using Zoom technology. During the meeting, he revealed that the committee had entrusted him with various responsibilities, notably the formulation of a comprehensive training plan for judges across the continent, preparing them for officiating in Asian Parkour championships.

Al-Atar also shared that the committee has scheduled its second meeting for November, during which they will deliberate on proposed strategies for organizing tournaments, referee training programs, and the development of coaching resources. He emphasized that the Asian Union is committed to carefully and

PARKOUR

strategically advancing the promotion of parkour within the continent.

Furthermore, Al-Atar expressed his heartfelt appreciation to the Kuwait Gymnastics Union's board of directors for their confidence in appointing him as Kuwait's representative in the Asian Union. He commended their unwavering dedication to providing him with all the necessary support to become one of the pioneering international referees in the realm of Asian Parkour.



Al-Ittihad's Romarinho celebrates after scoring.

Torino rout Salernitana; Bologna and Hellas Verona draw

Hudson-Odoi scores on Forest debut to help salvage draw vs Burnley



Nottingham Forest's Anthony Elanga, (left), and Burnley's Jordan Beyer battle for the ball during the English Premier League soccer match between Burnley and Nottingham Forest at City Ground, Nottingham, England. (AP)

NOTTINGHAM, England, Sept 19, (AP): Callum Hudson-Odoi marked his first Premier League appearance in 18 months with a goal to help Nottingham Forest rally for a 1-1 draw at home against Burnley, which earned its first point of the campaign.

The 22-year-old former Chelsea player spent last season on loan at Bayer Leverkusen but served up a reminder of what he can do as he was Forest's biggest attacking threat on his debut for his new team following a deadline-day move from Stamford Bridge. He brought his side level with a curling effort in the second half after Zeki Amdouni had put Burnley ahead.

It was Burnley's first point after three successive losses, but the visitors were denied a late winner by VAR and finished the game with 10 men after Lyle Foster was sent off for elbowing Ryan Yates.

Having once been considered one of the brightest prospects in English soccer, with Bayern Munich among the teams reportedly interested in signing him, Hudson-Odoi is now looking to revive his career after Chelsea decided to let him go.

Forest manager Steve Cooper coached him when in charge of England's Under-17 World Cup-winning team and has been quick to get him firing at his new club.

Hudson-Odoi curled a 20-yard shot in off the far post to level the score in the 61st. Burnley had taken the lead in the 41st when Amdouni fired into the bottom corner.

Foster thought he had scored the winner for Burnley in the 76th, but Sander Berge was ruled to have used his hand in the buildup.

□ □ □

Forest has seven points from five games. Burnley has only played four as its game at pro-

SOCCER

moted Luton was postponed last month.

Serbia forward **Nemanja Radonjic** scored either side of halftime and **Torino** won 3-0 at Salernitana in Serie A.

Torino moved up to seventh place with seven points from its opening four matches.

Alessandro Buongiorno had put Torino ahead early on.

Salernitana, which remained winless with just two points, is one spot above last place. While high-scoring striker **Boulaye Dia** has returned to Salernitana following an apparent disagreement with the southern club, he again was left off the squad for the match.

Also, **Bologna** and **Hellas Verona** drew 0-0.

□ □ □

Girona earned its fourth straight Spanish league win by beating **Granada** 4-2.

Viktor Tsyhankov, **Sávio** and **David López** scored goals 12 minutes apart for the visitors in the first half, and **Yan Couto** added another near the end of the match to help the Catalan club move into third place behind **Barcelona** and leader **Real Madrid** after five rounds.

Myrto Uzuni and **Lucas Boyé** scored second-half goals for promoted Granada, which remained winless and in the relegation zone after its fourth loss of the season. Its only win came against Mal-

lorca. Girona was coming off wins against **Getafe**, **Sevilla** and **Las Palmas** after opening with a draw at **Real Sociedad**.

Lions & Campbell get mixed results

ALLEN PARK, Mich., Sept 19, (AP): Detroit Lions coach Dan Campbell made some aggressive and conservative decisions in a 37-31 overtime loss to Seattle on Sunday.

"I knew I wanted to play that game a certain way early, but also knew if it doesn't quite work out that way we go the long road and win it at the end and we weren't able to do that," Campbell said on Monday.

