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Opinion

Sheikh Fahad Al-Sabah, blessed are your efforts to combat money laundering

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

KUWAIT is taking significant steps in the right direction to deal with the money laundering file.

This reflects his keenness to cleanse the economic and financial environment of all suspicions and to close all loopholes in the laws governing financial operations.



Al-Jarallah

This undoubtedly means that the country is moving towards economic and commercial stability, and has begun to get rid of practices that have negatively affected its international reputation.

This effort is crucial, especially since looters have turned it into a window for financial corruption. Through some forex and travel agents, they are able to quickly launder the money they obtained through fraudulent means, with the help of corrupt officials.

In this regard, many financial crimes were committed to finance terrorist groups abroad. Some criminals falsely claimed to manage the fund portfolios of heads of state and senior officials in either their own country or other countries.

One of the vital measures announced by the Minister of Interior concerning this issue is coordination with Interpol to extradite these criminals that they harmed economically.

This occurred because the looters either believed they were above the law or did not expect to be held accountable. The reason for this could be the failure to develop the laws, due to which they committed the most heinous crimes and fled abroad.

Even though we appreciate Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousef's efforts in this regard, this does not exempt the Council of Ministers from starting a legal workshop to close all loopholes in the Money Laundering Law No. 106/2013.

This need for reform is underscored by recent revelations from the press, particularly Al-Seyassah daily, which has been investigating for a month the methods that criminals use to move suspicious money out of the country and the fraudulent operations involved.

Many forex offices and some travel and tourism agencies are exploiting the legal loopholes to engage in fraudulent activities. These operations are often linked to individuals who present themselves as "businesspersons" but are actually looters.

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Real estate fraud rears head again amid lax gov't policies

Female heirs major victims of fake brokers

By Marwa Al-Bahrawi Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 13: After more than six years of addressing the real estate fraud crisis and significant progress made by the government from 2017 to 2022 to eliminate this phenomenon,

real estate fraud cases are once again resurfacing, particularly through real estate brokerage.

Recent activity on social media has revealed many cases of real estate fraud, with some individuals impersonating real estate brokers to carry out deceptive operations under the guise of accredited real estate offices.

To understand the reasons behind the resurgence of real estate fraud in brokerage and

explore the potential solutions, Al-Seyassah met with a number of real estate brokers.

They stressed the need to tighten control over unauthorized individuals in the profession, enhance societal awareness of real estate transactions, and increase penalties. Additionally, they advocated for the adoption of digital contracts and transitioning from paper to digital formats for all types of agreements, including sales, rentals, and assignments, in order to prevent individual fraud cases from evolving into a widespread, difficult-to-control phenomenon.

In this regard, head of the Real Estate Brokers Association Imad Haidar explained that the resurgence of real estate fraud is due to several factors. Most important among them are the weak oversight by government agencies concerned with real estate, a lack of real estate cultural awareness among citizens, and the failure of some brokers to prevent interactions with unauthorized individuals in the profession.

Haidar stressed the need for organizing and licensing advertising across all media platforms including social media, with the goal of blocking unlicensed advertisements.

He also highlighted the importance of requiring a broker's contract for any property transactions in the Real Estate Registration Department, as this is the only type of contract monitored by the Anti-Money Laundering Department, adding that without such oversight, other contracts remain susceptible to money laundering risks.

Haidar explained that real estate fraud employs various tactics, including temptation of prices, high returns, sales on plans, sales of properties under construction, and fictitious companies.

In order to prevent a recurrence of such issues and protect investors from becoming future victims, it is essential to address these problems comprehensively.

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Photos by Mohammad Morsi

A young diver hands over his catch of oysters to his colleague. The 33rd Diving Commemoration trip began on August 10 and ends on Thursday, August 15. The participants include captains, sailors and mariners. The catch of oysters (inset) till now is of high quality.

'Adopt hi-tech to bolster disaster reduction'

KRCS eyes partners to streamline relief efforts

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 13, (KUNA): The Kuwait Red Crescent Society (KRCS) emphasized its commitment to establishing meaningful and effective partnerships with international organizations to address the growing humanitarian challenges and crises of our time.

This message was conveyed by Anwar Al-Hasawi, Vice Chairman of the Society's Board of Directors, during a speech on Tuesday. The speech took place during a visit by a delegation from the GCC Center for Emer-

gency Management, led by Dr. Rashid Al-Marri, Chairman of the Center, to the KRCS headquarters.

Al-Hasawi highlighted the Society's dedication to collaborating and coordinating with humanitarian organizations, particularly the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, the International Committee of the Red Cross, and other global organizations. The goal of these partnerships is to enhance and streamline relief efforts for those affected by disasters and humanitarian crises.

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KUNA photo

Vice Chairman of the Society's Board of Directors Anwar Al-Hasawi receives a delegation from the GCC Center for Emergency Management.

Fake degree retirees to 'face prosecution'

By Al-Seyassah Local Affairs Editor

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 13: In the context of government efforts to track down and combat forged and fictitious certificates, holding those responsible accountable under the law, and confirming the report published by Al-Seyassah on July 26, the Minister of Education and Minister of Higher Education, Dr. Adel Al-Adwani, has approved the recommendations of the Ministerial Investigation Committee.

In a statement to Al-Seyassah, it was noted that legal authorities are exploring the possibility of prosecuting retirees whose certificates are proven to be forged or fraudulent, especially those who retired after the government, following higher directives, launched a "war" on forged certificates or those who refused to submit their certificates for scrutiny.

It was explained that anyone found guilty of forging their certificate would face charges of fraud for unlawfully obtaining financial benefits, seizing public funds, and harming the interests of other employees who were deprived of their rightful administrative and financial rights due to these "forgers."

The Ministry of Education also stated that Dr. Al-Adwani has referred the third batch of forged certificates to the Public Prosecution as part of a series of firm measures aimed at ensuring the integrity of the educational system, maintaining its credibility, upholding the principles of honesty and justice, and addressing any threats to the system's integrity.

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Situation in Middle East 'dangerous': British FM

BEIRUT, Aug 13, (Agencies): British Foreign Secretary David Lammy warned of the dangerous situation in the Middle East asserting a ceasefire must be reached immediately.

The British top-diplomat remarks came in a phone call with Lebanese caretaker Prime Minister Najib Miqati on Tuesday, where the two also discussed bilateral relations.

Prime Minister's media office released a statement conveying Lammy's remarks calling the situation a decisive moment for stability in the region, that cannot bare anymore delay.

Miqati, on his part, took note of British government's interest in Lebanon and its intent on ensuring its stability.

Military clashes between Israeli occupation and resistance in southern Lebanon have been ongoing since October 7.

Meanwhile, Iranian Ambassador to Kuwait Mohammad Totonji has strongly condemned recent escalations and actions by Israel, attributing the region's tensions to what he calls the "usurping occupying entity" with support from the US government, reports Al-Qabas daily.

In an interview with Al-Qabas daily, Totonji emphasized that Iran is not responsible for regional tensions, which he believes are primarily caused by Israeli actions and US support.

Totonji assured that Iran's response to Israeli actions would be "decisive and firm," stressing that Iran would act at an appropriate time and place. He indicated that this response aims to restore stability in the region.

The ambassador criticized the US and some European countries for their support of Israel, which he claims undermines peace efforts and exacerbates the situation. He accused these

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KUNA photo

Minister of Health Dr. Ahmad Al-Awadhi and Undersecretary of Defense Sheikh Dr. Abdullah Mishal Al-Sabah discuss efforts of digital transformation and mechanization of medical services at the Military Hospital.

MoH, Defense join forces to digitize army health sector

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 13, (KUNA): Minister of Health Dr. Ahmad Al-Awadhi met with Undersecretary of the Ministry of Defense Sheikh Dr. Abdullah Mishal Al-Sabah and Head of the Medical Services Authority Major General Dr. Walid Malallah on Tuesday to discuss the importance of exchanging expertise and continuing efforts to achieve digital transformation and the mechanization of medical services.

This meeting was held during Minister Al-Awadhi's visit to Jaber Al-Ahmad Armed Forces Hospital to review the progress of digital transformation and mechanization efforts at the military hospital. Minister Al-Awadhi received a detailed explanation and presentation on

the achievements in digital transformation at the Medical Services Authority, including a comprehensive overview of the challenges faced by the work teams and strategies to overcome them, as well as the progress made so far.

The visit also included presentations on the most significant technological solutions implemented to improve the quality of medical services and streamline administrative and medical procedures.

This visit is part of the ongoing cooperation between the Ministries of Defense and Health to support and enhance the military health sector. A number of officers from the Medical Services Authority also attended the meeting.

Prayer Timings

Fajr 03:49 Asr 15:28
Sunrise .. 05:15 Maghrib .. 18:31
Zohr 11:53 Isha 19:54

Local

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

Weather

Expected weather for next 24 hrs:

By Day: Very hot with light to moderate northwesterly wind to light variable wind, with speeds of 08-30 km/h.

By Night: Hot to rather hot and

relatively humid over coastal areas with light variable wind to light to moderate northwesterly wind, with speeds of 08-28 km/h.

Station **Max Exp** **Min Rec**
Kuwait City 49 36

Kuwait Airport 49 32
Abdaly 49 29
Jahra 50 37
Salmiyah 44 35
Jal Aljyah 49 32
Nuwaisib 47 33
Wafra 49 30

Condolences

Foreign Ministry mourns demise of Sheikh Salem Al-Ali Al-Sabah

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 13, (Agencies): Minister of Foreign Affairs Abdullah Al-Yahya, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Ambassador Sheikh Jarrah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah and the Foreign Ministry staff expressed grief and mourned the demise of the head of Kuwait National Guard, His Highness Sheikh Salem Al-Ali Al-Sabah.

They also extended their condolences to His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah and all Al-Sabah family on the tragic occasion.



Al-Yahya

Judicial Council

The President of the Supreme Judicial Council Dr. Adel Bouresli along with all members in the Judicial branch expressed grief and mourned the demise of the head of Kuwait National Guard, His Highness Sheikh Salem Al-Ali Al-Sabah.

In a statement, Bouresli extended his sentiment to His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad, His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah, and to all Al-Sabah family on the tragic occasion.

Information Minister

Minister of Culture and Information Abdulrahman Al-Mutairi mourned on Monday His Highness Sheikh Salem Al-Ali, chief of the Kuwait National Guard.

Minister Al-Mutairi expressed, through his account on social media platform (X), his sincere sympathies with His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled, and the entire Al-Sabah family over the passing of His Highness Sheikh Salem Al-Ali Al-Sabah.

He prayed to God Almighty to cover the deceased with the abundance of His mercy, and grant his family with patience and solace.

Education Minister

Minister of Education and Higher Education and Scientific Research Dr. Adel Al-Adwani has extended, on Monday, heartfelt condolences to the political leadership of Kuwait on the passing away of His Highness Sheikh Salem Al-Ali.

In a statement, Ministry of Education conveyed Al-Adwani prayers for Sheikh Salem Al-Ali Al-Sabah and his sincere sympathies with His Highness the Amir, Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled, and the entire Al-Sabah family.

Minister Al-Adwani extended his condolences to His Highness Premier Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah.

Al-Adwani prayed to Allah Almighty to cover the deceased with the abundance of His mercy and to dwell him in paradise, and grant his family with patience and solace.

Governors

Kuwait's Governors expressed on Monday their sincere

condolences to the country's political leadership on the demise of President of the National Guard, His Highness Sheikh Salem Al-Ali.

Al-Ahmad Governor Sheikh Hmoud Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, Mubarak Al-Kabeer Governor Sheikh Bader Sabah Al-Salem, Al-Farwaniya Governor Sheikh Athby Nasser Al-Sabah, Hawally Governor Ali Al-Asfar and Al-Jahra Governor Hamad Al-Hebeshi, all expressed in different statements, their deep condolences to Al-Sabah family on the tragic occasion, praying to Allah Almighty to have mercy on his soul, inspire his family with patience and solace.

Arab Parliament Speaker

Arab Parliament Speaker, Adel Al-Asoumi mourned on Monday the demise of the head of Kuwait National Guard, His Highness Sheikh Salem Al-Ali.

In a statement on Monday, Al-Asoumi offered his deepest condolences to His Highness Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled, Al-Sabah's family, and the people of Kuwait on the passing of Sheikh Salem Al-Ali.



Al-Asoumi

Turkish Ambassador Tuba Nu Sönmez

"I would like to offer my deepest condolences on the passing of His Highness Sheikh Salem Al-Ali Al-Sabah, Chief of the Kuwait National Guard (KNG). He was an exemplary statesman and a prominent figure in the Kuwait ruling family. Under his supervision, which spanned decades, the KNG has become a modern and sophisticated force. His contributions to Turkish-Kuwait relations were profound. The institutional cooperation between the Turkish Gendarmerie and the KNG have flourished under his rule. I pray for Allah Almighty's blessings upon him."

Archbishop Eugene Nugent

Archbishop Eugene Martin Nugent, Apostolic Nuncio (Ambassador of the Holy See) in Kuwait, said "It is with deep sorrow that I received the news of the demise of His Highness Sheikh Salem Al-Ali Al-Sabah and the people of Kuwait."

"I express my prayerful condolences as well as those of the Catholic Church to the Al-Sabah family and to the people of Kuwait."

"We share in the grief of the nation at the passing of this man of vision who worked tirelessly to promote peace and prosperity in this beautiful land. May Almighty God grant rest to his soul and comfort his family."

Qatari Amir

His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah and Al-Sabah family received on Tuesday representative of Qatari Amir Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani, Chief of Olympic committee Joao bin Hamad Al-Thani and accompanying delegation.

The Qatari delegation came to offer condolences on demise of chief of Kuwait National Guard Salem Al-Ali Al-Sabah.

'MoCI allocates KD 181m in food, construction support'

Today exports reach around KD 149m in 1H of '24

By Marwa Al-Bahrawi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 13: In the first half of the year, the Ministry of Commerce and Industry allocated a substantial 181 million Kuwaiti dinars in support for essential food and construction supplies. This support was divided into key categories such as basic materials 67 million dinars, which made up 37% of the total support.

This is in addition to the milk and baby food which accounted for 6.927 million dinars, representing 3.8% of the support and construction materials in the amount of 107 million dinars, constituting 59% of the total support.

In June alone, the ministry dedicated 34 million dinars to food support. Out of this, approximately 16 million dinars (46%) were directed towards basic materials through ration cards.

This represented a slight 1% decrease from May. Support for milk and baby food reached about 2 million dinars, accounting for 5% of the monthly support, and reflecting a significant 53% increase from the previous month. Construction materials received around 16 million dinars in June, making up 49% of the total monthly support and showing a 2% increase compared to May.

During the first half of the year, the ministry recorded substantial trademark-related activities – trademark filings accounted for about 18,000 transactions; renewals 3,300 transactions, trademark visas approximately 2,500 issued; objections 207 transactions, publishing 5,500 transactions,

agent registry 7 transactions, grievances 59 transactions.

In June, there was a notable decrease in trademark-related activities. The ministry recorded 2,728 trademark filing transactions, a 13% decline from May's 3,137 transactions. Renewals also fell to 398. Other June statistics include trademark visas 405 transactions, objection transactions 26, marking a 42% decrease from May; publishing transactions dropped to 750, a 42% decrease from May; trademark extraction transactions decreased to 30, down from 41 in May.

Total Kuwaiti exports for the first half of the year reached approximately 149 million dinars. The breakdown is as follows:

- Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) Countries: 97 million dinars, representing 65% of the total.
 - Arab Countries: 45 million dinars.
 - European Countries: 4.8 million dinars.
 - African Countries: 600 thousand dinars.
 - Asian and Australian Countries: 222 thousand dinars.
 - American Continents: 428 thousand dinars.
- In June 2024, total Kuwaiti exports amounted to about 22 million dinars, with the following distribution:
- GCC Countries: 12 million dinars, reflecting a 21% decrease from May.
 - Arab Countries: 9 million dinars, showing a 25% increase from May.
 - European Countries: 515 thousand dinars, down 53% from May.
 - African Countries: 116 thousand dinars.
 - Asian and Australian Countries: 1 thousand dinars.
 - American Continents: 77 thousand dinars, a 45% decrease from May.

Overall, June saw an 8% decrease in the total value of exports compared to the previous month, highlighting a shift in trade patterns and economic dynamics.

360 Mall clinics serve approx 100 patients weekly

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 13: Assistant Undersecretary for Auxiliary Health Services Affairs, Dr. Abdullah Al-Fars, emphasized the importance of taking prescribed medications and treatments regularly, particularly for individuals suffering from chronic diseases such as diabetes, high blood pressure, and heart dis-

ease, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

He said this during the inspection of the clinics and the first aid point at the 360 Mall. Dr. Al-Fars also advised the public to maintain a healthy diet, drink adequate amounts of water, and seek immediate medical attention at the clinic if any symptoms of illness occur.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ
يَا أَيُّهَا النَّفْسُ الْمَطْمَئِنَّةُ اجْعَلِي بَرًّا لِرَبِّكِ وَرَافِقًا رَحِيمًا
وَأَنْتِ الْوَالِدَةُ الْوَالِدِينَ
صَدَقَ اللَّهُ الْعَظِيمُ

مشاركة عزاء

تتقدم شركة الاتصالات الكويتية (stc)

ممثلة بمجلس إدارتها وإدارتها التنفيذية وكافة موظفيها إلى

حضرة صاحب السمو أمير البلاد

الشيخ مشعل الأحمد الجابر الصباح حفظه الله ورعاه

وسمو ولي عهده الأمين

الشيخ صباح خالد الحمد الصباح حفظه الله

وسمو رئيس مجلس الوزراء

الشيخ أحمد عبدالله الأحمد الصباح

وأ أسرة آل الصباح الكرام

بأحر التعازي وخالص المواساة بوفاة المغفور له بإذن الله تعالى

سمو الشيخ سالم العلي السالم المبارك الصباح

عميد أسرة آل الصباح الكرام

سائلين المولى عز وجل أن يتغمد الفقيد بواسع رحمته ويسكنه فسيح جناته

إِنَّا لِلَّهِ وَإِنَّا إِلَيْهِ رَاجِعُونَ

stc

'Investing in human capital is a key development strategy'

"AMID the escalating regional events, many countries in the Middle East are experiencing significant shifts in their key development indicators, including economic, political, and social metrics," columnist Dr. Ghadir Mohammed Asiri wrote for Al-Qabas daily.

"These changes highlight crucial stages for many nations, such as awareness, preparedness, and vigilance in responding to surrounding circumstances and rapid developments. In this context, the region faces challenges in maintaining security, economic stability, and currency exchange rates.



Dr. Ghadir Asiri

"This is not the first time Kuwait has been part of such a complex regional landscape. However, the wisdom of the Kuwaiti leadership, particularly the Amir and Crown Prince, has enabled the country to navigate through global and regional challenges successfully, thanks to their prudent foreign policy.

"Kuwait is distinguished by its ability to manage political priorities skillfully. The greatest challenge lies in balancing the realities of the region's evolving dynamics -- such as fluctuating global oil prices, which are the primary resource for Kuwait's general budget -- with the need to keep pace with accelerating indicators that drive development for its citizens and the nation.

"Kuwait is witnessing rapid changes in its economic development indicators, including gross domestic product (GDP), economic growth rate, annual per capita income growth, the balance between unemployment and inflation rates, and foreign direct investment (FDI) inflows.

"These shifts are impacting economic freedom in the country. Recent efforts to diversify income sources, improve the climate for foreign investment, and focus on sectors that complement the oil industry -- such as gas and domestic tourism -- are critical.

"Developing attractive local investment projects, identifying potential tourism sites, and learning from the positive experiences of other countries can all contribute to increasing Kuwait's income and resources.

"In developed countries, development is often driven by sub-sectors that are vital to the national economy, such as the real estate sector. Kuwait can revitalize its real estate market with laws that encourage citizen investment, thus advancing the public interest and stimulating real estate activity.

"Providing positive financing options for citizens to purchase real estate, whether residential or investment properties, and developing model areas that align with global standards can address modern tourism and living needs.

"Additionally, enhancing financing across various sectors will empower citizens to buy property. Another important sub-sector is tourism, where Kuwait can draw inspiration from the successful experiences of neighboring countries with similar climates and wealth.

"Introducing new economic sectors, such as railways and tourist areas, could significantly contribute to the general budget and drive rapid economic growth.

"A key development strategy in successful countries is investing in human capital through education and development. By educating its citizens and fostering advanced, modern minds, Kuwait can align with global policies and create a cadre of rational citizens who hold legitimate degrees from prestigious international universities.

"These individuals can assume senior positions and develop modern policies that keep pace with global trends, fostering political and societal sustainability in Kuwait. Real positive change can be achieved by young, ambitious minds that are open to technology and the modern world."

Also:

"It seems that the government is currently focused on reducing the population numbers, both among Kuwaitis and non-Kuwaitis. This is being pursued through measures such as withdrawal, deportation, and plans to terminate the services of expatriate employees," columnist Abdul Latif Al-Duqij wrote for Al-Jarida daily.

"We support these actions as long as they are carried out within a legitimate and legal framework, respecting the rights of those affected and treating them with fairness and humanity, without resorting to arbitrary or oppressive practices.

"However, as mentioned earlier, the government's approach appears to be somewhat spontaneous, lacking a clear plan or overarching policy. It is unclear whether these measures are temporary or part of a long-term strategy. Reducing the number of incoming expatriates, in particular, should be a coordinated effort involving both the government and the general public.

"The expatriates, who currently make up three-quarters of Kuwait's population, consume a significant portion of the state's subsidies for fuel, water, electricity, roads, and even healthcare -- often without contributing meaningfully to development or national income. In fact, many of these workers, especially those in low-income jobs, may hinder development and degrade the environment without providing much benefit.

"As I have written before, reducing the number of workers should be linked to the adoption of advanced technology, modern systems, and the automation of services, especially those provided by the state.

"It is no longer acceptable for the municipality to rely on a large workforce to clean streets or collect garbage when these tasks could be handled by modern automated systems operated by unemployed Kuwaitis.

"For example, some cities in the western United States, such as Los Angeles, Phoenix, and San Francisco, have already implemented automated taxi services. With a simple request, a taxi arrives to transport passengers safely and efficiently.

"This is just one example, but there are undoubtedly many services currently performed by low-income or even technical workers that could be modernized and automated. We, in Kuwait, have an even greater need to implement such services than these American cities."

"We often hear that the government does not function effectively, and when it does, it commits many violations. There are also delays due to a lack of accountability. It seems as if Kuwait can only advance or make progress with the presence of the National Assembly," columnist Sheikh Ali Al-Jaber Al-Ahmad wrote for Al-Seyassah daily.

"Our country is similar to our GCC neighbors who have advanced and progressed without a parliament. However, accountability is maintained through oversight bodies such as the State Audit Bureau, the Ministry of Finance, the Fatwa and Legislation Department, and most importantly, the Amir of Firmness and Determination (May God protect and preserve him).

"In the near future, we may either witness the government's success, as seen with previous successful expectations, or face frustration and failure, God forbid. The outcome is now in the government's hands and its team, whose progress we will observe with anticipation, hoping for a successful resolution, God willing.

"The government's decision to activate the fingerprint system three times a day is a wise decision, reflecting its concerns about some employees who, after fingerprinting, return to their previous activities -- a fact we highlighted in our article titled "Wages without Work," dated 9/12/2021. We received an unjustified backlash from some individuals, while others defended the truth of the situation, for which we are grateful.

"Those who truly care about their country must serve it through actions, not just words. Actions include adhering to required working hours and fulfilling responsibilities with integrity. You get what you give, so be honest in your role and the responsibility you carry on your shoulders to please your Lord, and analyze what you receive at the end of each month.

"In conclusion, after 89 consecutive weekly articles in the local press, I extend my heartfelt thanks to everyone who followed, praised, commented on, and constructively criticized the various opinions and ideas presented.

"Whoever publishes must accept both praise and criticism. These differing viewpoints are part of our personal efforts. None of us are infallible.

"I also express my gratitude to the press outlets Al-Seyassah, Al-Sabah and Al-Nahar for their commitment to publishing my articles every Sunday in the same column throughout this period.

Only God knows whether it will return or not.

Excuse me for quoting Al-Mutanabbi in this context:

"A dog died in the wilderness, so we were relieved from its barking.

The cursed one gave birth to a puppy that barked more than its father."

May God protect Kuwait and its people from all evil and harm."

— Compiled by PFX Fernandes and Mahmoud Ateyieh



Head of Military Judiciary Authority, Major General Awad Salem receives the Director of Legal Affairs in the Qatari Armed Forces and the accompanying delegation during the discussion.

Kuwait and Qatar explore joint military judicial efforts

Major General Awad Salem, Head of the Military Judiciary Authority, engaged in discussions with Colonel Abdullah Al-Fadala, Director of Legal Affairs of the Qatari Armed Forces, focusing on joint cooperation be-

tween the two nations' military judicial systems.

According to a statement from the Ministry of Defense, Major General Salem welcomed Colonel Al-Fadala and his accompanying del-

egation at his office on Tuesday. The meeting provided an opportunity for both parties to exchange cordial remarks and explore avenues for collaboration and the sharing of expertise. (KUNA)

5-yr jail for impersonating royal, swindling woman of KD 143,000

Securitymen nab 45 residency law violators, wanted expats

By Jaber Al-Hamoud

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff and Agencies

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 13: The Criminal Court on Monday sentenced a Kuwaiti citizen to five-year imprisonment for impersonating a ruling family member on Instagram and usurping KD 63,000 and then KD 80,000 from a Kuwaiti woman after deceiving her with promises of marriage and commercial projects.

The Public Prosecution charged him with deceiving the victim with the intent to mislead her into handing over money. He impersonated a ruling family member, deceived her with a fake marriage proposal, and fabricated a fictitious project.

He further deceived her by creating a fraudulent financial portfolio linked to a prominent figure in the country. This manipulation led her to borrow money from a bank to fund the supposed project.

The security services arrested him after discovering his trend of impersonating a ruling family member and defrauding women.

He was referred to the Central Prison on charges of fraud and deception of women by deceiving them with fictitious projects and marriage proposals.

Two people assaulted: A Gulf national, born in 1993 and residing in Al-Qasr, filed a complaint at Al-Qasr Police Station against an unknown person who allegedly assaulted him, reports Al-Anba daily.

The complainant submitted a medical report to support his claim, indicating he suffered from an eight-centimeter cut on his left palm. He told police that he had an argument with the suspect about priority on the road.

A misdemeanor case was registered and investigations are ongoing to arrest the suspect.

On the other hand, a felony case was registered at Jahra Police Station after a citizen, born in 1991, submitted a medical report stating he got a fracture on the right hand when a young man residing illegally in the country used some tools inside a popular market in Jahra to attack him.

Investigations are underway to establish the circumstances leading to the incident.

Also, two expatriates were detained at Jleeb Al-Shuyoukh Police for engaging in a fistfight after their vehicles collided.

A security source revealed the Operations Unit of the Interior Ministry received a report about the fistfight. Security officers were dispatched to the location and they discovered that the fight happened after the two-vehicle collision.

Brig-Gen Shehab gets new post: In a significant organizational shift, Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Defense, and Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahd Al-Yousef has issued a ministerial decision to elevate the Police Aviation Wing to the General Administration, reports Al-Jarida daily.

As part of this restructuring, Brigadier General Pilot Salem Shehab has been appointed as the Director-General of the newly-established General Administration of the Police Aviation Wing.

Additionally, the decision stipulates that the General Administration of the Police Aviation Wing will be transferred from the Central General Administration of Operations to the jurisdiction of the Assistant Undersecretary of the Ministry of Interior for Operations Affairs.

This move is aimed at streamlining operations and enhancing the effectiveness of police aviation services within the ministry.

45 expats held for violating laws: Officers from the Residency and Nationality Affairs Sector in the Interior Ministry recently carried out a security campaign in Shuwaikh Industrial Area and Farwaniya; leading to the arrest of 45 persons of various nationalities -- some of them violated the Residency Law, while others are wanted by the law for committing different crimes, reports Al-Anba daily.

All those arrested were referred to the Deportation Department in preparation for their deportation and to prevent them from entering the country again. On the other hand, Jahra security officers arrested a person in possession of locally made alcohol bottles in Jahra at dawn recently.

A security source disclosed that while patrolling the area, the officers got suspicious when they noticed the erratic movement of a car; so they signaled for the driver to pull over for routine inspection. The driver appeared afraid and confused, prompting the officers to thoroughly search the car. The officers saw a bag containing bottles on the front seat. When they asked the driver about the contents of the bag, he admitted that there were bottles of locally made alcohol in the bag and that he was on his way to sell them.

Accordingly, the suspect and the confiscated alcohol bottles were referred to the competent authorities.



One of the securitymen inside a garage.

Inspections lead to 60 traffic violations

11 garages operating illegally in Jleeb cited

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 13: The Ministry of Interior reported that the General Traffic Department, in collaboration with the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, conducted an inspection campaign in the Jleeb Al-Shuyoukh area targeting garages and craftsmen's workshops, resulting in the issuance of 11 violations to garages operating without licenses from the Ministry of Commerce, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

Additionally, the inspection led to 60 traffic violations related to security, durability, and control conditions. Among those arrested, 19 were found to be violators of the residency law. They have been referred to the relevant authorities for legal action.

Several road accidents reported: Several road accidents in different parts of the country led to the death of one person and injuries to many others, reports Al-Anba daily.

A two-vehicle collision on Salmi Road

(Kilometer 5) resulted in injuries and fractures in different parts of the bodies of five young men, including two minors. The two vehicles were referred to Naseem Police Station.

A bus overturned on Subiya Road leading to the injury of seven expatriates -- two of whom are in critical condition.

A man born in 1994, who was driving a 2024 model van, was detained for running over two expatriates -- one was born in 2000 and the other in 1988 -- opposite a cooperative society in Jahra. The two expatriates sustained serious injuries and they are now confined at Jahra Hospital.

The Public Relations and Media Department of the Directorate-General of Fire Department (DGFD) said firemen responded to a traffic accident on the Abdali Road Saturday afternoon, which resulted in the death of one person, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The daily added, the concerned authorities are investigating the cause of the accident.



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Hands-on workshops drive students' tech excellence

KCST concludes summer camp in AI, digital skills development

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 13: The Kuwait College of Science and Technology (KCST) has concluded its summer camp, which was held under the title 'Skills Development in Digital Transformation and Artificial Intelligence', which ran from July 21 to August 1, reports Al-Jarida daily.

Supported by the Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sciences and in collaboration with the Sabah Al-Ahmad Center for Giftedness and Creativity, the camp attracted a large number of university students across Kuwait. This two-week program was designed to enhance both practical and theoretical skills in modern technology and innovation. It featured four specialized workshops, each lasting one week with five days of training and eight hours per day.

Dr. Basil Al-Othman led this workshop, focusing on skills to tackle digital security challenges. Dr. Abdul Latif Baba presented application of Machine Learning and Deep Learning in the Health Sector aimed at using technology to improve healthcare.

Dr. Muhammad Faisal Naji guided participants in applying theoretical Robotics and Human Interaction knowledge to practical projects. The final workshop, Building Smart Solutions was led by Dr. Murad Khan, involved



Workshop participants gather for a group photo as KCST concludes its summer camp.

Al-Jarida photo

developing Internet of Things applications using the Raspberry Pi platform.

The closing ceremony was attended by Dr. Shibli Jumaa, Dean of Student Affairs at the college, Dr. Laila Al-Moussawi from the Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sciences,

and Salem Al-Baz from the Sabah Al-Ahmad Center for Giftedness and Creativity, who honored the students for their participation.

Dr. Khaled Al-Baq'a'in, President of the Kuwait College of Science and Technology, emphasized the impor-

tance of these workshops in enhancing technical skills and supporting career development. He highlighted the college's commitment to aligning with the state's vision of advancing technology and innovation.

Al-Baz praised the effectiveness of the

workshops, noting their role in developing students' skills in critical areas such as cybersecurity, programming, and artificial intelligence. Dr. Basil Al-Othman, Director of the Cybersecurity Laboratory, commended the students for their engagement and improvement, indicat-

PUC introduces new law degree program

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 13: The General Secretariat of the Private Universities Council (PUC) has introduced a new Bachelor's degree program in Law as part of its internal scholarships plan for diploma holders, reports Al-Jarida daily.

Interested candidates must complete their registration manually at the Kuwait International College of Law by Tuesday, Aug 20.

Following the announcement of the final results for the internal scholarship plan for high school graduates, students who are admitted must visit the respective university or college to finalize their admission procedures.

ing that the workshops were successful in refining their skills.

Overall, the summer camp was celebrated as a significant step in preparing students for the evolving technological landscape and supporting their future careers in digital transformation.

25 warnings issued for committing construction sites safety violations

By Enas Awad

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 13: The General Controller of Safety Work Follow-up in the Mubarak Al-Kabeer Governorate Municipality, Engineer Barghash Al-Ajami, announced that the supervisory team in the governorate has recently conducted the first round of a campaign aimed at ensuring compliance with safety requirements at construction sites by building contractors.

In a press statement, Al-Ajami

reported that the team's field visits in the Abu Ftaira area resulted in the issuance of 25 warnings and notices due to violations of safety regulations. These infractions not only failed to meet the required safety standards but also posed a danger to passers-by.

Al-Ajami explained that when safety requirements are breached, the team issues an initial warning to the property owner, giving them 24 to 48 hours to address the issue. If the owner fails to comply, a violation report is filed, and work on the site is halted.

Union demands full diesel subsidy amid supply crisis

Fishermen warn of market disruptions without full support

By Abdul Nasser Al-Aslami

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 13: The Kuwait Fishermen's Union has renewed its call

to restore the subsidized diesel share to its previous level prior to the decision for a 50 percent reduction, which led to a significant drop in Kuwait's fish and shrimp share during the last fishing season.

The union affirmed the need for a prompt resolution, and wondered who benefits from the decline of local produce.

In a press statement issued today, the union explained that there is a fear among all fishermen that the current fishing season may be lost without achieving the desired goals due to the reduced diesel share. This reduction, which is insufficient for fishing trips and is only implemented around mid-month, leads to fishing vessels being halted as they wait for the new share at the beginning of each month. This causes congestion at the fuel stations in the Sharq and Fahaeel markets, as well as huge confusion, to the extent that some ships are late, which in turn affects the supply in the markets and eventually the prices.

The union appealed to the members of the Economic Committee in the Council of Ministers and the Ministry of Finance to meet the demands of the fishermen and restore the diesel share to the previous level, as well as increase the financial support for the fisheries sector, similar to other sectors affiliated with the Public Authority for Agricultural Affairs and Fish Resources (PAAAFR).

It stressed that all fishermen have placed great hopes in the Council of Ministers' Economic Committee to achieve this demand as quickly as possible in order to support the local marine product and offer it at appropriate prices in the markets, adding that all the catch of the Kuwait Fishermen's Union is for the local market to balance the prices of fish and shrimp.

The union highlighted the visit of the Minister of Commerce and Industry to the Sharq fish market during the auction session. He observed the progress of work on both shrimp and fish and noticed the market's lack of seasonal mullet fish.

It revealed that despite the launch of the mullet fishing season at the beginning of last month, pomfret fish are unavailable due

Consumer protection

MoCI enforces fish market regulations

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 13: The Ministry of Commerce and Industry has confirmed that inspection teams from the Commercial Control Department are conducting daily tours at the fish market auction in Souq Sharq, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

These inspections aim to regulate prices, safeguard consumers from violations, and ensure compliance with established standards and laws.

The Ministry explained that a daily report is prepared and submitted to management, detailing price levels and the country of origin of the fish.

Complaints received are thoroughly verified for validity and seriousness before any legal action is taken, with cases being referred to the Commercial Prosecution as needed.

to decision No. 787/2017, which specified places for fishing in areas outside Kuwait Bay where this type of fish is not found.

The union has sent many letters to relevant authorities, urging a reconsideration of the decision and the fishing locations, as mullet are rarely found in the permitted areas and are predominantly available in Kuwait Bay.

It indicated that mullet fish thrive in shallow, coastal waters and either migrate or die at the end of their natural life cycle if not caught.

The union stressed the need for a quick resolution, affirming its readiness to participate in discussions with authorities to address the issue.

It revealed that consumers frequently inquire about the absence of mullet in the market, and its complete disappearance.

The union expressed appreciation for the efforts exerted by all parties concerned with the fishing sector. It thanked the Council of Ministers' Economic Committee, the Fisheries Sector of PAAAFR, the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, the Coast Guard, and the Kuwaiti Naval Force.



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Governor Sheikh Ghazbi Al-Nasser receiving Ethiopian Ambassador Dr. Saeed Jibril.

Governor of Farwaniya Sheikh Ghazbi praises strong relations with Ethiopia

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 13: The Governor of Farwaniya and Acting Governor of the Capital, Sheikh Ghazbi Al-Nasser, welcomed the Ambassador of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia to Kuwait, Dr. Saeed Mohammed Jibril, at his office, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

During the meeting, Sheikh Ghazbi highlighted the deep and close bilateral relations and the ongoing cooperation between the two friendly countries.

The discussion focused on further strengthening joint relations across various fields, with the aim of expanding cooperation to broader horizons. Both parties expressed their commitment to enhancing ties at the economic, cultural, and civilizational levels, reflecting the strong partnership between Kuwait and Ethiopia.

Desert 'encroachment' cleanup drive kicks off

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 13: The Environment Public Authority has announced that a field campaign to remove encroachments in open desert areas in southern Kuwait saying the campaign will kick off on Wednesday, reports Al-Jarida daily.

This initiative follows a coordination meeting with the Kuwait Municipality, the Public Authority for Agriculture and Fisheries Affairs, the Ministry of Finance, and the Ministry of Interior.

The campaign aims to address and rectify illegal encroachments and ensure the preservation of Kuwait's desert environment.

LOCAL

Kuwait's Amir offers condolences to Ugandan Prez over landslide victims

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 13, (KUNA): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah extended his condolences, on Tuesday, to President of Uganda Yoweri Museveni following the tragic rubbish dump landslide. He expressed his wishes for a swift recovery for those injured.

Similarly, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah

Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah also sent a message of condolence to President Museveni, conveying his hopes for the quick recovery of the injured.

His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah sent his condolences to President Museveni on the same day, mourning the victims of the landslide.

Sheikh Fahad

Continued from Page 1

They are assisted by professionals of their own nationality, who act as their support network. The crimes uncovered in recent years have revealed new methods of evasion that the current legal framework has not yet addressed.

Sabotaging an economy and driving institutions to collapse often involves exploitation of legal loopholes for malicious purposes. Many money launderers, acting under the direction of certain intelligence agencies, engage in these activities to sabotage the economies of stable countries and achieve the malicious goals of terrorist groups.

Therefore, we appreciate the efforts exerted by the First Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Defense, and Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousef in this regard for protecting Kuwait's national security. This requires quickly arresting criminals and bringing them to trial, and recovering the money they have looted. Also, the law must be amended to eradicate all loopholes that can hinder this great effort.

Real estate

Continued from Page 1

This involves transitioning from paper to digital contracts for all types of agreements – sales, rentals, and assignments. By doing so, the aim is to prevent individual fraud cases from escalating into widespread, difficult-to-control phenomena and ensure that affected parties can seek recourse through the judiciary.

The owner of Al-Sagheer Real Estate Company Mohammed Al-Sagheer highlighted a recent rise in fraud cases on social media involving rental, sale, and purchase transactions.

He also highlighted many cases of fraud related to renting chalets in Khairan, something that the Ministry of Interior had been warning about but some individuals continue to fall victim, despite these warnings.

Al-Sagheer indicated that this issue may stem from fraudsters exploiting data of actual chalets on social media, promoting it through fake companies, and artificially inflating their credibility with a large number of likes and followers to deceive potential victims about the safety and reliability of the company.