The usually gutsy coach went for it on fourth-and-4 instead of attempting a 48-yard field goal in the second quarter and Jared Goff threw an incomplete pass; went for it on fourth-and-3 and eventually scored a touchdown on the drive in third quarter; went for it on fourth-and-2 instead of a punt, helping Seattle have better field position to set up a touchdown at the end of the third quarter. Then on fourth-and-3 at the Seattle 20, he went for the game-tying field goal with 3 seconds left because he said it was too much of a risk to go for it.

Campbell liked their chances in overtime, but never got the ball after Seattle won the toss.

There was little sense of urgency when the Lions got the ball at midfield down three points with 1:44 left.

"They had two timeouts and I did not want to give that ball back, that was No. 1, do not give this ball back. No. 2, can we get down there far enough to score a touchdown?" Campbell said.

He said he never thought they were crunched against the clock because they had timeouts. On that final drive Goff never took a shot downfield.

"I thought because of where they wound up getting the football, if we could hold them to that field goal it would be a phenomenal stop and the defense totally came through," Seahawks coach Pete Carroll said.

Wide receiver Josh Reynolds has given the passing game a boost after stepping up again with five catches for 66 yards, including two touchdowns.

"I trust him a hell of a lot. I trust him. He's got great hands. He's been playing at a high level. He started to catch himself in a little bit of a rhythm now, which is good, and get himself open," Goff said.

The pass rush was ineffective against Seattle's Geno Smith whose offensive line was missing the starting tackles. The only sack came late in the game when linebacker Alex Anzalone dropped Smith for a 17-yard loss.

The transition from run to pass must happen quicker.

"Our urgency has to go up and our violence has to go up to shed those blockers. That will go a long way," Campbell said.



Torino's Nemanja Radonjic celebrates scoring during the Serie A soccer match between Salernitana and Torino, at the Arcehi stadium in Salerno, Italy. (AP)

UEFA says it is monitoring the situation

European soccer could see more disruption

GENEVA, Sept 19, (AP): International soccer games could again be affected by the territorial dispute between Azerbaijan and Armenia that reignited Tuesday.

Norwegian team Molde was traveling Tuesday to Azerbaijan two days ahead of a scheduled game in the Europa League against Qarabag. As Molde players and officials were in transit, Azerbaijan launched what it called an "anti-terrorist operation" targeting Armenian military positions in the Nagorno-Karabakh region.

"We're on our way and with a stopover in Warsaw for fuel now,

SOCCER

before heading for Baku, that's our plan," Molde spokesman Per Lianes wrote in an email to The Associated Press.

UEFA said it is "monitoring the situation and is in close contact with the host association" of Azerbaijan.

The latest conflict follows rising tensions this month in the region that was the scene of a separatist war that started in the 1980s and a six-week war in 2020.

Nagorno-Karabakh and sizable surrounding territories were under ethnic Armenian control since 1994. Azerbaijan regained the territories and parts of Nagorno-Karabakh itself in 2020. That war ended with an armistice that placed a Russian peacekeeper contingent there.

Three years ago, UEFA required club and national teams



A file photo of Muhab in action.

Al-Mutab joins Al-Fehaheel

Al-Fehaheel club has enlisted the services of goalkeeper Muhab Al-Mutab to strengthen their first-handball team in preparation for the forthcoming 2023-2024 season. Al-Mutab brings with him prior experience representing numerous local teams, including Yarmouk, Kazma, and Al-Qadisiyah, in addition to his contributions to our national team and beach handball squad.

At present, the Al-Fehaheel management has yet to appoint a coach for the first team. There are expectations that Egyptian Mohamed Said, who previously coached the U19 team and led the "young eagles" in the previous season following the departure of Coach Walid Salmeen, will assume leadership of the team. Furthermore, the club has not secured any foreign professional players. Reports circulating suggest that professional players will be acquired in December

from Azerbaijan and Armenia to find neutral countries to host their home games in interna-

or January, owing to the delayed commencement of the league, scheduled for February of the following year. This delay is attributed to the involvement of the national team, as well as the participation of Kuwait and Al-Qadisiyah clubs, in various international competitions. These competitions include the Asian Games in China this month, followed by the Asia Olympic qualifiers for Paris 2024, set to take place in Qatar in October (with the senior national team's participation). Subsequently, the agenda includes the Super Globe 2023 Club World Championship, featuring Kuwait's participation, followed by Al-Qadisiyah hosting the 26th Asian Club Championship from November 17-27, 2023, featuring the yellow and white teams. Finally, the Asia qualifiers for the 2025 World Cup are scheduled to be held in Bahrain from January 14-25, 2024.