He said, "We have also observed recent fraud cases involving apartment rentals in investment buildings, where advertisements offer distinctive apartments at less than 50 percent of their actual value. This tactic prompts individuals to rush and pay a deposit via an electronic link to secure the apartment, fearing they might miss out. After receiving the payment, the fraudsters close their phone lines and disappear."

Additionally, some scammers persuade victims to rent apartments for six months in advance, using real photos of the apartments taken from legitimate broker websites in order to convince them of the opportunity's authenticity. Unfortunately, due to a lack of awareness about modern fraud techniques, some people end up losing hundreds of dinars."

Al-Sagheer affirmed the importance of community awareness regarding modern fraud methods.

He said, "While real estate fraud is challenging in buying and selling transactions in Kuwait, it is more prevalent in rental situations. This is due to the differences in the targeted demographics. Younger individuals, who are often less experienced in real estate matters, are more likely to fall victim to rental fraud compared to those involved in buying and selling, who generally have greater real estate knowledge."

Female heirs are particularly vulner-

able to real estate fraud. If we refer to fraud cases in exhibitions and chalets in Sabah Al-Ahmad area, we will find that over 90 percent of those affected were female heirs. This is because women often hesitate to seek advice or do not fully understand their financial situations, leading them to invest in under-construction apartments. They may end up paying multiple installments only to discover, too late, that they have been scammed and have lost tens of thousands of dinars."

The General Manager of Al-Jun Real Estate Company Ahmed Bou Abbas affirmed that increasing penalties and regulating the activities of real estate brokers and intruders in the profession, as well as implementing unified electronic contracts for all sales, purchase, and rental transactions are essential measures to combat real estate fraud.

Bou Abbas reiterated that home licenses contribute greatly to the proliferation of itinerant brokers and intruders in the profession, thereby exacerbating fraud and harming the Kuwaiti real estate market.

He called for a reassessment of real estate brokerage activities, suggesting that they should be categorized as private-sector activities.

Bou Abbas stressed the need to prioritize the interests of all parties involved – sellers, buyers, and citizens – before the integrity of real estate as a safe haven for investors' money is compromised.

Fake degree

Continued from Page 1

Dr. Al-Adwani has urged relevant departments to ensure the accuracy of medical certificate data provided by employees, enforce administrative systems and regulations, impose oversight and control over work procedures, and apply the highest standards of transparency and accountability across all sectors. This is to ensure the preservation of work quality and productivity within the ministry and to detect any violations or irregularities in work systems and regulations.

In the same context, the Acting Undersecretary of the Ministry of Social Affairs reported that the Committee for Reviewing Educational Certificates for Ministry employees has completed its mission. The committee examined and audited the academic qualifications of 3,019 out of 3,053 employees holding post-secondary qualifications without recording any observations. The remaining 34 employees are currently being addressed by the Civil Service Bureau to determine their legal status.

This action is part of the implementation of the Council of Ministers' decision to review all university certificates for citizens and residents working in the government sector, specifically those holding post-secondary academic qualifications since the year 2000.

The Certification Review Committee completed its work eight months after its formation, following multiple stages, frameworks, and legal foundations to ensure the validity of qualifications.

Al-Ajmi emphasized the importance of combating the phenomenon of fake and forged certificates and confronting corruption to preserve public funds and protect the rights of employees.

KRCS eyes

Continued from Page 1

He further emphasized that proactive disaster risk preparation empowers individuals and communities to take necessary measures, enabling them to respond swiftly and effectively, thereby mitigating the impact of such events.

MoH mandates '24-hour' reporting requirement for infectious diseases

Ministry to assess contacts

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 13: In line with the country's commitment to prevent and treat communicable diseases in

order to protect public health, the Ministry of Health issued a circular on the mandatory reporting of people with communicable diseases or suspected of having such diseases to the assistant undersecretaries, and directors of health districts, hospitals, health centers, central departments and medical bodies, reports Al-Rai daily.

The circular is based on Article Two of Law No. 8/1969 on health precautions to prevent communicable diseases, stating "if a person is infected or suspected of being infected with a communicable disease, his condition must be reported to the nearest preventive health center within 24 hours."

Article Three of the same law stipulates that the first person responsible for the reporting referred to in the previous article is the doctor who examined the patient.

Accordingly, the circular obligates "all treating physicians in hospitals, health centers and private health facilities to report cases of hepatitis B or C, acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS) and other reportable diseases on an infectious disease report form and then send the form to the nearest preventive health center to avoid legal responsibility."

The circular also obligates "all virus laboratories to email a weekly report on laboratory-discovered cases of hepatitis B and C to CDCoffice@moh.gov.kw, while the report on laboratory-discovered AIDS cases should be emailed to au.pha@moh.gov.kw."

In accordance with the previous circular and Law No. 8/1969, the following are responsible for reporting those infected or suspected of being infected with communicable diseases:

1. The physician who examined the patient;
2. Adult relatives of the patient who are residing with him or who have contacted him while he was sick, and their order of responsibility for reporting shall be according to the degree of kinship;
3. The person who resides with the patient, regardless of their relationship;
4. The owner or manager of a hotel, restaurant or factory; and the school principal or supervisor of a boarding house or accommodation if the infection was uncovered in any of these places or any other public place of this kind.

Certain precautionary mea-



KUNA photo

Kuwait's female athletes in Paris 2024 Olympics.

'Our will is strong'

Kuwaiti female athletes ... tale of persistence in Paris '24 Olympics

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 13, (KUNA): The Kuwaiti participation in the Paris 2024 Olympics highlighted the promising potential of Kuwaiti women's sports on the international stage.

This historic involvement showcased the progress of Kuwaiti female athletes, signaling a future of accumulating experience and determination that could lead to significant achievements in regional and global arenas.

Kuwait was represented by four female athletes in the 33rd Olympics held from July 26 to August 11, 2024, competing in athletics, rowing, sailing, and swimming under the slogan "Our Will is Strong." Each athlete demonstrated perseverance and determination in a competitive field.

Following their participation, Kuwait News Agency (KUNA) had a sit down on Tuesday with the four proud women representatives for each to give her experience throughout their thrilling campaigns in the Olympics.

Amina Shah, a first-time Olympic participant, said that she gained valuable experience and is committed to continuous training for future international events. In the women's individual (ILCA 6) race, she achieved her best result by finishing 30th out of 43 competitors, marking the top ranking among Arab participants.

Amal Al-Roumi, on the other

hand, pointed that she began her career in 2017 as she expressed pride in being the first Kuwaiti woman to compete in the 800-meter race at the Olympics. She has plans to train for upcoming championships, including the 2024 Asian Games in Thailand and the Islamic Solidarity Games in Riyadh in 2025.

Lara Dashti expressed passion about the sport since early childhood, when she started her journey at the age of 10. Her dedication led her to a fifth-place finish in the women's 100-meter breaststroke.

Lara qualified for her second Olympic appearance after Tokyo 2021, and she aspires for participating in future competitions like the Asian Championships and the World Aquatics Championships.

Suad Al-Faqaan, a professor in the Biological Sciences Department at Kuwait University (KU), and is the first Kuwaiti woman to compete in rowing, said that she started her journey in 2020 and has been supported by her students and faculty at KU.

Her commitment garnered significant media attention and resulted in a personal record at the Olympics.

The Kuwaiti delegation, including female athletes Lara Dashti, Amina Shah, Amal Al-Roumi, and Suad Al-Faqaan, alongside their male counterparts attended the Paris 2024 Olympics closing ceremony on Sunday.

Other measures include the ministry invoking its right to take samples from the contacts of patients with contagious diseases. These samples will be analyzed in the laboratory to determine if the contacts are infected or not.

The health minister could also issue a decision on compulsory vaccination to protect newborns, a specific category of the population or the entire population from any contagious disease; in accordance with the regulations on protecting public health. The decision, dates and procedures to be followed in these cases shall be specified.

Situation in

Continued from Page 1

countries of failing to condemn Israeli actions and continuing to support Israel's policies.

Iran, according to Totonji, is committed to curbing regional tensions and restoring stability. He highlighted Iran's efforts to stop the war machine and promote security in the region, emphasizing the importance of Islamic solidarity and coordination.

He criticized the UN Security Council for its inability to address the situation effectively, citing the influence of certain powers, including the US, as a reason for the Council's inaction.

The Iranian ambassador reaffirmed Iran's right to defend itself and respond to aggression within the framework of international law. He called for the international community to stop supporting Israeli aggression and to apply international law impartially.

Totonji demanded an end to Israeli aggression in Palestine and urged the US to cease its support for Israel, while at the same time calling for fair and impartial application of international law.

Iran rejected a call Tuesday by three European countries urging it to refrain from any retaliatory attacks that would further escalate regional tensions. Iran calls it an "excessive request."

The leaders of Britain, France and Germany in a joint statement Monday asked Iran and its allies to refrain from retaliation for the killing of Hamas political leader Ismail Haniyeh in Tehran last month. Iran has blamed Israel.

The European leaders also endorsed the latest push by mediators Qatar, Egypt and the United States to broker an agreement to end the Israel-Hamas war. Talks are expected to resume Thursday. And they called for the return of scores of hostages held by Hamas and the "unfettered" delivery of humanitarian aid to Gaza.

MoH begins school 'pest' control drive

By Marwa Al-Bahrawi Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 13: The Ministry of Health has launched a campaign to rid Kuwaiti schools of rodents and insects in preparation for the upcoming school year.

Dr. Fatima Al-Darwish, Head of the Medical Insect and Rodent Control Department, announced that the initiative targets 985 schools across the country. So far, pest control operations have been successfully completed in 283 schools.

This campaign spans all governorates of Kuwait, with 62 schools in Farwaniya Governorate, 41 schools in Ahmadi Governorate, 52 schools in Jahra Governorate, 71 schools in the Capital Governorate, and 57 schools in Hawalli Governorate already receiving treatment.

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World News Roundup

Europe

Crews battle fires

Russia intensifies attacks in Ukraine

KYIV, Ukraine, Aug 13, (AP) — The Russian army is intensifying its attacks in eastern Ukraine, military authorities said Tuesday, even as the Kremlin's forces try to check a stunning weeklong incursion into Russia by Kyiv's troops.

Ukraine's General Staff said Tuesday that over the previous 24 hours Russian troops launched 52 assaults in the area of Pokrovsk, a town in Ukraine's Donetsk region that is close to the front line. That's roughly double the number of daily attacks there a week ago.

Ukraine's sensational charge onto Russian soil that began Aug. 6 has already encompassed some 1,000 square kilometers (386 square miles) of Russian territory, the Ukrainian military claims.



Putin

The goals of the swift advance into the Kursk region are a closely-guarded military secret.

But analysts say a catalyst may have been Ukraine's desire to ease pressure on its front line by attempting to draw the Kremlin's forces into defending Kursk and other border areas. If so, the increased pressure around Pokrovsk suggests Moscow didn't take the bait.

Still, Ukraine's cross-border operation - the largest attack on Russia since World War II - has rattled the Kremlin. It compelled Russian President **Vladimir Putin** to convene a meeting on Monday with his top defense officials.

Apparently, Ukraine assembled thousands of troops - some Western analysts reckon as many as 10,000 to 12,000 - on the border in recent weeks without Russia noticing or doing anything about it.

Evacuated

About 121,000 people have been evacuated from Kursk or have fled the areas affected by fighting on their own, Russian officials say. The Institute for the Study of War, a Washington-based think tank, said it has seen geolocated footage indicating that Ukrainian forces advanced as much as 24 kilometers (15 miles) from the border.

The Russian Defense Ministry appeared to support that claim when it said Tuesday it had blocked an attack by the units of the 82nd Air Assault Brigade of the Ukrainian armed forces towards Maryinka, which is about that distance from Ukraine.

Russian state television on Tuesday showed residents from evacuated areas queuing in buildings and on the street to receive food and water.

Volunteers were pictured distributing bags of aid, while officials from the country's Ministry of Emergency Situations helped people, including children and the elderly, off buses.

"There is no light, no connection, no water. There is nothing. It's as if everyone has flown to another planet, and you are left alone. And the birds stopped singing," an elderly man called Mikhail told Russian state television. "Helicopters and planes fly over the yard and shells were flying. What could we do? We left everything behind."

A motive behind Ukraine's bold dive into Russia was to stir up unrest, according to Putin, but he said that effort would fail. The successful border breach also was surprising because Ukraine has been short of manpower at the front as it waits for new brigades to complete training.

Dara Massicot, an analyst at the Carnegie Endowment, said the Ukrainian breakthrough was a smart move because it exploited gaps between various Russian commands in Kursk: border guards, Ministry of Defense forces and Chechen units that have been fighting on Russia's side in the war.

Also:

LONDON: A man accused of stabbing an 11-year-old girl in London's bustling theater district was charged Tuesday with attempted murder.

Ioan Pintaru put the girl in a headlock and stabbed her eight times, seriously wounding her, prosecutors said.

The girl was hospitalized and required plastic surgery for wounds to her face, shoulder, wrist and neck area, prosecutor **David Burns** said.

Authorities haven't offered a motive for the attack, but police said that there was no suggestion the stabbing was terror-related and they don't believe the suspect knew the mother or daughter.

The attack happened around 11:30 a.m. on Monday in Leicester Square, a tourism hot spot, outside a shop selling tea.

An employee of the tea shop and other bystanders jumped on the suspect and held him to the ground until police arrived. A steak knife was recovered.

"Fortunately members of the public intervened, which prevented any further injury being made to the child," Burns said.

The girl's mother wasn't wounded, though she initially appeared to be because she was covered in her daughter's blood, police said.

Pintaru, 32, a Romanian citizen, who also faces a knife charge, was held in custody. He was ordered to appear on Sept 10 at the Central Criminal Court known as the **Old Bailey**.

ATHENS, Greece: Firefighters in Greece battled scattered fires on Tuesday, hoping to contain the remains of a major wildfire that burned into the northern suburbs of Athens, triggering multiple evacuations and leaving at least one person dead.

With strong winds that had fanned the flames on Sunday and Monday dying down overnight, the fire department said the fire no longer had any active, advancing fronts and firefighters were concentrating their efforts on extinguishing the flames in hundreds of slow-burning areas. Reinforcements of water-dropping aircraft and firefighters were expected to arrive from other countries after Greece requested assistance from Europe's joint disaster response mechanism.

Authorities were racing to extinguish as much of the blaze as possible ahead of Tuesday afternoon, when winds were predicted to pick up again, with a forecast of gusts reaching up to 60-70 kilometers (37-43 miles) per hour.

Helicopters, planes and hundreds of firefighters and vehicles were arriving from France, Italy, the Czech Republic, Turkey, Serbia and Romania. Turkey's Agriculture and Forestry Minister **Ibrahim Yumakli** said two firefighting planes and one helicopter had taken off Tuesday morning headed to Greece.



US Democratic presidential nominee Vice President Kamala Harris speaks at a campaign rally on Aug 7, 2024, in Romulus, Mich. Harris is trying to outmaneuver former president Donald Trump and address old vulnerabilities on her policy positions as she starts to fill in how she would govern if elected in November. (AP)

Politics

Trump, Musk talk about assassination attempt on X

VP Harris cautiously rolls out policy

WASHINGTON, Aug 13, (AP) — US Vice President Kamala Harris is trying to outmaneuver former president Donald Trump and address old vulnerabilities on her policy positions as she starts to fill in how she would govern if elected in November.

Vice presidents rarely have policy portfolios of their own - and almost always set aside any views that differ from those of the Oval Office occupant. Now, after four years of following President Joe Biden's lead, Harris is taking a cautious approach to unveiling a policy vision in her own right.

But her surprise ascendance to the top of the ticket after Biden dropped his reelection bid also means her policy platform is being pulled together just as quickly.

When Harris inherited Biden's political operation in late July, the campaign's website was quietly scrubbed of the six-point "issues" page that framed the race against Trump, from expanding voting protections to restoring nationwide access to abortion. Instead, Harris has peppered her speeches - so far heavy on biography for herself and her running mate - with broad goals like "building up the middle class." She has called for federal laws to provide abortion access and ban assault-style weapons, but has been thin on the details of what specifically they would entail or how she would convince Congress to make progress on some of the most hot-button political issues.

Platform

Asked by reporters on Saturday when she would unveil her policy platform, Harris promised more details this week and added, "It'll be focused on the economy and what we need to do to bring down costs and also strengthen the economy overall."

Her team has offered few clues of what it will include. But the first major window into her thinking came this past weekend, with a proposal pulled not from the policy backwaters of the Biden administration or the cutting-room floor of the legislative process but from her rival, Trump.

Harris announced that she, like Trump, wants to end federal taxation

of tipped earnings for workers - with the added caveat that she would limit the plan to those in the lower- and middle incomes. The idea has drawn bipartisan support in recent months and is particularly salient in service industry-heavy Nevada.

It's also one of the few new ideas embraced by Trump in his 2024 bid to get back into the White House - a bonus in the view of the Harris camp, which has tried to needle the Republican into making unforced errors.

The Republican was none too amused by Harris endorsing the idea, complaining on his social media platform that "This was a TRUMP idea - She has no ideas, she can only steal from me." Trump continued on the matter in an interview with Elon Musk on Monday night, criticizing Harris for adopting his idea after what he claimed was harassment by the Biden administration of tipped workers.

Backed

On Monday, the White House said that Biden backed the plan too, though White House press secretary Karine Jean-Pierre wouldn't address why Biden and Harris didn't push for it during their first three-and-a-half years in office.

"Obviously, it's a new idea," she said, but added later in response to criticism from Trump, "Why didn't they pass it during the last administration?"

In her first weeks as a candidate, Harris' most pronounced policy moves have been to back away from liberal stances she took in her failed 2020 bid for the White House, including proposals to ban fracking, establish a single-payer health-care system and decriminalize illegal border crossings. Harris dropped out of that heated race before a single vote had been cast but recognizes that voters now could punish her for those stances if not quickly addressed.

Another complication for Harris comes from her relationship with Biden, who quickly endorsed her and handed her the keys to his political operation after he dropped out.

"The last three and a half years, they've been in sync," said Jean-Pierre. "They have been certainly on the same page. And I presume that that will continue from here."

Biden himself only began outlining detailed policy ideas for a second term during his final, frenzied effort to salvage his candidacy after his disastrous June 27 debate against Trump. He advocated for restoring abortion access, raising the federal minimum wage and passing a new surtax on billionaires. Harris has largely embraced all those priorities, including the incumbent's call for changes to the Supreme Court.

But all those plans would require congressional support, which proved elusive even when Democrats held unified control of Washington during the first two years of the Biden-Harris administration.

Also:

NEW YORK: Donald Trump recounted his assassination attempt in vivid detail and promised the largest deportation in U.S. history during a high-profile return to the social media platform formerly known as Twitter - a conversation that was plagued by technical glitches.

"If I had not turned my head, I would not be talking to you right now - as much as I like you," Trump told X's owner **Elon Musk**.

Musk, a former Trump critic, said the Republican nominee's toughness, as demonstrated by his reaction to last month's shooting, was critical for national security. "There's some real tough characters out there," Musk said. "And if they don't think the American president is tough, they will do what they want to do."

The rare public conversation between Trump and Musk, which spanned more than two hours and was overwhelmingly friendly, revealed little new about Trump's plans for a second term. The former president spent much of the discussion focused on his recent assassination attempt, illegal immigration and his plans to cut government regulations.

Still, the online meeting underscored just how much the U.S. political landscape has changed less than four years after Trump was permanently banned by the social media platform's former leadership for spreading disinformation that sparked the Jan. 6, 2021, attack on Congress and undermined the very foundation of the American democracy.



People walk past caution tape through Pasadena City Hall on Aug 12 in Pasadena, Calif., after an earthquake was strongly felt from the Los Angeles area all the way to San Diego. (AP)



Tucker



Adams

America

Former Colorado clerk convicted: Former Colorado clerk Tina Peters, the first local election official to be charged with a security breach after the 2020 election as unfounded conspiracy theories swirled, was found guilty by a jury on most charges Monday.