tional competitions until the conflict stopped. Months later Baku hosted four games at the men's



New Orleans Saints quarterback Derek Carr passes against the Carolina Panthers during the first half of an NFL football game in Charlotte, N.C. (AP)

Sports

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Browns suffer double blow against Steelers

Saints improve 2-0

PITTSBURGH, Sept 19, (AP): T.J. Watt scooped up a fumble by DeShaun Watson and ran 17 yards for the go-ahead touchdown midway through the fourth quarter, and the Pittsburgh Steelers beat the Cleveland Browns 26-22 on Monday night in a game overshadowed by a serious knee injury to Cleveland star running back Nick Chubb.

The Steelers (1-1) beat the Browns (1-1) for the 20th straight time at home in the regular season when outside linebacker Alex Highsmith - who returned an interception for a touchdown on the game's first snap - beat Cleveland left tackle Jedrick Wills Jr. off the edge and chopped the ball out of Watson's hands.

Watt picked it up and raced home as Pittsburgh extended its home winning streak on Monday night to 21 straight dating to 1991. Cleveland allowed an opponent to score two defensive touchdowns for the first time since Pittsburgh did it on Oct. 16, 1983.

FOOTBALL

The Browns played most of the final three quarters without Chubb, who took a handoff from Watson early in the second quarter and reached the Pittsburgh 3. Steelers safety Minkah Fitzpatrick dove at Chubb's legs, and the four-time Pro Bowler's left leg bent awkwardly underneath him. He was carted off the field.

Jerome Ford, Chubb's replacement, ran for 106 yards and caught a 3-yard touchdown pass for the Browns, but Cleveland's miscues cost it a chance to win at Pittsburgh in the regular season for the first time since 2003.

Watson completed 22 of 40 for 235 yards with a touchdown and an interception. He was also flagged twice for sportsmanlike conduct for grabbing the facemask of a Steeler while running. The penalties cut a pair of promising drives short.

Kenny Pickett and the Steelers' offense struggled. Pickett went 15 of 30 for 222 yards.

Saints 20, Panthers 17

In Charlotte, Tony Jones Jr. ran for two touchdowns, rookie Blake Grupe kicked two field goals and New Orleans beat Carolina, improving to 2-0 for the first time since 2013.

Jones replaced the injured Jamaal

NFL Results/Standings

WASHINGTON, Sept 19, (AP): NFL results and standings on Monday.

Team	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA
New Orleans	2	0	0	1.000	60	51
Pittsburgh	2	0	0	1.000	54	32
Cleveland	1	1	0	.500	32	46
New England	2	0	0	1.000	37	49

American Football Conference

AFC East						
W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA	
Miami	2	0	0	1.000	60	51
Buffalo	1	1	0	.500	54	32
NY Jets	1	1	0	.500	32	46
New England	2	0	0	1.000	37	49

AFC South						
W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA	
Indianapolis	1	1	0	.500	52	51
Jacksonville	1	1	0	.500	40	38
Tennessee	1	1	0	.500	42	40
Houston	0	2	0	.000	29	56

AFC North						
W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA	
Baltimore	2	0	0	1.000	52	33
Cleveland	1	1	0	.500	46	29
Pittsburgh	1	1	0	.500	33	52
Cincinnati	0	2	0	.000	27	51

AFC West						
W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA	
Kansas City	1	1	0	.500	37	30
Las Vegas	1	1	0	.500	27	54
Denver	0	2	0	.000	49	52
LA Chargers	0	2	0	.000	58	63

National Football Conference

NFC East						
W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA	
Dallas	2	0	0	1.000	70	10
Philadelphia	2	0	0	1.000	59	48
Washington	2	0	0	1.000	55	49
NY Giants	1	1	0	.500	31	68

NFC South						
W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA	
Atlanta	2	0	0	1.000	49	34
New Orleans	2	0	0	1.000	36	32
Tampa Bay	2	0	0	1.000	47	34
Carolina	0	2	0	.000	27	44

NFC North						
W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA	
Detroit	1	1	0	.500	52	57
Green Bay	1	1	0	.500	62	45
Chicago	0	2	0	.000	37	65
Minnesota	0	2	0	.000	45	54

NFC West						
W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA	
San Francisco	2	0	0	1.000	60	30
LA Rams	1	1	0	.500	53	43
Seattle	1	1	0	.500	50	61
Arizona	0	2	0	.000	44	51

Williams late in the first half and ran for 34 yards on 12 carries.