Peters, a one-time hero to election deniers, was accused of using someone else's security badge to give an expert affiliated with My Pillow chief executive Mike Lindell access to the Mesa County election system and deceiving other officials about that person's identity.

Lindell is a prominent promoter of false claims that voting machines were manipulated to steal the election from Donald Trump. His online broadcasting site has been showing a livestream of Peters' trial and sending out daily email updates, sometimes asking for prayers for Peters and including statements from her.

Prosecutors said Peters was seeking fame and became "fixated" on voting problems after becoming involved with those who had questioned the accuracy of the 2020 presidential election results. (AP)

Ex-LA County deputies charged: Two former Los Angeles County sheriff's deputies and two former foreign military officials have been charged with threatening a Chinese national and his family with violence and deportation during a sham raid at his Orange County home five years ago, federal prosecutors said Monday.

The four men also demanded \$37 million and the rights to the man's business, according to the US attorney's office in Los Angeles. Authorities have not released the businessman's name.

The men were arraigned Monday on charges of conspiracy to commit extortion, attempted extortion, conspiracy against rights, and deprivation of rights under color of law. All pleaded not guilty.

Prosecutors said the group drove to the victim's house in Irvine on June 17, 2019, and forced him, his wife and their two children into a room for hours, took their phones, and threatened to deport him unless he complied with their demands. Authorities said the man is a legal permanent resident. (AP)

Tucker new NY fire commissioner: New York City Mayor Eric Adams on Monday appointed **Robert S. Tucker**, the

head of a private security firm, to head the city's fire department.

Tucker, 54, takes over from Laura Kavanagh, the first woman to serve as the city's fire commissioner.

"I can think of no higher calling than

never worked as a firefighter. Tucker has served on the board of directors of the FDNY Foundation, a nonprofit that raises money for the fire department. As a teenager, he interned in the department's Manhattan communications office, where he said became "obsessed" with mapping the locations of the borough's multiple-alarm fires.

Like Kavanagh, who stepped down after two years as fire commissioner, Tucker has



A firefighting helicopter drops water on a wildfire in Dione near Athens, Greece, on Aug 12. Firefighters in Greece battled scattered fires on Aug 13, hoping to contain the remains of the major wildfire that burned into the northern suburbs of Athens, triggering evacuations and leaving at least one person dead. (Xinhua)

A New York City native, Tucker is a graduate of George Washington University and the Pace University School of Law. (AP)

Quake felt from LA to San Diego: A 4.4 magnitude earthquake was strongly felt Monday afternoon from the Los Angeles area all the way to San Diego, swaying buildings, rattling dishes and setting off car alarms, but no major damage or injuries were immediately reported.

The temblor caused a pipe to burst at the ornate 1927 Pasadena City Hall building, where TV news helicopters showed water spilling from an upper floor. Elsewhere in the Los Angeles area, an ESPN interview was interrupted, and the ground swayed in Anaheim, where Disneyland is located in Orange County.

Dishes rattled in the storied Los Angeles neighborhood of Laurel Canyon, home to many celebrities, and photos on social media showed shampoo bottles and other items littering the floor of a Target store in L.A. (AP)

Africa

12 killed in Congo

‘More seats for Africa at UNSC’

UNITED NATIONS, Aug 13, (Agencies): After decades of seeking a bigger voice in the United Nations’ most powerful body, Africa “cannot wait any longer,” Sierra Leone’s president told the Security Council on Monday.

Chairing a meeting that his country convened, President **Julius Maada Bio** pressed a longstanding bid for African countries to get more council seats, including two permanent and potentially veto-wielding spots.

“The time for half-measures and incremental progress is over. Africa must be heard, and its demands for justice and equity must be met,” Bio said, calling his continent the “unquestionable victim” of an imbalanced, outdated and unrepresentative Security Council structure.

It wasn’t the first time the council has heard calls for expanding and reshaping its membership - and African countries aren’t the only ones that want more representation. While there’s a general sense that the council needs to change, discussions have bogged down over differences on how much to expand the group, what countries to include and what powers it should have.

But Bio’s presence put an exclamation point on the issue ahead of a UN “Summit of the Future” and the annual General Assembly gathering of presidents, prime ministers and monarchs. Both gatherings are scheduled next month.



Bio

Vision

Some countries are hoping for momentum from the summit, which is meant to generate a wide-ranging new vision of what international cooperation should look like in this century. The latest draft of the summit’s potential “Pact for the Future” terms Security Council reform a priority and pledges an “ambitious” result, with specific language still to come.

“We are sure it is a matter of time. Because the gatekeepers will find it difficult to let us in,” Bio said at a news briefing Monday, but “we have a genuine and compelling case.”

Set up in 1945 to try to maintain peace in the wake of World War II, the Security Council can levy sanctions, deploy peacekeeping missions and otherwise pass resolutions that are legally binding, if sometimes ignored.

Its composition reflects the postwar power structure, and a time when most of Africa was under European control.

The United States, Russia, China, Britain and France are permanent, veto-wielding members. Ten other seats - originally six, until a 1965 expansion - go to countries that get two-year council terms, without veto power. The broader General Assembly elects them by region, with three seats for Africa.

African countries, and many others, have argued that the arrangement shorts the continent with the world’s fastest-growing population, now at 1.3 billion. The continent’s 54 countries make up 28% of the

Zambia, Congo reopen border: Zambia and Congo agreed to reopen their border on Monday after resolving a trade dispute between the countries that led to Zambia closing the border over the weekend.

“The Zambian party informed the Congolese party that the border will be reopened, in order to allow the free movement of people and goods between the Democratic Republic of Congo and the Republic of Zambia,” said the ministers of commerce of the two countries in a joint statement.

Zambia’s commerce, trade and industry minister Chipoka Mulenga had met with Congolese officials in the city of Lubumbashi near the border.

Zambia announced on Sunday it had closed its border with its northern neighbor after Congo imposed a ban on the import of soft drinks and beer from Zambia. That resulted in protests by Congolese truckers near the border town of Kasumbalea. Zambian business groups also criticized the ban.

The Zambian Association of Manufacturers said it could set a “dangerous precedent for future trade relations.”

Zambia’s decision to shut its border threatened Congo’s ability to export its minerals. Landlocked Congo has huge gold, copper and cobalt reserves in its mineral-rich east. Much of it passes through Zambia on its way to the coast for shipping.

US offers \$95m in aid to S.Sudan: The United States, through USAID, announced Monday USD 95 million in additional humanitarian assistance to support crisis-affected populations in South Sudan.

“US Ambassador to South Sudan Michael J. Adler made the announcement in Juba, bringing the total US government life-saving assistance in South Sudan to more than USD 508 million to date in fiscal year 2024,” the USAID said in a press statement.

It went on to say that South Sudan is experiencing compounding crises, including intercommunal conflict, flooding, and an influx of refugees and returnees from neighboring Sudan, which have escalated humanitarian needs for millions of people this year.

With food insecurity expected to increase during the lean season from June to September, humanitarian partners are scaling up life-saving assistance to the most vulnerable people across the country at this critical time.

With the additional assistance announced today, including funding from the bipartisan National Security Supplemental, USAID’s trusted humanitarian partners will continue to deliver critical food assistance and nutrition support to over 700,000 people in the most affected areas of South Sudan.

Militants kill 12 in Congo: Militants allied with the Islamic State group in eastern Congo have killed at least 12 people in several villages in North Kivu province, a local official said Monday.

Fighters with the Allied Democratic Forces attacked people in the village of Mukonia on Saturday, the municipality’s mayor, Nicole Kikuku, said on national television. The death toll might be higher because several villagers are still missing, the mayor added.

Attacks from the Allied Democratic Forces have increased recently. Last June, the group killed at least 40 people in several villages in North Kivu. It is also suspected of being behind a massacre last year when 41 people were killed, mostly students, in neighboring Uganda.



An aerial drone photo shows a view of Dajinhu scenic area of Taining County, Sanming City, southeast China’s Fujian Province on Aug 10. Sanming City has been exploring a new path of development that embraces green transformation to boost rural tourism including forest-based health services and other economic activities. Currently, forests cover 77.12 percent of the total area in the city. (Xinhua)

Asia

Myanmar releases Japanese executive

Philippines protests China jets actions

MANILA, Philippines, Aug 13, (Agencies): The Philippine government said Tuesday it has filed a diplomatic protest against Beijing after Chinese jets flew dangerously close and fired a volley of flares in the path of a Philippine air force patrol plane over a disputed shoal in the South China Sea.

The Chinese air force jets’ hostile actions against the Philippine military’s NC-212i light transport plane Thursday over the Scarborough Shoal was the first such aerial encounter since high-seas hostilities between Beijing and Manila in the busy seaway started to flare last year.

Philippine military chief Gen. Romeo Brawner Jr did not report any injuries or damage but condemned the Chinese actions, which he said could have had tragic consequences.

“If the flares came into contact with our aircraft, these could have been blown into the propeller or the intake or burned our plane,” Brawner told reporters. “It was very dangerous.”

Department of Foreign Affairs spokesperson Teresita Daza said without elaborating that a diplomatic protest has been transmitted to China.

Illegal

Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. said over the weekend that the actions by the Chinese air force jets were “unjustified, illegal and reckless.”

“We call on the government of the People’s Republic of China to cease all forms of provocative and hazardous acts that could undermine the safety of Filipino military and civilian personnel in the waters or in the skies, destabilize regional peace, and erode the trust and confidence of the international community in the PRC,” a Philippine government task force overseeing the South China Sea said Monday.

Despite the encounter, Philippine monitoring of its airspace would be intensified, the task force said.

The Southern Theater Command of the Chinese People’s Liberation Army said Saturday that a Philippine air force aircraft “illegally” entered the airspace above the shoal, which China claims, disrupting its combat training activities.

The command sent jets and ships to identify, track and drive away the Philippine aircraft, it added.

The command warned the Philip-

pine to “stop its infringement, provocation, distortion and hyping-up.”

The United States, Australia and Canada have reported similar actions by Chinese air force aircraft in the past in the South China Sea, where those nations have deployed forces to promote freedom of navigation and overflight.

China has bristled at military deployments by the US and its allies in the disputed region, calling it a danger to regional security.

In 2013, China announced a new Air Defense Identification Zone over the East China Sea that covers a chain of disputed islands also claimed by Japan. Beijing said then that all aircraft entering the zone must notify Chinese authorities and they would be subject to emergency military measures if they did not identify themselves or obey orders from Beijing. However, Washington and its allies said the move was invalid and refused to recognize it.

Chinese officials had warned that Beijing could establish a similar air defense zone over the South China Sea if its sovereignty over the sea passage, a key global trade and security route, was threatened.

Jay Batongbacal, a law professor and director of the Institute for Maritime Affairs and Law of the Sea at the University of the Philippines, said the air defense zone is not an exercise of territorial rights over the area it covers.

“What is happening is that they are flexing their capabilities to intimidate the Philippines, to give the impression to non-Chinese audiences and countries that they have control of the air in the South China Sea,” Batongbacal said.

Also:

TOKYO: A Japanese business executive who was detained in Myanmar for more than a month has been released after being convicted of violating rice pricing rules, officials said Tuesday.

Hiroshi Kasamatsu, a director of the Myanmar supermarket Aeon Orange, was in custody in Myanmar since his June 30 arrest for selling rice at prices above the official regulations. Japan’s Foreign Ministry confirmed Monday that the Japanese national was convicted of violating law related to daily necessities and service. He was sentenced to one year in prison and

fined 500,000 kyat (about \$150).

Kasamatsu was freed Monday afternoon, said Maj **Gen Zaw Min Tun,** spokesperson for the Myanmar’s ruling military council.

The Japanese Foreign Ministry said it was unclear if Kasamatsu would stay in Myanmar or return to Japan. He was released from custody and is in good health, it said, but declined to give further details.

Rice is vital in Myanmar, a country struggling to stabilize its economy as civil war disrupts efforts to recover from the COVID-19 pandemic. The army seized power from the elected government of **Aung San Suu Kyi** in 2021, triggering nonviolent protests that have evolved into armed resistance.

Aeon Orange is a part of Japan’s retail giant Aeon group, and operates several supermarkets in Myanmar. Aeon said it had no immediate comment.

Kasamatsu was among a number of foreign executives arrested on similar allegations in Myanmar.

WELLINGTON, New Zealand: A man who died when the helicopter he was flying crashed onto a hotel roof in Australia was an employee of the aviation company that owned the aircraft, but he did not work as a pilot and had not flown in Australia before, the company said Tuesday.

Nautilus Aviation said in a statement that he was a member of its ground crew and while he held a helicopter pilot’s license in New Zealand, he was not authorized to fly the company’s helicopters. The man’s name was not released to the public.

About 400 people were evacuated from the DoubleTree Hilton in the far north Queensland city of Cairns on Monday morning when the helicopter crashed onto the roof and burst into flames.

Two hotel guests were briefly hospitalized for smoke inhalation. No one else on the ground was hurt.

Authorities were investigating how the helicopter was able to take off from Cairns Airport and the man’s reason for making the flight, they said in Cairns on Monday. Queensland Police Service Acting Chief Superintendent **Shane Holmes** said they believed the crash was an isolated incident and there was no ongoing public safety threat.



Zimbabwean President Emmerson Mnangagwa lays a wreath at the national monument in Harare, Zimbabwe on Aug 12. Thousands of Zimbabweans gathered on Monday at the National Heroes Acre in the national capital of Harare to celebrate the 44th anniversary of Heroes Day. (Xinhua)



Blinken



Maduro

Lat/Am

Venezuela turmoil discussed: US Secretary of State **Antony Blinken** discussed with his Colombian counterpart, Luis Gilberto Murillo, the ongoing crisis in Venezuela following the presidential elections.

The National Electoral Council of Venezuela declared incumbent President **Nicolas Maduro** the winner, while the opposition insisted that their candidate was the rightful winner.

In a statement released on Monday, Principal Deputy Spokesperson Vedant Patel said that Blinken thanked Murillo during a phone call for Colombia’s efforts to facilitate dialogue aimed at restoring democracy in Venezuela.

Both diplomats emphasized the necessity for Venezuelan electoral authorities to release transparent polling station results from the presidential elections and urged Venezuelan security forces to cease violations of human rights and freedom of expression.

Blinken and Murillo also underscored the importance of regional unity, including within the Organization of American States (OAS), to exert additional pressure on Venezuela to return to a democratic path. (KUNA)

Brazil buries pilot: The pilot of the plane that crashed down in Brazil last week was buried Monday in Sao Paulo, becoming the first person laid to rest among the 62 victims, as authorities continue working to determine what exactly caused the accident.

A hearse bearing the casket of Danilo Santos Romano rolled through the streets of Penha, a working class neighborhood of Sao Paulo’s east side, en route to the cemetery that lies beneath his apartment. Family members and friends walked behind the vehicle and dozens of shop owners who knew him as a regular customer gathered on the sidewalks to applaud as it passed. Romano was 35.

Clesio Moura, one of the applauding shopkeepers, said he met the pilot two years ago.

“He had lived abroad, worked for foreign companies, but was always humble,” Moura said. “We used to chat about soccer, he really wanted to have a child to take to the stadium one day. Danilo was full of life.”

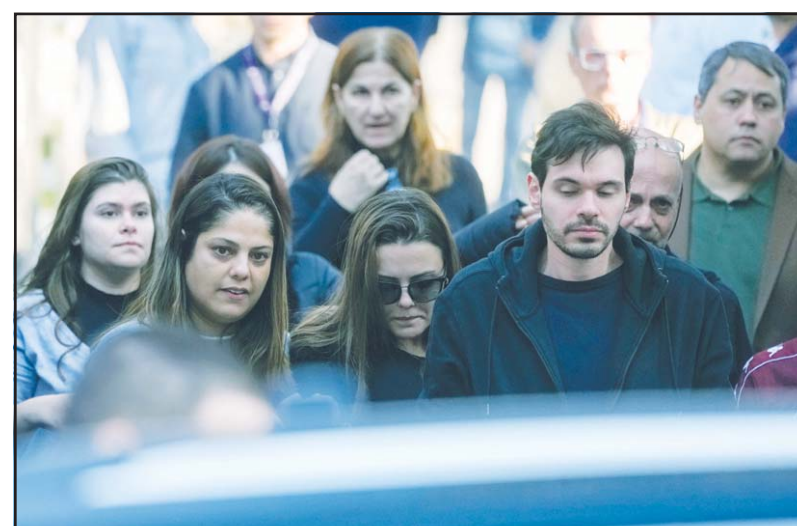
The crash Friday killed 58 passengers and four crew members. Footage of the plane plunging while in a flat spin horrified people around the world, and the cause of the accident has yet to be determined. Some experts have pointed to the possibility of severe icing on the wings, which caused pilots to lose control of the plane, but airports minister Silvio Costa Filho told reporters Friday that Romano and his copilot made no calls for an emergency landing, nor did they

communicate any adverse weather conditions. (AP)

66 Colombian soldiers released: Colombia’s defense ministry on Monday said

66 soldiers who had been “kidnapped” by villagers in the south of the country were released unharmed and will continue to carry out operations against rebel groups in the province of Guaviare.

Colombia’s army has long struggled to



Thalita Valente Machado, (bottom center), leaves Penha Cemetery after burying her husband Danilo Santos Romano in Sao Paulo, Brazil on Aug 12. Romano was the pilot of the plane that crashed into the backyard of a home in the city of Vinhedo on Aug 9. (AP)

defeat rebel groups in the Guaviare area, which has been heavily affected by deforestation and cocaine trafficking. The rebels sometimes exert control over remote settlements in the area.

In a message posted on the social platform X, the defense ministry said the soldiers had been held since Friday by large numbers of villagers who were following orders from a local rebel group, known as the Jorge Suarez Briceño front.

On Sunday, Colombia’s defense minister had threatened to break off a ceasefire with the Briceño front if the soldiers were not released. (AP)

Ernesto drenches Caribbean: Tropical Storm Ernesto battered the northeast Caribbean on Tuesday as it took aim at Puerto Rico, where officials shuttered schools and government agencies.

The storm was located about 300 miles (480 kilometers) east-southeast of San Juan, Puerto Rico, on Tuesday morning. It had maximum sustained winds of 45 mph (75 kph) and was moving west at 18 mph (30 kph).

“It’s not a hurricane, but it will bring heavy rains regardless,” Gov Pedro Pierluisi said as he urged people to seek shelter by Tuesday evening.

Forecasters have warned of widespread flooding and possible landslides, with six to eight inches of rain forecast for Puerto Rico and the US Virgin Islands, and up to 10 inches in isolated areas. (AP)

Change	Closing pts	Change	Closing pts		
SAUDI - TASI	+56.18	11,796.84	DUBAI - DFMGI	-16.77	4,184.50
JAPAN - Nikkei 225	+1,207.51	36,232.51	EGYPT - EGX 30	-375.66	29,331.04
PHILIPPINES - PSEI	+37.08	6,650.44	PAKISTAN - KSE 100	-79.32	77,903.13

Business

Agility Global PLC reports Q2-2024 net profit of \$30 million

Strong EBITDA growth of 28.4% to \$167.4 mln

ABU DHABI, Aug 13: Agility Global PLC, a multi-business owner and operator and long-term investor in global and regional businesses, today reported Q2 2024 earnings of \$29.8 million, or 0.29 cents per share. EBITDA grew 28.4% to \$167.4 million, and revenue increased 16.2% to \$1.1 billion. (Note that figures for the comparable period are carved-out financials).

For the first six months of 2024, earnings stood at \$60.3 million, or 0.78 cents per share. EBITDA grew 31.2% to \$336.9 million, and revenue increased 11% to \$2.1 billion.

"Agility Global continues to report strong results in the second quarter of the year. Our largest owned and operated businesses, namely Menzies, Tristar and Agility Logistics Parks, reported double-digit EBITDA growth, in-line with their individual business strategies for growth," said Agility Global Chairman Tarek Sultan. "The net value of our investments, reported through our balance sheet, remained stable in spite of volatility in equity markets. We continue to look at growth opportunities, with a particular focus on building strategic infrastructure and strengthening the competitiveness of the portfolio businesses."

Agility Global PLC operates under two segments:

The owned and operated business segment holds the company's operating entities, whose financial performance is consolidated and reflected in its income statement. This segment includes Menzies Aviation, the world's largest aviation services provider by number of countries; Tristar, a global leader in fuel and chemicals storage, shipping and logistics; and Agility Logistics Parks, a leading owner and developer of industrial real estate in the Middle East, Africa and South Asia.

The investment segment holds Agility Global's minority investment stakes, the most material

	Q2 2024 (Million USD)	Q2 2023 (Million USD)	Variance (%)	H1 2024 (Million USD)	H1 2023 (Million USD)	Variance (%)
Revenue	1,108.1	953.5	16.2%	2,087.5	1,881.1	11.0%
EBITDA	167.4	130.3	28.4%	336.9	256.9	31.2%
EBIT	92.8	61.5	50.8%	188.1	123.8	52.0%
Net Profit	29.8	(4.5)	757.3%	60.3	2.7	2156.0%
EPS (cent)	0.29	(0.04)	825%	0.78	0.03	2500%

Numbers above are rounded.



Agility Global

of which include a 9% stake in DSV, the world's third-largest freight forwarder, and its stake in Abu Dhabi's Reem Mall.

Q2 2024 Performance

For Q2 2024, the consolidated EBIT of the controlled businesses was \$89.9 million, EBITDA \$164.4 million and revenue \$1.1 billion. This reflects increases of 46.9%, 26.6% and 16.2%, respectively, over the same period in 2023.

Aviation Services: Menzies
Menzies reported Q2 EBITDA of \$91 million, an increase of 27.6% over the same period a year before. Most service lines experienced volume and yield growth with the exception of Air Menzies International (AMI). Menzies witnessed healthy growth in all regions as the result of volume increases in ground handling, cargo and fueling operations, and solid commercial growth. Notable launch of operations including Spain and Portugal and the launch of cargo operations in Bangalore, India; and contract wins in South Africa. AMI continues to face tightened gross profit margins as a result of rate pressure in the industry in general. Overall, Menzies EBIT margin improved from 6.1% to 7%, up 1 percentage point, as the company leveraged its existing platform to expand

commercial growth.

Fuel Logistics: Tristar

Tristar's Q2 consolidated EBITDA stood at \$63.4 million, up 19% vs. Q2 a year earlier. This growth is driven mainly by the momentum of Tristar's Fuels and Fuel Farms segments. The Fuels business has been growing as a result of the new contracts and business expansion with existing clients. Fuel Farms has grown due to the favourable market and utilization optimization. Maritime continued to deliver extremely strong results, following a strong 2023.

The results of this quarter validate the success of Tristar's focus on continued operational improvement and diversified portfolio.

Industrial Real Estate: Agility Logistics Parks

Agility Logistics Parks (ALP), a leading developer of warehouse parks and light industrial facilities, reported EBITDA of \$9.2 million on revenue of \$12.6 million, increases of 23.7% and 13.1%, respectively. ALP's growth was driven mainly by its Saudi Arabia operations, which experienced increased demand for warehousing space. ALP has operations in Saudi Arabia, UAE, Africa, and India and is entering new markets where growth potential is promising.

Investments Segment

Agility Global holds non-controlling minority stakes in a number of businesses, both listed and non-listed. As of 30 June 2024, the carrying value of those stakes was roughly \$4.1 billion. The main investments in this segment are in DSV and Reem Mall.

DSV is a Copenhagen-based logistics company and a global top three

freight forwarder. Agility Global owns a 9% stake in DSV, making it one of the largest shareholders in DSV. The carrying value of this investment as of June 30, 2024, was \$3 billion. Agility Global has partially offset declines in the DSV share price by hedging 73% of its investment through a funded equity collar.

Reem Mall - Agility Global is an investor in Reem Mall on Abu Dhabi's Reem Island. Agility Global's investment in Reem Mall is through equity and convertible debt. The mall had a soft opening to the public in February 2023 and launched formally in May 2024. To date, 173 units are trading, and almost 74% of Gross Leasable Area (GLA) is committed. More tenants are expected to announce openings in coming months. The mall is one of the region's first, fully integrated omnichannel retail ecosystem with digital, e-commerce, and logistics capabilities. It brings together all consumer and retail services to ensure a seamless customer experience.

Recap of Agility Global Q2 2024 Financial Performance

- EBITDA increased 28.4% to USD 167.4 million, and margins stood at 15.1%.
- Revenue increased 16.2% to USD 1.1 billion.
- Net profit stood at USD 29.8 million equivalent to 0.29 cent per share.
- Agility Global enjoys a healthy balance sheet with USD 10.5 billion in assets and USD 5.4 billion in equity.
- Agility Global spent a total of USD 154 million in CAPEX and investments and reported operating cash flow was USD 221.7 million for the first 6 months of 2024.

Oil prices up to \$79.95 pb

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 13, (KUNA): The price of Kuwaiti oil went up USD 1.75 to reach USD 79.95 per barrel on Monday, compared to USD 78.20 pb last Thursday, said Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) on Tuesday.

On a global scale, the Brent crude went up USD 2.64 to reach USD 82.30 pb, as did the West Texas Intermediate, which went up USD 3.22, reaching USD 80.06 pb.

Output drops by 8K barrels

Kuwait ranks fifth in OPEC oil production with 2.415 mn bpd

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 13: Kuwait ranked fifth on the list of the largest producers among OPEC members, as its production during the month of July reached 2.415 million barrels per day, compared to 2.423 million barrels last June, thus decreasing by about 8,000 barrels per day, reports Al-Qabas daily.

Saudi Arabia topped the list with a production of 9.015 million barrels per day, followed by Iraq with 4.251 million barrels, then Iran with a production of 3.271 million barrels per day, then the UAE with 2.952 million barrels per day.

In addition to Kuwait, Libya's production decreased by about 19 thousand barrels per day, and Congo's by about 6 thousand barrels per day, while the production of 8 countries increased, led by Saudi Arabia, whose production increased by about 97 thousand barrels per day.

The organization lowered its forecast for oil demand for the current year to 2.1 million barrels per day, for the first time in 13 months.

OPEC, in its August report issued yesterday, expected oil demand this year to be 2.1 million barrels per day, which is 135,000 barrels per day less

than all its previous forecasts dating back to July 2023.

The organization slightly reduced its estimates for global oil demand in 2025 by about 65,000 barrels per day, to remain around 1.8 million barrels per day.

It expects demand for crude from OECD countries to grow by 0.2 million barrels per day in 2024, while growth in demand from non-OECD countries is expected to reach 1.9 million barrels per day, driven mainly by demand from China.

Markets are waiting for the Saudi-led OPEC+ alliance to announce its plans for oil production in the coming weeks. At a review meeting earlier this month, the alliance's member states reiterated that the return of voluntary cuts could be halted or reversed depending on market conditions.

OPEC expects non-OPEC+ oil supply to grow by 1.2 million barrels per day this year, the same estimate as the previous three months. OPEC kept its forecast for non-OPEC oil supply in 2025 unchanged from the previous two months at 1.1 million barrels per day. It said the increase in supply would come from the United States, Canada and Brazil.

Company assets increase by 4.5%

KIC reports strong profit growth in first half of '24

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 13: Kuwait Investment Company has announced impressive financial results for the first half of 2024, with a reported profit of 5 million dinars. This performance marks a notable growth of 48%, demonstrating the company's resilience and effectiveness in its business model despite challenging market conditions, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

During this period, the company saw its assets increase by 10.8 million dinars, reflecting a growth of 4.5%. This growth underscores the company's ability to navigate and adapt to market fluctuations effectively.

Youssef Al-Ali, a company spokesperson, attributed this success to the company's flexible business model

and diversified investment strategy, which allowed it to sustain profitability even amidst broader market challenges in the second quarter of 2024.

Fawaz Al-Ahmad highlighted that Kuwait Investment Company's approach to investment is based on a balanced policy of risk assessment and opportunity analysis.

The company's strategic flexibility, designed to address emerging challenges and anticipated scenarios, has been key to maintaining sustainable growth and high efficiency.

Overall, the financial indicators from Kuwait Investment Company reflect a successful strategy in managing and growing its investments, positioning it well for continued success in the future.

Geopolitical risks could impact GCC insurers' earnings

GCC Islamic insurers to benefit from favorable economic conditions

S&P Global Ratings expects GCC Islamic insurers will continue to benefit from several tailwinds over the next 6-12 months. Tailwinds include ongoing favorable economic conditions resulting in an increase in insurance demand, thanks to ongoing investments in infrastructure projects, population growth, and regulatory initiatives. That said, increasing competition and declining investment returns—resulting from the anticipated decrease in interest rates and potentially more volatile capital markets—could weigh on the industry's earnings over the next 12-18 months, in our view.

Geopolitical risk is rising. Even though we expect that the effects of the Israel-Hamas war will remain contained to the region, we note that the risk of regional escalation is increasing. Although this is not our base case, a regional escalation could impair business sentiment in the wider Middle East, including the GCC region, reduce growth prospects, and impair GCC insurers' investment portfolios.

Consolidation remains a hot topic. While we expect overall credit conditions for Islamic insurers will remain stable over the next 6-12 months, consolidation will likely remain relevant as many smaller and midsize Islamic insurers continue to report relatively weak earnings.

Saudi Arabia continues to outpace other markets

We expect the Islamic insurance sector in the GCC region will expand by about 15%-20% in 2024, with revenues exceeding \$20 billion. We expect the Saudi market, similar to the past two years, will be the main driver of topline growth in the GCC region. This is because Saudi Arabia, the GCC region's largest Islamic insurance market, continues to benefit from higher economic growth. At the same time, authorities proceed with reducing the number of uninsured vehicles and have introduced new mandatory medical covers, leading to additional insurance demand and premium income.

The Islamic insurance sector in the GCC region expanded substantially over the past five years. Topline growth was particularly strong over 2022-2023, when the sector increased by about 20%-25% annually. This was mainly driven by the market in Saudi Arabia, which expanded by about 27% in 2022 and another 23% in 2023.

Islamic insurers' topline in GCC countries outside of Saudi Arabia cumulatively declined by almost 3% in 2023. The main reason was a decline in premium income in the UAE, the region's second-largest Takaful market, primarily due to consolidation in the industry and rate pressure affecting motor and other lines. That said, we expect the Takaful sector in the UAE will expand by 15%-20% in 2024 as motor rates increased substantially over the past 12 months, particularly following this year's major floods in Dubai and other parts of the UAE. At the same time, we anticipate that Takaful players in Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, and Qatar will report more moderate growth rates of about 5%-10%.

Rate Adjustments And Strong Investment Returns Support Earnings

Half-year 2024 results suggest that net profits could further improve this year, after GCC Islamic insurers reported record results in 2023. The aggregate net profit in the sector improved to about \$967 million in 2023, from about \$100 million in 2022. This improvement was mainly driven by the Saudi market, whose underwriting results improved and investment income increased to about \$690 million in 2023, from about \$345 million in 2022, substantially contributing to overall earnings. We also note that, for the first time, all of Saudi Arabia's 25 listed insurers reported a net profit in 2023. This followed a tough 2021 and 2022, when more than half of Saudi insurers reported a net loss.

The Saudi insurance market experienced a material increase in premium income from motor lines. Underwriting results in 2023 benefited from rate adjustments in several lines and from Saudi authorities' decision to reduce the number of uninsured vehicles. More economic rates and additional business resulted in a stronger increase in gross premium income, compared with gross claims paid. Consequent-

Key Takeaways

- After strong topline growth over 2022-2023, Islamic and Takaful insurers in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) region continue to benefit from favorable growth prospects, mainly due to higher insurance demand in Saudi Arabia, which is the largest Islamic insurance market in the region.
- 2024 is set to be another profitable year for the sector. Net profits in 2023 had already reached a record of almost \$1 billion, mainly due to rate adjustments in previously underperforming lines and higher investment returns.
- That said, we expect competition will pick up in some markets. This—together with anticipated interest rate cuts starting from September and potentially more volatile capital markets—could lead to a sharp decline in earnings in 2025 if Islamic insurers fail to maintain their underwriting discipline.
- While we expect overall credit conditions for Islamic insurers will remain stable over the next 6-12 months, consolidation will likely remain a hot topic among smaller and midsize players. About one-fifth of Islamic insurers in Saudi Arabia and about one-third in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) merged in recent years.

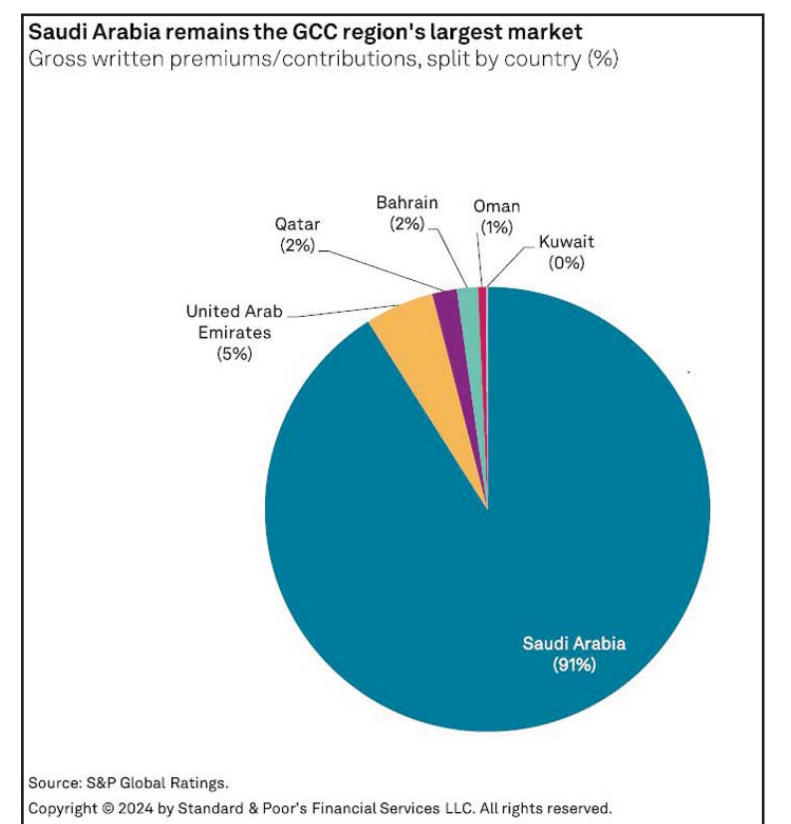
ly, the net loss ratios of Saudi insurers' two largest lines—medical and motor insurance, which together contributed almost 81% to total premium income—improved materially in 2023.

Topline results and net earnings were not distributed equally across the sector. The five largest of the 25 listed insurers in Saudi Arabia generated about 73% of total insurance revenues in 2023, up from 69% in 2022. Saudi Arabia's largest insurers, the Company for Cooperative Insurance (Tawuniya; A/ Stable/-) and Bupa (not rated), had a combined market share of about 55% in 2023. Earnings concentration is similar, with the five largest insurers generating about 81% of total profits in Saudi Arabia in 2023. In our view, strengthening competition, lower investment returns due to declining interest rates, and rising geopolitical tensions in the region could lead to a sharp decline in earnings in 2025.

Similar to previous years, Qatar's Takaful market reported the most profitable underwriting results in the GCC region in 2023. The average combined (loss and expense) ratio was below 80% in 2023 (a lower combined ratio indicates higher underwriting profit). In Saudi Arabia, the overall combined ratio improved to about 95% in 2023, compared with more than 100% in 2022, when about two-thirds of insurers recorded underwriting losses. Even though the Saudi market reported an increase in net earnings to about \$588 million at half-year 2024—from about \$450 million over the same period in 2023—14 out of 25 listed Saudi insurers experienced a decline in underwriting results and profits at mid-year 2024, compared with the same period last year, suggesting an uptick in competition. We still believe that 2024 will be another strong year for the overall sector, with potentially even higher earnings than in 2023.

Ratings Weather Rising Risks, More Consolidation Awaits

Apart from a few positive outliers, our credit ratings on GCC Islamic insurers remained broadly stable over the past 18 months. We do not expect



any major rating actions over the next 6-12 months, as most rated insurers are sufficiently capitalized. Total shareholders' equity in the sector increased to about \$7.6 billion in 2023, from \$6.6 billion in 2022, thanks to profitable earnings and several capital increases. The key risks to credit conditions for Islamic and conventional insurers in the GCC region comprise:

- A worsening geopolitical situation in the region; and
- An increase in competition, which—together with lower investment returns—could impair earnings and capital buffers.

A regional escalation of the Israel-Hamas war would be economically, socially, and politically destabilizing for the entire GCC region and its banking systems. Combined with slow global economic growth, this could impair revenue growth and increase investment volatility for GCC Islamic and conventional insurers alike. In our view, a prolonged conflict, which is not our base case, would have a pronounced effect on asset values and investment returns. In such a scenario, we expect our ratings on less capitalized Islamic and conventional insurers or insurers with material exposure to equities and other high-risk assets could come under pressure.

Strong competition and increasing regulatory demands already led to several mergers, with more to come. Consolidation is particularly prevalent among smaller and midsize players in Saudi Arabia and the UAE. Over the past five to six years, the number of listed Saudi insurers declined by about 20% to 27, from 34. We forecast that mergers, mainly in Saudi Arabia, the UAE, and Kuwait will continue as several Islamic insurers still fail to meet the required solvency capital requirements.

China's robust express delivery indicates booming consumer market

China's courier sector surpassed the 100-billion-parcel mark this year much faster than the previous year, reflecting a booming consumer market and sustained economic vitality.

The milestone was reached on Tuesday, 71 days earlier than in 2023, according to the State Post Bureau (SPB). This equates to an average of 71.43 packages per person in China, or 5,144 packages delivered every second.

The express delivery sector has become a key indicator of the country's economic health. Amid a steady economic recovery, the industry has set new records across three main metrics.

The highest single-day delivery volume exceeded 580 million parcels, and the average monthly volume surpassed 13 billion parcels. The sector's monthly revenue topped 100 billion yuan (about 14 billion U.S. dollars).

China boasts a highly efficient logistics network that reaches even the most remote areas, with 234,000 delivery points nationwide and over 95 percent of vil-

lages covered by express delivery services. This summer, the system enabled next-day delivery of seasonal fruits from distant regions.

Technological innovation has further boosted delivery efficiency. In some cities, drones can deliver packages in about 10 minutes, while autonomous delivery vehicles have also significantly reduced delivery time.

Going forward, the SPB plans to enhance logistics hubs in urban clusters, improve rural logistics systems and ex-

pand international delivery services, as well as integrate the delivery chain with advanced manufacturing.

China has led the world in express delivery volume for 10 consecutive years.

Meanwhile, China's status as "the world's factory" is hard to replace, Nobel Laureate in Economics Michael Spence said in a recent interview with the South China Morning Post.

"There is no replacement for China at the moment," said the economist when sharing his view on China's role as "the

world's factory" and envisioning the future of the country's economy in the interview published on Monday.

"And it will take some considerable time before we're willing to say that China is not the world's factory," Spence added.

The economist also believes that, over time, "we will see more dispersed manufacturing capabilities in many categories" partly because of China's own growth and development and partly because of the growth of other economies. (Xinhua)

The Conversation

Two marketing professors explain why

Bipartisan data-privacy law could backfire on small businesses

By John Lynch

University of Colorado Boulder and Jean-Pierre Dubé, University of Chicago

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



Orion Brown started Black Travel Box to serve Black female travelers who find hotel lotions and shampoos inadequate. Randel Bennett co-founded the insurance startup Sigo Seguros for underserved Spanish-speaking drivers. Bill Shufelt and John Walker founded Athletic Brewing Company so athletes and nondrinkers in social situations could drink tasty nonalcoholic beer.