The Saints' defense did the rest, holding Panthers rookie Bryce Young to 153 yards passing in his home debut. New Orleans limited Carolina (0-2) to 239 yards and sacked Young, the top overall pick in the draft, four times.

The Saints nearly made it two full games without allowing a touchdown before giving up a 3-yard scoring toss from Young to Adam Thielen with 1:16 left in the game. Young's 2-point conversion pass to Thielen got the Panthers within three, but the Saints recovered the outside kick and ran out the clock.

Derek Carr had a badly underthrown interception into triple coverage and missed several other open receivers as the Saints limped into the locker room at halftime with a 6-3 lead.

But Carr improved in the second half, hitting Chris Olave for a 42-yard gain to set up Jones' first TD. Carr finished with 228 yards passing and the one pick.



Some of the participants of the program.

Volleyball referee training program commences

The Volleyball Referee Training Program kicked off two days ago at the Abdullah Al-Salem Center for Leadership Development in the Khaldiyyah region. This program spans two weeks and is

overseen by the Referees Committee of the Kuwait Volleyball Association, in anticipation of the upcoming season's tournaments.

Dr. Ahmed Al-Anizan, an international referee,

is leading the program. A total of 86 referees, comprising both male and female participants, are actively engaged in the training sessions, which are conducted during the evenings.

Real try to extend perfect start to season vs Union in CL

Wounded Man United face daunting trip to Bayern for CL opener

Spain players arrive at camp

Hermoso accuses federation of threatening World Cup winners

MADRID, Sept 19, (AP): In the latest twist to the Spanish soccer crisis, the country's World Cup-winning players started reporting to training camp on Tuesday despite not wanting to be called up for the national team while fighting for changes in the soccer federation.

Local media showed some of the players arriving at a hotel in Madrid where they briefly gathered with staff before heading to Valencia - a day after new coach Montse Tomé ignored their decision not to play until their demands for reform at the federation were met.

The players had said in a statement on Monday that they were caught by surprise by the call-up and did not plan to end their boycott, but those who don't show up risk breaking a Spanish sports law that requires athletes to answer the call of national teams unless there are circumstances that impede them from playing, such as an injury.

Not responding to a call-up by a national team can expose a player to fines or even being banned from playing for their clubs, according to Spain's sports law. Those punishments would have to be requested by the federation to the government's sports council, which would decide whether to apply them.

One player, goalkeeper Misa Rodríguez, when asked if she was happy to be with the team in Madrid replied with a "No."

Instead of regaining control of the squad by calling up the players, the move by the federation has prompted the government to step in to mediate directly with the players.

Spain's Secretary for Sports and president of the Higher Council for Sports, Víctor Francos, said he would meet with

players in Valencia later Tuesday. He also slammed the federation's handling of the situation.

"The government had let the federation be the ones to talk to the players, giving it room to maneuver," Francos told Spanish television channel La Sexta. "(But) yesterday we looked ridiculous as a nation. It is unacceptable and this morning I spoke to some of the players. The impression I came away with was the most negative one possible. I did not hear resentment or anger, I heard sadness and exhaustion, and that is why I decided to back them."

It was the latest embarrassing chapter in Spanish soccer in a crisis ignited by former federation president Luis Rubiales kissing player Jenni Hermoso on the lips after Spain won the Women's World Cup last month.

Hermoso, who said she did not consent to the contact at the awards ceremony, accused the federation of trying to intimidate the players by picking them for the national team even though they asked not to be called up.

She said in a statement early Tuesday that the federation's decision to call up nearly half of the 39 players who said they would not play for the national team as a protest was "irrefutable proof" that "nothing has changed."

The players had made it clear that they wouldn't come back until their demands for significant change and new leadership in the federation were met, but Tomé on Tuesday picked 15 of the players who helped Spain win its first Women's World Cup last month.

Tomé left Hermoso off the list "as a way to protect her," she said.