What do these three successful businesses have in common? In each case, the entrepreneurs built their businesses on personalized digital advertising platforms such as Facebook and Instagram. They didn't have the budgets for TV advertising campaigns to compete with bigger businesses. And all served markets that had previously been ignored.

A privacy bill that's being eyed by Congress could unintentionally make it harder for similar ventures to take off in the future. We are professors of marketing who are experts in academic research on effects of public policy on marketing. We are concerned that the bipartisan bill - the American Privacy Rights Act - could undermine small entrepreneurs like these who rely on targeted digital advertising.

While Americans increasingly favor government taking a more interventionist approach to data privacy, a growing body of rigorous research shows that privacy regulations can have

unintended consequences.

The American Privacy Rights Act - introduced by lawmakers in both the House and Senate in April 2024 - would, in the words of a Senate summary, create "national consumer data privacy rights and set standards for data security."

The bill would create a national standard for data collection and data use. A national standard would have the benefit of unifying a patchwork of state regulations. In a supportive editorial, The Washington Post described the bill "as tough as, if not tougher than, what states have mustered so far." Tougher must be better, right?

Not necessarily. The state bills at issue are generally modeled on the European General Data Protection Regulation, or GDPR. The European Union touts the GDPR as "the strongest privacy and security law in the world."

But a growing body of academic literature shows that privacy regulations such as the GDPR can have unintended consequences. In May, the nonprofit Marketing Science Institute released our report summarizing that work. In short, data privacy doesn't come free - it requires trade-offs.

For starters, there's a trade-off between privacy and usefulness of information exchanges for firms and consumers. The 2006 book "The Long Tail" described how digital marketing changed our economy from a market focused on selling hit products to a market serving many smaller niches of consumers with diverse needs and tastes. Digital marketing makes it possible for small entrepreneurs and consumers with nonmainstream needs to find each other.

There's also a trade-off between privacy and fairness. Just as consumers differ in their needs for products, they differ in whether, when and why they are willing to share data. Re-

search shows that those most keen to minimize data-sharing are richer, more educated and older than those who are less keen. The goal of privacy regulation, we argue, should be to give consumers control of their data rather than to slow the flow of data for all.

Coarser personalization can exclude marginalized consumer segments. Some lower-income consumers and certain minority groups live in digital data deserts. The problem isn't that companies know too much about them. Instead, they are so invisible that they are unwittingly excluded from the digital economy.

Privacy can be, in some sense, a problem of the privileged. We know of no rigorous study showing that toughened digital marketing privacy policies produced tangible economic benefits for anyone, let alone lower-income consumers.

There's also a trade-off between privacy and freedom from discrimination, particularly against marginalized groups. Algorithms have been known to inadvertently discriminate. For example, one study showed that women were less likely than men to be served ads for job opportunities in STEM careers. That seems unfair.

Regulators, including the framers of the American Privacy Rights Act, have prescribed that firms should limit the data they collect only to what is reasonable and necessary, minimizing information about race, gender or other protected class attributes. But without that information, how will regulators and firms audit data-based marketing algorithms for unintended discrimination?

Finally, there's a trade-off between privacy and innovation by sellers in the marketplace. Many small brands exist because digital marketing allows them to create sustainable businesses at a small scale without giant media budgets. Digital advertis-

ing costs a fraction of what's needed for traditional television campaigns, saving small U.S. entrepreneurs US\$163 billion annually. Small brands benefit more from accurate targeting than the big brands with broader appeal.

A growing number of studies show that privacy regulations may slow innovation and reduce the competitiveness of markets. This is especially harmful to those same small businesses and entrepreneurs that benefit most from being able to accurately target diverse consumers.

Recently, privacy advocates started attaching the label "corporatists" to those who argue for benefits of personalized marketing. Ironically, it's small businesses that benefit most from personalized marketing, as our report for the Marketing Science Institute shows.

Giants like Unilever and Nike gain competitive advantage from privacy regulation and changes to platform privacy policies that dramatically raise small businesses' costs of acquiring new customers, and giants like Amazon and Walmart gain new appeal as ad platforms. Similarly, studies show that GDPR boosted Google's and Facebook's market dominance in Europe and disproportionately increased privacy compliance costs for smaller firms.

To be sure, we believe there's value in the bill being crafted in Congress to protect consumers' right to privacy. The May markup included carve-outs for small businesses, for example, but without considering how they rely on others' data for customer acquisition. In June, divisions between Republicans and Democrats led to canceling a markup session.

In our view, Congress would be wise to use the current impasse to carefully consider how the proposed law would affect smaller sellers and disadvantaged consumer groups. (AP)

Unfulfilled orders

Tesla customers in India seek refunds

HANOI, Vietnam, Aug 13, (AP) - In April 2016, Elon Musk invited Indians to preorder the upcoming Tesla Model 3. Vishal Gondal was one of the first to sign up, paying a \$1,000 deposit for a car that never arrived.

The founder and CEO of a health-tech startup called GOQii in India's financial capital Mumbai, Gondal wasn't sure when the automaker would launch in India or how much the car would eventually cost. But the Elon Musk fan was excited about the Model 3 and willing to wait.

In the eight years since Tesla's initial promise to sell cars in India, other automakers have launched their own EVs. But the American automaker has failed to follow through, apparently because of concerns that taxes would make the cars too expensive in India, combined with the difficulties of building an Indian factory if it decided to shift production away from China.

After six years without a Tesla or a clear explanation about the company's plans for India, Gondal bought an electric SUV made by German automaker Audi. He got his \$1,000 back in January 2023 with the help of a friend who helped him track down a Tesla sales manager in India.

India is the world's third-largest auto market after China and the United States. But it's unique. The average price of cars sold in India in 2023 was \$14,000, compared with \$47,000 in the United States. An American can buy a new Tesla 3 for about \$40,000. That's the price of a luxury car in India, and buyers would demand excellent after-sales service.

"I think Tesla may be a great tech company. But they just don't know how to sell luxury cars," Gondal said.

Since then, other automakers who have been selling luxury cars in India have also started selling EVs. Hemant Suthar, a Mumbai-based director of a design studio who had also prebooked a Tesla in 2016 before finally getting his money back in 2023, said that he didn't think the minimalist Tesla could compete with some of the more luxurious EVs now on Indian roads.

To woo automakers like Tesla while also protecting domestic car-makers like Mahindra and Maruti Suzuki, India reduced its import duties to 15% from 70%-100% in March 2024 for EVs cheaper than \$35,000 - as long as the automaker commits to building a factory in the country within three years.

Despite his earlier enthusiasm, in 2019 Musk expressed concern that import duties could double prices of Teslas made in India, making them "unaffordable." Many in India expected Musk to announce plans for a factory there in April, but he canceled an expected trip at the last minute, citing "very heavy Tesla obligations."

Tesla didn't respond to an emailed request for comment.

The EV market has changed drastically in India and elsewhere in the past five years and Tesla's own position has evolved since it built giant factories in China, Germany and the U.S. Sales are slowing and its only new product, the Cybertruck EV, lacks much of a market outside the U.S., so global sales have fallen year over year for two straight quarters.

According to a filing to the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission, it can build 2.3 million cars annually. Production in 2023 grew by 35% to 1.85 million cars.

US economists, trade groups voice concerns over tariffs against China

'These policies are ultimately bad for growth'

WASHINGTON, Aug 13, (Xinhua) - As the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative (USTR) is expected to issue a final determination on its proposed "modifications" of the actions toward China under Section 301, U.S. economists, trade groups and international organizations have voiced concerns and expressed disappointment, warning that the imposition of additional tariffs could hurt U.S. companies and consumers.

On May 14, U.S. Trade Representative Katherine Tai announced that President Joe Biden is directing her to "take further action" on China tariffs after releasing statutory four-year review of Section 301 tariffs. The proposed "modifications" include raising tariffs in "strategic sectors," such as batteries, electric vehicles, semiconductors, as well as steel and aluminum products.

In late May, the USTR issued a Federal Register notice regarding proposed tariff modifications under Section 301 and the machinery exclusion process, inviting public comment. On July 30, the USTR stated that it will continue to review all comments and expects to issue its final determination in August.

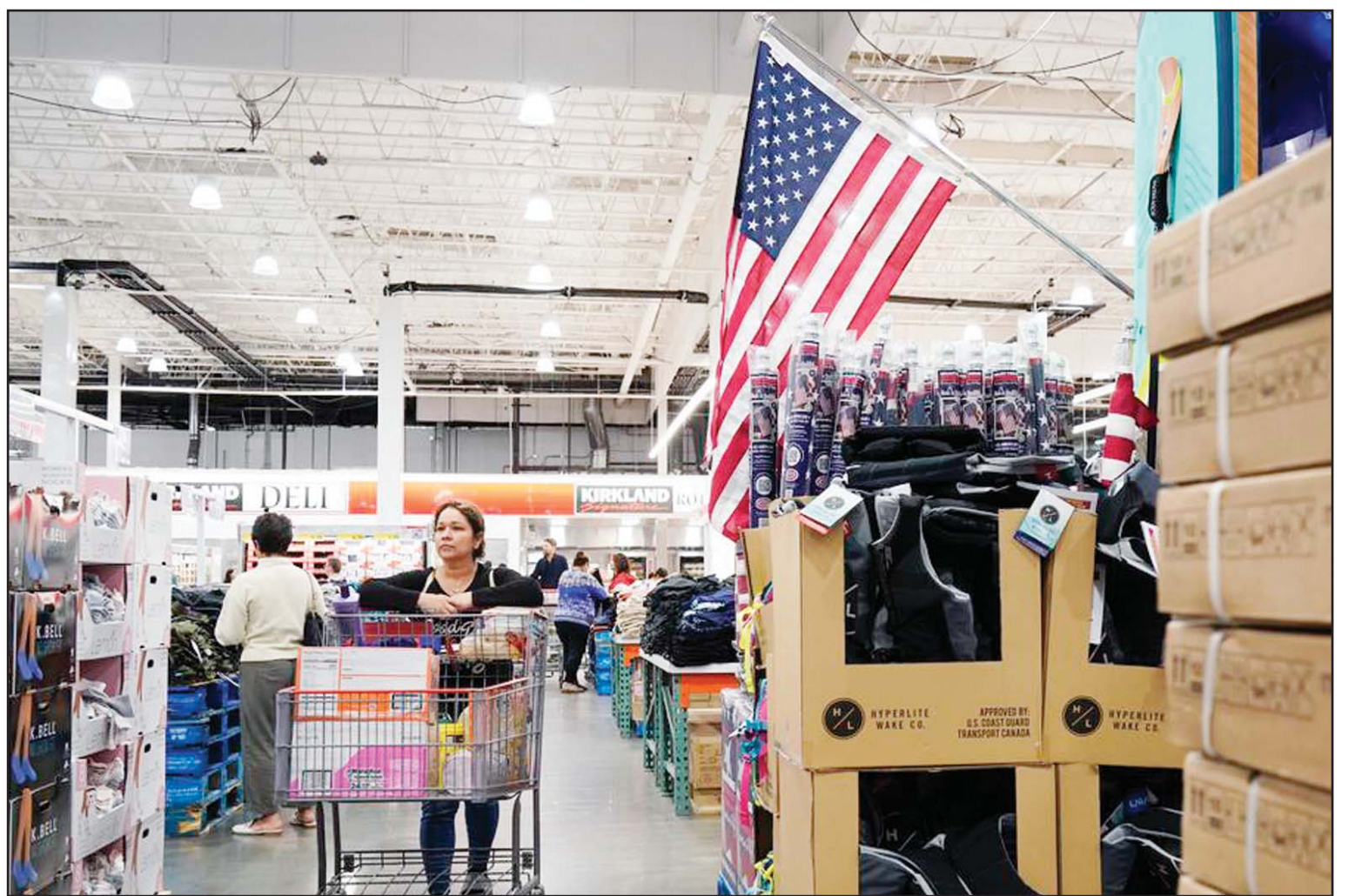
In a statement released earlier this year, the U.S.-China Business Council (USCBC), a private, nonpartisan, non-profit organization of more than 270 American companies that do business in China, expressed disappointment in the results of the Section 301 review.

"We are disappointed with the outcome because maintenance of the prior tariffs -- with no reductions -- and imposition of additional tariffs ultimately make it harder for American companies to compete in the U.S. and abroad, cost American jobs, and increase prices for U.S. manufacturers and consumers during a time of ongoing inflation," USCBC President Craig Allen said.

"As USCBC requested in our public comments, we appreciate USTR's creation of a tariff exclusion process so that U.S. companies can request needed and common-sense relief, but its scope appears narrow," said Allen.

Jeffrey Sachs, an economics professor and director of the Center for Sustainable Development at Columbia University, told Xinhua that the new tariffs violate America's World Trade Organization commitments, hurt consumers, and raise geopolitical tensions.

In an opinion piece published earlier this year, William Alan Reinsch, Scholl Chair in International Business at the Center for Strategic and Interna-



Customers select goods at a supermarket in Foster City, California, the United States, April 10, 2024. U.S. consumer inflation in March sped up to 3.5 percent from a year ago, after ticking up to 3.2 percent in February, indicating continued inflation pressure, the U.S. Labor Department reported Wednesday. (Xinhua)

Slight improvement recorded in July

Germany's self-employed remain pessimistic

BERLIN, Aug 13, (Xinhua) - The business climate for Germany's self-employed saw a modest improvement in July, however, many self-employed individuals remain dissatisfied with their current situation, and their expectations are reportedly low.

According to the figures released Monday from the Jimdo-ifo business climate index for the self-employed, the index rose to -13.4

points, up from -14.0 points in June. "The self-employed are resisting the current slump," ifo expert Katrin Demmelhuber said.

Nevertheless, a persistent lack of demand continues to challenge the self-employed. In July, 44.4 percent of self-employed individuals reported being affected by a shortage of orders, compared to 44.0 percent in April.

Additionally, about a quarter of those surveyed said they were unable to fully offer their goods or services due to staffing shortages, supply chain issues, and other constraints.

Meanwhile, business confidence among Germany's small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) fell sharply for the third consecutive month in July, with the confidence

index dropping by 4.2 points from the previous month. According to KfW Research, negative values in this indicator suggest below-average economic performance.

The Jimdo-ifo business climate index has tracked the business climate for solo self-employed individuals and microenterprises since August 2021. It covers all economic sectors, with a primary focus on service.

tional Studies, said that the real loser in this decision is climate.

"Since we rely on China for key elements of the green transition, notably solar cells, batteries, and the critical minerals that go into them, the effect of the tariffs will be to make those products more expensive and to slow down the transition that will help the United States meet its climate obligations," said Reinsch.

"The administration's trade policy is

based on politics, and this decision is no exception," Reinsch said. "It is designed to get out in front of (Donald) Trump on tariffs and inoculate Biden against the inevitable accusation that he is soft on China."

Echoing that point, Gary Clyde Hufbauer, a nonresident senior fellow at the Peterson Institute for International Economics, told Xinhua Monday that he thinks the USTR will make very few changes in the Section 301 tariff

rates after reviewing public comment. "The reason is that the Democrats don't want to give Trump an opening to complain that they are 'soft on China,'" said Hufbauer, a former U.S. Treasury official.

Noting that the existing tariffs have already been reflected in U.S. consumer and business prices, Hufbauer said firms that were hoping for relief will now give up. "Neither (Kamala) Harris nor Trump will (offer) much relief for

the next four years," he said.

In late June, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) stated in a concluding statement following the completion of its 2024 Article IV Mission to the United States that "the ongoing intensification of trade restrictions and the increased use of preferences in the treatment of domestic versus foreign commercial interests represent a growing downside risk for both the U.S. and the global economy."

Networking and innovation highlighted at 2024 Inter-Council Summer Dinner

Kuwait's business community comes together for annual Inter-Council Dinner

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 13: The American Business Council - AmCham Kuwait, in collaboration with the British Business Forum, Canadians in Kuwait, French Business Council, German Business Council, Lebanese Business Council, and Portuguese Business Council, proudly hosted the 2024 Inter-Council Summer Dinner.

The Inter-Council Summer Dinner has become a highlight for many, and this year was no exception. Held at Grand Hyatt's Arena VIP Lounge, the evening was filled with lively conversations, delicious food, and plenty of opportunities to meet new faces and reconnect with old friends. Attended by members and friends from each council, this gathering wasn't just about business; it was about bringing people together, fostering genuine connections, and celebrating our shared commitment to a thriving business community.

Building on the Inter-Council's commitment to fostering connections among business leaders, decision-makers, and entrepreneurs, the Inter-Council Summer Dinner provided a vital platform for transforming Kuwait's business environment. Guests were welcomed into an environment that encouraged open dialogue and collaboration, where they could share expertise, discuss market trends, and explore opportunities for innovation and B2B partnerships. This gathering facilitated meaningful conversations about the future of business in Kuwait, emphasizing the power of cooperation to unlock new opportunities.

The 2024 Inter-Council Summer Dinner stands as a testament to the dedication of all involved councils, whose joint efforts contribute significantly to the growth and prosperity of Kuwait's business environment.

The event wrapped up with an exciting raffle draw, showcasing generous prizes donated by our valued partners. Among the highlights were a top-of-the-line coffee machine from Union Trading Co. (UTC), a 50 KD voucher from Best Al Yousifi, a luxurious one-way trip with chauffeur service from UBS, and a one-night stay for two, including breakfast at Stamboul, courtesy of the Grand Hyatt Hotel. Additional prizes included two 25 KD vouchers from Mezzan Pharmacy, two 100ml perfumes from Raquel Fragrances, and a dinner for two at Olio, along with a 60-minute treatment at Talise



Photo during the event.

Spa, provided by Jumeirah Beach Hotel & Spa. These fantastic prizes added an exciting finish to an already memorable event, leaving attendees eagerly looking forward to next year's gathering.

The Inter-Council Summer Dinner continues to be a cornerstone event, fostering collaboration, innovation, and a sense of community among Kuwait's business professionals.

ABCK-AmCham Kuwait: Is a non-profit organization operating since 1985 and is composed of Fortune 500 corporations, small and medium-sized companies, and prominent business leaders and entrepreneurs, both American and Kuwaiti. ABCK-AmCham Kuwait has acted as an advocate for American interest in the state of Kuwait. For More Information, please visit our website at www.amchamkuwait.org

or follow us on our social media channel @abck1985

The British Business Forum:

The British Business Forum (BBF) in Kuwait has been in existence for nearly 50 years. It was set up and operated under the auspices of the British Embassy. It is a non-profit organization run by Business professionals for Business and its prime focus is to connect and promote British organizations and businesses interests in Kuwait using its membership network. Such is collated from both Individual and Corporate classes of membership and ranges in organisations across all sectors and nationalities. The BBF is supportive of the UK Department of International Trade (DTI) and the growth of UK/ Kuwait business relationships and opportunities through its membership and knowledge base of membership who

are subject matter experts (SME's) in many business sectors, including Oil & Gas, Education, Finance, Logistics, Infrastructure, Retail, and Health. The BBF is able to facilitate connections between people and organisations on personal and corporate levels through its network of members and supporters. Those wishing to find out more or are interested in joining us can contact the BBF administration officer, Julie Fautley via admin@bbfkw.com

Canadians in Kuwait:

CIK is a non-profit membership-based organization supported by Canadian and Non-Canadian volunteers. CIK shares Canadian culture with Kuwaitis' utilizing the talent and efforts of its members. CIK members participate actively in various events like Community-based, and national events in Canada and Kuwait. CIK offers

networking to help its members expand their network and feel a home away from home through fun activities and outings. It also contributes to bringing Canadian and Kuwaitis together and provides an opportunity to experience one another's cultures.

CIK offers weekly Friday breakfasts to its members and their friends at various restaurants in Kuwait. Those wishing to find out more or are interested in joining us can contact the CIK via cikeventsq8@gmail.com

The French Business Council:

The French Business Council Kuwait regularly offers companies that so wish the opportunity to benefit from the business expertise of its members in order to facilitate prospecting on the Kuwaiti market.

The French Business Council

partners with Chambers of Commerce and Industry in France throughout the year to organize meetings with companies interested in the Kuwaiti market through practical information, and press reviews sent regularly to members, seminars and online meetings, and practical meetings around different business themes. Follow us on social media @FBCKuwait

The German Business Council:

The German Business Council is a non-profit organization and business platform, founded in 2005, in order to promote and cultivate relations between German-speaking individuals and companies with their counterparts from the host country and the region. Monthly business events and gatherings serve to increase the profile of the German-speaking economic presence and provide regular opportunities for networking and exchange of information. The GBCK is conducting its operations in close and trusting cooperation with the German, Austrian, and Swiss Embassies and institutions in Kuwait. Follow us on social media @gbckuwait

The Lebanese Business Council:

The Lebanese Business Council in Kuwait (LBCK) is a Non-Profit group established in 2020 under the Lebanese Embassy in Kuwait. It is composed of 150 members, including small and medium-sized companies. LBCK's mission is to promote trade between Kuwaiti and Lebanese businesses and to strengthen the economic and cultural exchange between the two countries.

For more information, please visit our website at: www.lbc.org or follow us on our social media channels:

Facebook: Lebanese Business Council in Kuwait

Instagram: lbck_kuwait

Twitter: @lbck Kuwait

The Portuguese Business Council:

The Portuguese Business Council Kuwait is an organization that aims to promote economic and commercial ties between Portugal and Kuwait. It provides a platform for Portuguese companies to network, exchange information, and develop business opportunities in Kuwait. The PBCK serves as a liaison between Portuguese businesses and the Kuwaiti government, helping to facilitate trade and investment between the two countries. www.pbckw.org

Al Dirwaza account offers up to 2% annual profit

KIB announces winners of Al Dirwaza account's draw

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 13: Kuwait International Bank (KIB) announced the winners of the weekly draw held under the Al Dirwaza account's 2024 campaign, which is distinguished by the highest number of winners throughout the year. The second weekly draw, based on customers' July deposits, recently took place in the presence of representatives from the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, as well as representatives from the Bank. The KD 1,000 prize was awarded to Samer Basem Awwad Awwad, Ahmed Bakry Abdelnaeim Deyab, Mahmoud Ali Abdulmontaleb Abdullah, Tambe Mohammed Zaynol Abdeen, and Yaqoub Mohammad Habeeb Alkanderi, whilst the KD 500 prize was awarded to Adel Saud Abdulaziz Alsallal, Abdulrahman Mohammad Fahad Almshwet, Chahd Esam Ismael Elsamra, Avjin Andarank Moshaghan Gharagoz, Kholoud Ibrahim Mohammad Ramadhan, Aslaa Abdullah Jawad Ahmad, and Amal Muhammad Muhammad Allehiy.

It serves to note that AlDirwaza account is a savings account for individual customers, based on the Wakala investment principle, launched by KIB as one of its banking products for individuals. The account is currently the best of its kind in the sector, with annual expected profits of up to 2% disbursed on a monthly basis, where the customer gets an expected profit of 2% for the first 3 months from the account opening date and up to 1% expected rate onward. The expected profits are automatically deposited into the customer's account within the first day of the beginning of each month.

Al Dirwaza account holders are eligible to enter the weekly, monthly and annual draws on the condition of maintaining at least KD 100 in their account. For the weekly and monthly draws, each KD 1 that has completed a full month's cycle in the account will count for one chance, and chances are calculated based on the lowest monthly balance preceding the draw. As for the mega draw, chances are calculated for each KD 1 that completes a two-month cycle in the account – based on the lowest two monthly balances prior to the draw.

Al Dirwaza account is also in compliance with the provisions of Islamic Sharia and approved by the KIB's Sharia



KIB's Al Dirwaza account

Supervisory Board. Furthermore, the account comes with a wide range of benefits, including the ease of opening the account, which does not require a salary transfer, and the customer's ability to open it remotely without visiting a branch through KIB Online on the Bank's website or KIB Mobile application on smartphones.

Additionally, Al Dirwaza account automatically grants customers instant issuance of an ATM card, with a KD 2,000 ATM daily withdrawal limit, as well as the ability to issue credit cards against the cash collateral in the account. To open the account and participate in its draws, a minimum of KD 100 is required and can only be withdrawn upon account closure.

Manal Al-Jassem wins 1 kg of KFH gold in July 2024 draw

Kuwait Finance House announces KD 1,500 winners in AIRabeh draw

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 13: Kuwait Finance House (KFH) announced the winners of the AIRabeh draw with 20 customers winning cash prizes worth KD 1,500 each for the 30th and 31st weeks of 2024, additionally, KFH announced Manal Al-Jassem as the monthly winner of 1 Kilo Gram of KFH Gold for the month of July 2024.

The winners of KD 1,500 are: Hanan Al-Daihani, Zereena Zahir, Abdullah Al-Hujailan, Hanouf Al-Mutairi, Ahmad Elmehy, Abdullateef Al-Jarallah, Khadijah Al-Kandari, Maasoumah Saleem, Ahmad Al-Jouhar, Talal Al-Najjar, Kaleem Abrar, Maryam Saad, Aisha Hamed, Mohammad Al-Tannak, Faleh Azzam, Owayed Al-Rasheedi, Eman Ahmad, Ali Al-Daihany, Mohammad Bin Basheer, Omar Hussain.

The AIRabeh campaign provides prizes and draws that offer customers several chances of winning "weekly, monthly and quarterly". The campaign crowns 536 winners throughout the year.

The draw took place under the supervision of a representative from the Ministry of Commerce and Industry.

The campaign is part of KFH's ongoing efforts to offer exceptional products and services that meet customers' aspirations, enhance the Bank's leadership in the local and global markets, as well as reflect its excellence in offering innovative banking solutions as per the highest quality standards.

The AIRabeh account is a salary account available to customers wishing to transfer their salaries and manage their personal accounts. Customers can open AIRabeh account in any of KFH branches in Kuwait, or through the Bank's online channels. The account can be opened in the Kuwaiti Dinar and is targeted for customers wishing to transfer their salaries and manage their personal accounts. Salary transfer is a prerequisite for customers to enter the draw provided that the transfer of salary to AIRabeh account is constant.

Regarding the terms and conditions of the prizes and draws, a customer is able to deposit 3 salaries during the 3 months prior to the draw, and the minimum balance of the



The campaign visual.

account should not be less than KD 50 at the end of each month during the 3 months prior to the draw. Ten draws take place on a weekly basis for amount of KD 1,500 for 10 winners each, 1 KG of KFH gold will be drawn monthly for one winner and KD 25,000 for one winner every quarter, reaching a total number of 536 winners during the year.

KFH is keen to further meet customers' requirements and aspirations and their increasing needs as well as offer innovative and modern services, therefore achieving customer satisfaction, which is one of the fundamentals at KFH. The Bank has achieved a qualitative shift in the level of financial services by utilizing technology.

Career planning key to sticking with your college major

Study reveals why students change majors and how to avoid It

By Rachael Cody

University of Connecticut

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



Not long after new college students have finished choosing the college that is right for them, they are asked to declare an academic major. For some students, this decision is easy, as their majors may have actually influenced their choice of college. Unfortunately, this decision is not always an easy one to make, and college students frequently change their minds.

For instance, according to the National Center for Education Statistics, 30% of undergraduates changed their major at least once.

While it may be common for undergraduates to change their major, it can cause them to lose time, money and opportunities. Students who experience the loss of these resources may be at risk for dropping out of college altogether.

While earning a Ph.D. in educational psychology, I conducted a study that highlighted students' experiences upon changing their majors. I wanted to know why students made the switch and what that experience was like.

The results of my study showed that students became disoriented about their

majors during their undergraduate education. Oftentimes, they were influenced by professors and advisers who were dismissive of their aspirations and abilities. These students experienced failure, which sometimes ruined their motivation. Failure may be commonplace in certain majors, but these students believed themselves to be outliers, viewing failure as a hit to their self-esteem.

So, what is a college student to do when faced with such an important decision? It is tempting to give into fear, indecisiveness or worry. But rest assured, using the following strategies to select the right major will also help sustain your motivation when the going gets tough.

Creating a career plan is one of the ways that students can bolster their chances of success in their chosen majors. When creating a career plan, think about the career that you want to have in the future and consider the academic and professional paths that could lead to that career. Researchers have found that students who made career plans were more likely to persist in their academic majors.

When making a career plan, you should reflect on your beliefs about work, your interest in various academic subjects and your abilities. Exploring these factors may be one of the reasons why students who complete career plans are more likely to stick with their majors. Use your reflections to guide you as you search for careers that you would enjoy. Then, identify a specific career and outline the steps that you will have to take during your time at college that will help prepare you for that career.

College students sometimes drop out of their selected majors because they have

become disenchanted with the academic area they have chosen. Or they may find themselves more attracted to a different academic major altogether. For others, the desire to switch majors may occur after they get a taste of what it is like to work in that field, particularly during work-placement opportunities. One study found this to be true for some nursing majors, who shared that their first clinical placements showed them that they were not well suited to perform the duties of a nurse.

To avoid these sorts of outcomes, it is important to do your research about the job that you are interested in pursuing, as well as any related jobs. Is there one that would be better suited to your abilities and your preferences? Is there someone you can talk to who can tell you more about what an average day looks like at a particular job? Ask yourself which aspects of the job you could see yourself enjoying, as well as the parts of the job that you think you might dislike. While it is possible to switch out of your major once your interests become more apparent, you will save a good deal of time and energy by initially choosing a major that is aligned with your interests and abilities.

It may come as a surprise when you are presented with incredibly challenging material during your first semester at college. Students who were at the top of their class may be particularly shocked when they receive their first low grade on an exam. You should not assume, however, that you have made the wrong choice of academic major simply because you performed poorly on one test. Negative feedback from college advisers and instructors can influence a student's choice to switch out of their major. (AP)

Philanthropy

NEW YORK, Aug 13, (AP): The unprecedented mental health crisis for children in the United States often surfaces where they spend much of their days: school. With that in mind, Google's philanthropic arm is directly financing high school wellbeing projects on a classroom crowdfunding platform.

Google.org on Monday flash funded all mental health-related listings on DonorsChoose, an online charity where members help purchase supplies requested by public school teachers. With \$10 million in new gifts and the help of actress Selena Gomez, the Silicon Valley giant hopes to center mindfulness as an educational goal at the start of the academic calendar.

Districts have turned to teachers for psychological help after the coronavirus pandemic brought alarming levels of childhood depression, anxiety and fights. But experts say that increased attention has not translated to more philanthropic money overall toward mental health.

Google.org committed earlier this year to back nonprofits that support kids' mental health and online safety. Monday's announcement - which will also provide \$500 vouchers for eligible DonorsChoose campaigns in the near future - ups that pledge to \$25 million.

The move comes amid widespread criticism and lawsuits claiming Google-owned YouTube and other social media sites have fueled the childhood mental health crisis by deliberately designing addictive features.

Justin Steele, Google.org's Director for the America, said its initia-

tive highlights Google's efforts to lead this "important conversation" and "be one part of contributing to positive solutions."

Its internet browser's own data has showcased the rising interest; Steele said searches for "teen mental health" doubled over the last four years.

"Obviously, we want people to be able to take advantage of all the amazing things technology has to offer," Steele said. "But we also want them to be able to do it in a healthy and safe way."

Google.org is giving \$6 million overall to DonorsChoose. The technology company also announced \$1.5 million in donations to the Jed Foundation, the Steve Fund and Child Mind Institute - groups focused on emotional wellbeing among young adults, people of color and children, respectively. The organizations will design half-hour training sessions to help educators navigate new mental health challenges. Teachers can earn \$200 DonorsChoose credits upon course completion.

Impact

Gomez's Rare Impact Fund, which seeks to drive more money into this "underfunded field," is receiving \$1.25 million.

The "Only Murders in the Building" star has been vocal about her own bipolar diagnosis. In a Monday blog post, Gomez said she knows firsthand that "caring adults" can make a big difference for teenagers.

"As young people find their way through the world, it's crucial that they get guidance in building healthy, positive and productive mental health habits," Gomez wrote. "Few people are in a better position to

help do this than teachers."

The need to address behavioral issues in high school was further emphasized by a recent report from The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Students said they faced bullying and missed school due to safety concerns at higher rates than previous years in data released August 6.

Yes, Mindful Philanthropy Executive Director Alyson Niemann acknowledged, the greater focus on mental health has brought minimal funding boosts for nonprofits in this space. But she said the dollars don't match the new levels of awareness.

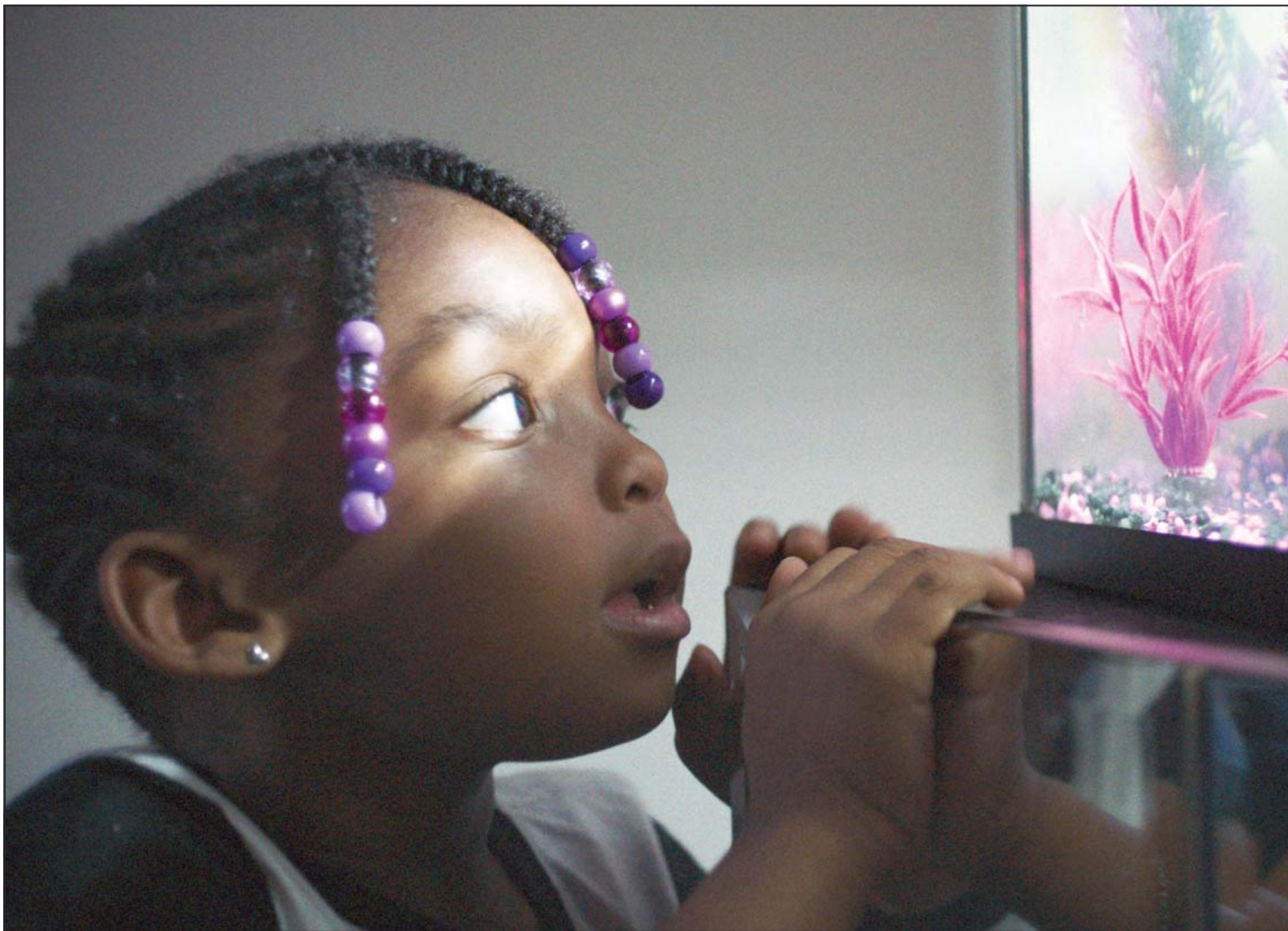
One major barrier is that donors don't know which solutions work, according to Niemann. School-based mental health support is one of the most effective remedies, she said. That's where many students begin the path to treatment and find trusted adults in teachers or coaches.

DonorsChoose CEO Alix Guerrier emphasized that teachers are not substitutes for mental health professionals. But he said DonorsChoose has seen a fourfold increase over the past four years in the number of mental health submissions. Such requests include saucer chairs for a "calm corner" and meditative stuffed animals that guide deep breathing.

"There is no limit to teachers' creativity," Guerrier said.

Mental health has long been a priority for Aileen Gendrano Adao in her Los Angeles classrooms. The high school English teacher said she asks students to ground themselves with three deep breaths at the start of class. Wall posters affirm students' self-worth.

Variety



This image released by Netflix shows Aubrey Smith in a scene from 'Daughters.' (AP)

Film

Film captures the power of father-daughter visits

'Daughters' reveals deep bonds, healing

PARK CITY, Utah, Aug 13, (Agencies): Angela Patton has devoted her career to listening to the needs of young girls. Over a decade ago, the CEO of the nonprofit Girls For a Change and founder of Camp Diva Leadership Academy helped start a program in Richmond, Virginia, that created a daddy daughter dance for girls whose fathers are in prison. The "Date With Dad" idea wasn't hers, however. It came from a 12-year-old Black girl.

The popularity of a 2012 TEDWomen talk about the initiative, which has been viewed over 1 million times, had many filmmakers clamoring to tell the story. But she didn't feel anyone was right until Natalie Rae came along.

"Natalie actually made the effort and put the energy in to come to visit with me, to meet the families that I have worked with in the past, and just to learn and be a willing participant," Patton told The Associated Press during the Sundance Film Festival in January.

The two began an eight-year journey as co-directors to make the documentary "Daughters," which follows four young girls as they prepare to reunite with their fathers for a dance in a Washington, D.C., jail. Executive produced by Kerry Washington, the Sundance-prize winning film is begins streaming on Netflix on Wednesday.

With intimate moments inside the homes of the girls, and glimpses into the intensive 12-week therapy session the fathers participate in prior, "Daughters" paints a moving and complex portrait of fractured bonds and healing.

"It was just one of the most powerful stories I had ever come across," Rae said. "For me, it was a beautiful example of what change can happen in the world when we listen to the wisdom of young women. This is a young Black girls' idea, and she knew what her and her father needed."

In the same spirit, the two filmmakers agreed that they wanted "Daughters" to be from the girls' per-

spectives.

"I am always an advocate for them," Patton said. "I hear them saying that 'My dad is valuable to me but I'm really ticked off at him right now.' Or 'My dad is great, and someone else is trying to tell me that he's not and I want you to not see my father as the bad man because he made a poor decision. But he still loves me.' I'm hearing all of these lived experiences through many girls in the community. I want to see how we can help them."

Relationships

Though Patton has for many years worked with Black families in Washington and Richmond, for the film there would have to be another level of trust in establishing close relationships with the girls and their mothers, asking what they needed and were comfortable with and knowing when to turn the cameras on and off.

"You have to get to know the families. I come from understanding that in order for us to build trust in the community, I have to co-create with them," Patton said. "I've been doing it for over 20 years. I kind of got a reputation. ... Sister Angela is what they call me. You know, 'She's got our back. She's going to protect us.'"

Rae was a newcomer to this world, but Patton said that her co-director "took it to the next level" getting to know their subjects and earning their trust.

"These are really lifetime relationships," Rae said. "Most of the time we're not filming. It's going and spending time being invited to see someone at the hospital, going to a birthday party. Aubrey (one of the subjects) and I made her dad a birthday cake one year and got to talk to him on the phone and just told him what it looked like."

"Daughters" is what some people are calling a "three tissue" movie that is sure to pull at heartstrings. The filmmakers hope that it can also be

an agent of change, a powerful example of the importance of visits in which girls can hug their fathers.