Pittsburgh Steelers running back Jaylen Warren is tackled by Cleveland Browns safety Juan Thornhill during the first half of an NFL football game in Pittsburgh. (AP)

Finland draw defending champions Canada in Davis Cup quarterfinals

LONDON, Sept 19, (AP): Finland's re-ward for beating the United States and Croatia to reach the knockout stage of the Davis Cup is a quarterfinal match against defending champion Canada.

Finland has never reached this stage before in the top team event in men's tennis.

The draw for the Final 8 was made on Tuesday. Serbia will play Britain, the Czech Republic will meet Australia and Italy will take on the Netherlands in the other matches in the quarterfinals.

The Final 8 takes place in Malaga, Spain, from Nov. 21-26.

Third-seeded Tatjana Maria advanced to the second round of the

Guangzhou Open by beating Philippine qualifier Alexandra Eala 6-3, 6-0 on Tuesday.

Maria will next meet Chinese wildcard Zhuoxuan Baiin. Zhuoxuan, who beat Despina Papamichail 6-3, 7-5, was among three Chinese players to win in the first round.

TENNIS

Wang Xiyu defeated Nadia Podoroska 6-3, 6-3 and will next take on Diana Shnaider in the second round, while Yuan Yue beat Tamara Korpsch 6-3, 7-6 (5).

Other winners included fourth-seeded Lucia Bronzetti, Daria Saville and Moyuka Uchijima.

SOCCER

Bayern, the 11-time defending champion in the Bundesliga, is unbeaten so far this season, though it dropped its first points Saturday when Bayer Leverkusen came from behind to draw 2-2 in Munich.

Bayern coach Thomas Tuchel is suspended following his sending off in the team's loss to Manchester City in the quarterfinals last season. Tuchel will be forced to watch the game from the stands and it's likely Zsolt Löw and Anthony Barry will direct the team in his place.

United will be without right back Aaron Wan-Bissaka, who was injured after making a short appearance toward the end of Saturday's loss to Brighton.

After a perfect start in the Spanish league with five straight wins, Real Madrid will look to keep its momentum going in the Champions League on Wednesday.

The record 14-time European champion kicks off its Champions League campaign against newcomer Union Berlin at home. It will be Madrid's 27th straight appearance in the group stage - and Union Berlin's first-ever game in the competition.

"The Champions League is a special competition for us, and we are going to treat tomorrow's game as something special," Madrid coach Carlo Ancelotti said Tuesday. "We want to get off to a good start in the group stage and we are playing at home. Our opponent is a well-organized, strong and solid side. We will need to play at a high intensity."

Madrid is enjoying a winning streak to sit at the top of the Spanish league. "It's been a perfect start, five wins

from five matches," said Jude Bellingham, the club's new signing who has thrived early on. "It's important we keep it up. With the support of our fans and the quality of the players here, if we keep going like this, we'll be on the right path."

Bellingham, who will play his first Champions League game for Madrid after arriving from Borussia Dortmund,

scored five goals in the team's first four league matches and has been a key factor in the team's hot start.

Madrid's league wins came against Athletic Bilbao, Almeria, Celta Vigo, Getafe and Real Sociedad, with Ancelotti's team having to come from behind in three of them. Madrid outscored its opponents 10-3 and is the only team with a perfect record in the

league. "It will be Madrid's first match against Union, which qualified by finishing fourth in the Bundesliga for its highest league result. Union is enjoying its third consecutive season in a UEFA competition, and fourth overall."

"They are a new team in the Champions League but the fact that they are here means they have done very well," Ancelotti said. "They are well-organized defensively, they are solid and they play with intensity. We have studied them carefully and hopefully we can put in a good performance tomorrow."

Madrid last failed to reach the group stage back in 1996-97. It has advanced from its group every time since then, having reached at least the semifinals in the last three seasons.

Madrid is still without forward Vinicius Junior, and defender Dani Carvajal is also out because of a muscle injury sustained in practice on Tuesday. Ancelotti said Carvajal will be replaced by Lucas Vázquez.

The other Group C teams are Napoli and Braga, which play in Portugal on Wednesday.

After Union, Madrid's next match will be the city derby at Atletico Madrid in the Spanish league on Sunday



Bayern's goalkeeper Sven Ulreich jumps for a ball besides goalkeeper Daniel Peretz during a training session in Munich, Germany, Tuesday, Sept 19, 2023 prior to the Champions League group A match between Bayern Munich and Manchester United. Bayern will face Man U on Wednesday. (AP)