"We really want to show the impact on families and daughters from this system and incarcerated fathers and bring more awareness around the importance around touch visits and family connection," Rae said.

Patton added: "I think there's so many things to take away because it's a film that just fills your spirit. You cannot leave not thinking that you should do something, even if it's just to dial your father's number, and just say, 'I love you, dad.'"

Also:

BEIJING: Domestic comedy "Successor" remained on top of the Chinese mainland's daily box office on Monday, grossing approximately 24.47 million yuan (about 3.42 million U.S. dollars), according to the China Movie Data Information Network.

The comedy accounted for over 27 percent of the total box office revenue on Monday, with its accumulated sales since its debut on July 16 topping 3 billion yuan.

It was followed by the Chinese animated film "White Snake: Afloat" on the daily box office chart, which raked in about 20.92 million yuan on Monday.

The film is based on the classic Chinese tale of the White Snake, one of the most popular folk love stories about the romance between a young man and a snake spirit who has taken human form.

The third installment of the "White Snake" series, this movie hit the silver screen on the traditional Qixi Festival, also known as Chinese Valentine's Day.

Realistic drama "Upstream," which debuted on Friday, came in third with 20.36 million yuan in revenue on Monday.

The total box office revenue on the Chinese mainland on Monday was around 90.4 million yuan.

LONDON: Street artist Banksy on Monday unveiled a new mural of a rhinoceros that looks like it is climbing on top of a car in London - the eighth animal-themed artwork he has posted in the past week in a collection that includes elephants, a goat, a wolf, pelicans and more.

The elusive graffiti artist, who has never confirmed his full identity, has been posting the new work on his Instagram account every day since last Monday. The latest piece in **Charlton**, southeast London, features a rhino on a wall and gives the impression the animal is mounting a broken-down car parked in front of the building.

On Sunday, the artist claimed another artwork depicting piranhas which appeared on a police box near the Central Criminal Court, known as the **Old Bailey**, in London.

A small crowd of people flocked to the fish tank-themed artwork Monday, taking photos and selfies as workmen placed barriers around it. A spokesman for the City of London Corporation said it was looking at options to preserve it.

Other pieces unveiled last week included pelicans that appeared on the side of a fish shop in **Walthamstow**, east London, and a silhouette of a howling wolf that was painted on a satellite dish on a garage roof in south London. (AP)



COPENHAGEN, Denmark: Sweden on Monday dropped its investigation into a backstage altercation in May involving the Dutch contestant in the Eurovision Song Contest who was expelled from the competition hours before the final.

After fan favorite **Joost Klein** was booted out, organizers said the reason was a probe by Swedish police into "a complaint made by a female member of the production crew."

In its new statement, the Swedish Prosecution Authority said the investigation concluded that "the man made a movement that hit the woman's camera," adding that "the course of events was fast and was perceived differently by the witnesses of the incident."

"I cannot prove that the act was capable of causing serious fear or that the man had any such intention," senior prosecutor **Fredrik Jönsson** said.

He did not name Klein. The 26-year-old singer and rapper had

been a bookies' favorite with his song "Europapa," an upbeat ode to the continent's diversity that is also a tribute to his parents, who died when he was a child.

The last-minute disqualification was unprecedented in the 68-year history of Eurovision. Dutch broadcaster **AVROTROS**, one of dozens of public broadcasters that



Klein



Prasad

collectively fund and broadcast the contest, said at the time it was "shocked by the decision." (AP)



SUVA: Fiji's Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Finance **Biman Prasad** has highlighted the pivotal role that films play in society, saying the country's film industry has

shown great potential for growth and is increasingly becoming a critical industry for Fiji's economy.

Prasad said the Pacific island country is becoming "a preferred film production location in the world," drawing attention for its stunning cultural diversity and geographical features, reported Fiji Broadcasting Corporation on

Tuesday.

Movies are not just forms of entertainment, but also serve as powerful mediums of storytelling that resonate across various demographics, the deputy prime minister said.

He emphasized the necessity of fostering a supportive environment for local filmmakers. (Xinhua)

People & Places

Books

Sociopath mystery

Newman debuts new 'bold voice' in fiction

NEW YORK, Aug 13, (AP): Before you read a word of "How to Leave the House" by Nathan Newman, it may help to know that a TV adaptation is already in the works. This is a book that unfolds like it's destined for the small screen. "It was a cinematic sunset: pinks, oranges and periwinkle blues... Beneath it all was lonely Natwest, a single figure on the empty street..." That passage is about midway through the book, but you get the point. There are other parts that read like stage directions and the novel's point of view switches from inside the mind of our "hero," Natwest, to the perspectives of various town residents he encounters during the day.

Let's back up. This is the story of a young Englishman named Natwest. It is the day before he departs his hometown for the first time for university. He's intelligent, opinionated, and planning to study art history. He has ordered something embarrassing and the Royal Mail has not delivered it on time. The object in question is revealed on page 50, but it's too funny to spoil. The plot, such as it is, unfolds over the course of 24 hours as Natwest leaves his house initially for a trip to the post office. When it turns out another town resident has taken possession of the package instead, Natwest's journey of discovery truly begins.

It's during his encounters with town residents that Natwest's perspective begins to change. The pretentious and self-centered young man gives way to someone whose interior monologue sounds like this near the end: "Natwest had always imagined himself to be the main character. ... He'd always thought he was leaving them (the town's residents) behind, but it dawned on him now that it was more likely they were leaving him behind. He was but a minor character in their lives."

Those lives are rich with pathos and humor. There's a dentist in love with a trans woman who loves to paint, but only human mouths. There's an imam who is at heart a cinephile. And a teenager having suicidal thoughts after the leak of nude pictures on the internet. Mix it all up with a secret surrounding Natwest's own origin story, and you begin to see how it might be a better TV show than it is a book.

But don't let that stop you from reading it. Fair warning: It is graphic in its description of sexual encounters and doesn't shy away from difficult topics, including self-harm. The humor helps take the edge off a little, but Newman certainly has something to say about the up-and-coming generation. This is a bold new voice, and one to watch.

Professor Maura Delaney's book, "The Good Sociopath," is about to hit the market with a neurosurgeon, Dr. Craig Canning, as her primary example. The publisher has even put his photograph on the cover.

Canning is arrogant and lacks genuine emotions (although he's good at faking them), but his exceptional surgical skills have saved hundreds of lives. Canning doesn't care one whit about his patients, but he glories in his reputation as one of the best in his profession.

Then a young woman plunges to her death from a balcony in an apartment building where Canning also resides. Police rule it an accident, but Maura says she isn't so sure. If Canning was responsible, Maura's academic career will be in ruins, so she hires newly-minted private eye Annalisa Vega, a former Chicago PD detective, to recheck the police work. So begins "All The Way Gone," Joanna Schaffhausen's fourth novel featuring Annalisa.

Famous for tracking down a serial murderer dubbed the Lovelorn Killer, Annalisa is skeptical of the very idea of a good sociopath. Nevertheless, it's a widely recognized phenomenon. Most sociopaths are not criminals. High functioning ones often possess qualities — including exceptional intelligence, charisma, charm and the ability to stay calm under pressure — that help them succeed in fields such as medicine, law, politics and business.

But when Vega meets Canning, she immediately gets a "bad vibe."

Meanwhile, Vega's newly-discovered teenage stepdaughter, Cassidy, the product of one of her husband's extramarital affairs, needs help with her own problem. Cassidy's girlfriend, Naomi, will die if she doesn't get a kidney transplant, and so far no match has been found.

The best remaining chance would be her mother, who abandoned the family when Naomi was a toddler, but no one knows where she's gone. As it turns out, she's a psychopath, too, with no possibility that she's one of the good ones.

Vega juggles the two cases with the skill readers of the series have come to expect of her. The dueling plot lines are also in Schaffhausen's wheelhouse. She possesses a doctorate in psychology and has a long-standing interest in brain development.

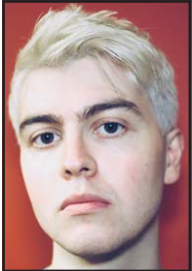
The author's prose is clear and tight, and she does a fine job of moving the story along at a swift and sometimes frantic pace, piling on twists that readers are unlikely to see coming.

Also:

NEW YORK: Thirteen popular books have been banned from all public schools in Utah in the first wave of bans expected under a new law that prohibits books when at least three of the state's 41 school district boards claim they contain pornographic or indecent material.

Allowing just a few districts to make decisions for the whole state makes the law one of the most lenient for book banning in the United States, according to PEN America, an organization that advocates for free speech and tracks book banning around the U.S.

The state school board released its first list of banned books this month, which includes a popular young adult novel series by author Sarah J. Maas called "A Court of Thorns and Roses" and books by Judy Blume and Margaret Atwood. The state's two largest school districts, which are located in conservative parts of the state, led the charge to ban the books. Davis School District voted to ban all 13 books on the list, and Alpine School District banned seven of them, including Maas' series.



Newman



Korean American star Jay Park performs at MyungHwa Live Hall for a fan meeting on Sunday, Aug. 11, in Seoul. (AP)

Music

Singer reconnects with fans after 11 years

Park on K-pop and keeping it real

SEOUL, South Korea, Aug 13, (AP): Korean American star Jay Park is known for many things, including being a rapper and R&B artist, as well as a garlic health drink enthusiast.

Park held a two-day fan meeting in Seoul over the weekend for the first time in over a decade. Between performing his hits, Park, known for his dedication to health drinks, minced garlic on stage for two fans who won a lucky draw to taste his garlic health drinks. During the show, fans waved garlic-shaped light sticks.

Hailing from Washington state, Park stumbled into South Korea's competitive pop industry after his mother suggested he try out for a K-pop audition, which he initially thought was just a talent show. He moved to South Korea, became a trainee under JYP Entertainment, and later debuted as a member of K-pop band 2PM.

His stint with the band was cut short in 2009 when his old online comments about his difficulty adapting to an unfamiliar country surfaced, drawing harsh criticism from the media and the public. He eventually parted ways with the band and returned to his hometown. After Park's return to the United States, public perceptions changed after people realized that his online messages had been taken out of context, leading to a strong demand for his return. He re-debuted as a solo artist in 2010.

Park has become one of the biggest names in the Asian entertainment industry as a recording artist, founder of three well-known South Korean music labels and an entrepreneur, with a Korean liquor brand.

In an interview, Park talked about his long-overdue fan meeting, being the first K-pop star to open an OnlyFans account and his upcoming foray into K-pop management with two bands set to debut.

His interview with The Associated Press has been edited for length and clarity.

Question: It's your first fan meeting in more than a decade. How did this come about and how was the meeting with fans?

Answer: I received a lot of support and love from the fans, but I felt like I never deserved that. I also wanted people to know the real me, as a person and as an artist. My perception back then was like, I didn't want to rely on the fans too much and just continuously take money from them. That's not what I wanted to do. But I realized they want to show their support and it's about (me) giving back as well. So right now it's just a perfect opportunity to meet with my fans.

Q: You just talked about the "real me." Who is the real you? Is there a side of you that you want people to see more?

A: I don't want people to see anything. If you see me, you see me. If you don't, you don't. I don't have an artist name. My name is Jay Park. There's not a lot of people that are active under their real name. I'm probably like one of the only ones. I've been like that for, what, 16 years now? And I work with people that I want to work with. I do music that I want to do. I'm not hungry or thirsty for recognition anymore or to be accepted.

Q: What was it like meeting your fans after a long time?

A: What surprised me was a lot of my fans were a little more shy, I felt. But I think it's because, for me, there's no one that really manages my fandom. So it's like everybody's just kind of scattered around, so when they all come together in one spot for the first time in 11 years, it's kind of like awkward for them as well. It's awkward for me. So everyone was very shy. I'm glad that we can meet 11 years later

and celebrate each other.

Q: I heard you're the first K-pop star to open up an OnlyFans account. What's the reason behind it?

A: I came out with a song called "McNasty" which is kind of reminiscent of (my previous song) "Mommae." So it's a little bit more raunchy, explicit. I've put out like hundreds of songs and the promotion can't be the same every time. Especially because we're not spending millions and millions of dollars. We have to be creative. It's not like I created OnlyFans all of a sudden to do porn. But that's the thing. I used that branding to market myself in the song, to bring awareness to the song and it worked just as planned. It became a huge thing.

Q: How do you keep up with trends?

A: I don't keep up with trends. I have certain morals and certain standards, and I just abide by those standards. And it's led me to where I'm at right now. I never cut any corners. I don't take shortcuts. So I think that that's taken me a long way. And I've always tried to be the best human being and try to carry myself as a good person.

Q: Your Korean liquor brand, WONSOJU, is selling globally. Why did you get into the soju (a distilled clear Korean alcoholic beverage) business?

A: I wanted to have traditionally distilled premium soju and have it go global so that people realize soju is not just a cheap alcohol you can just get drunk off. There's real nice soju. Like there's good whiskey, there's good sake, there's good soju as well.

Q: Is soju your favorite liquor?

A: I like soju and wine.

Q: You've hinted at an upcoming album. When is the release?

A: It's supposed to come out in October.



Actor Vince Vaughn, (right), poses with guest Mel Gibson during a ceremony to award Vaughn a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame, Monday, Aug. 12, in Los Angeles. (AP)



Paak



Snoop

Variety

LOS ANGELES: Although he is most prominently known for his decades-long rap career and being everyone's "uncle," Snoop Dogg has proven his talent extends beyond what he does in the recording studio.

That's been evident the past two weeks, as Snoop became a breakout star of the Paris Olympics, bearing the torch, hitting the gym with the US Olympic weightlifting team and freestyleing to horses trotting during the dressage competition.

He also performed, along with Dr. Dre, at the closing ceremony to hand off the games to its 2028 host city: Los Angeles.

It's the latest in a series of "side quests" (extra adventures outside the world of music) by the hip-hop legend - from co-hosting a cooking show with Martha Stewart to unexpectedly stepping in during a Wrestlemania match - that have made him a social media sensation and keep fans amazed at his versatility.

Snoop Dogg's time in Paris for the 2024 Olympics left the world with one question: is there anything he can't do?

Before the Games kicked off, he joined athletes at the US Olympic trials, where he ran the 200-meter dash in 34.44 seconds and got a lesson in pole vaulting.

He tested his swimming skills, joining Michael Phelps, the most decorated Olympian of all time, for a special swimming lesson as part of NBC's coverage. He also practiced fencing, weightlifting and even has his own Olympic pin that features him blowing clouds of smoke that form the Olympic rings.

One of the artist's most important jobs at the Games was bearing the Olympic torch. He carried the highly-recognized symbol through Saint-Denis, smiling and blowing kisses to fans chanting his name.

In June, Snoop went viral for his unique commentary at the Reds vs. Brewers game. (AP)

PARIS: Anderson.Paak embraced the process, seeing it as an opportunity to flex a new creative muscle. It helped him while recording the upbeat joyous track "Hello World" with Gwen Stefani and OneRepublic's Ryan Tedder.

"We hope to bring a taste of that celebratory spirit to the world that can stay with them," Paak said on Thursday before he performed "Hello World" for the first time at a Paris restaurant. He later spun records under his other stage name, DJ Pee .Wee, for little more than an hour.

Tedder wrote and produced "Hello World," which is being supported by the International Olympic Committee and Coca-Cola. The trick was to juggle both parties' demands for the right message to "inspire athletes and fans" before unveiling it to the masses.

"Ryan already had a really good structure and foundation of where the song would go," said Paak, an eight-time Grammy winner. In 2022, he and Bruno Mars performing as Silk Sonic, won Grammys in all four major categories, including song and record of the year for "Leave the Door Open."

Paak has collaborated with some of music's best, including Dr. Dre, Kendrick

Lamar, Snoop Dogg and J. Cole.

"Sometimes when I get in the studio, I just go freeform or whatever comes out," he said. "This had some parameters. But I think sometimes it can be really cool exercise for artists." (AP)

LISBON: Museums and attractions managed by the Museums and Monuments of Portugal (MMP) saw over 5.1 million visitors last year, highlighting a notable recovery in cultural tourism following the pandemic, according to a press release issued on Monday.

Data released by MMP reveal that nearly 5.16 million people visited the 38 sites it

oversees, marking a 10-percent increase, or an additional 444,000 visitors, compared to the previous year.

Foreign tourists represented 57.6 percent of these visits, and paid entries accounted for 76 percent of the total, the document said.

The Jeronimos Monastery in Lisbon was the most-visited site, drawing 965,526 visitors, followed by the Sagres Fortress and Guimaraes Castle. Among museums, the National Tile Museum in Lisbon topped the list with 276,209 visitors, followed by the National Coach Museum.

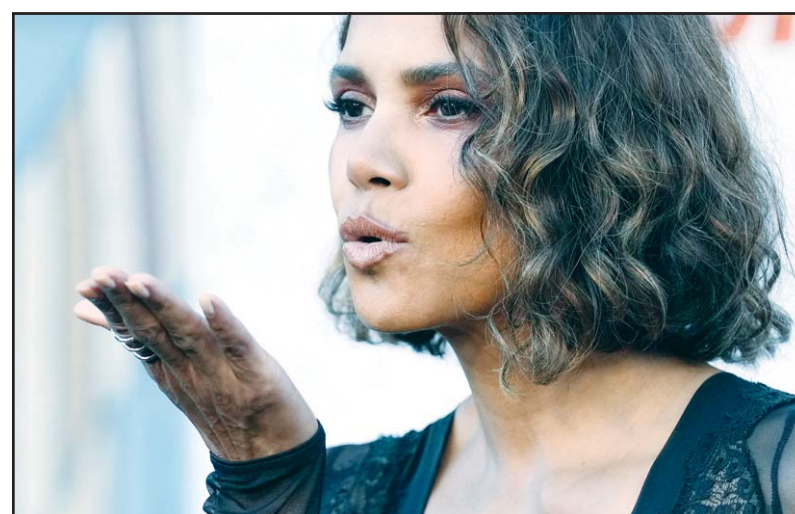
The data reflect a steady recovery from the significant decline experienced during the COVID-19 pandemic, which had caused a 70-percent drop in both visitors and revenue, according to the press release. (Xinhua)

BEIJING: Multiple Chinese authorities have jointly organized a series of themed events nationwide to celebrate the Qixi Festival, also known as Chinese Valentine's Day, which falls on Saturday this year.

These events included food and cultural merchandise markets, exemplary group weddings and various tourism activities featuring unique ethnic customs and cultural experiences.

On Saturday, the organizers, including the Publicity Department of the Communist Party of China Central Committee, the Ministry of Civil Affairs, and the Ministry of Culture and Tourism, have also launched flagship events in six localities, including Yiyuan County in Shandong Province, Lushi County in Henan Province, and Guangzhou City in Guangdong Province.

These events aim to fully tap into the cultural value of the Qixi Festival, nurture good values for familial and romantic relationships, and cultivate a new trend of social civility, according to the organizers. (Xinhua)



Halle Berry, a cast member in 'The Union,' blows a kiss to photographers at the premiere of the Netflix film at the Egyptian Theatre, Monday, Aug. 12, in Los Angeles. (AP)

Dementia risk factors identified in new report are all preventable

Addressing risk factors can cut dementia rates by 45%

By Eric B. Larson, University of Washington and Laura Gitlin, Drexel University

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

Nearly half of all dementia cases could be delayed or prevented altogether by addressing 14 possible risk factors, including vision loss and high cholesterol. That is the key finding of a new study that we and our colleagues published in the journal *The Lancet*.

Dementia, a rapidly increasing global challenge, affects an estimated 57 million worldwide, and this number is expected to increase to 153 million by 2050 worldwide. Although the prevalence of dementia is on the decline in high-income countries, it continues to increase in low- and middle-income countries.

This third updated report of the Lancet Commission on Dementia offers good news and a strong message: Policymakers, clinicians, individuals and families can be ambitious about prevention and reduce dementia risk; and for those living with dementia and their caregivers, support their quality of life using evidence-based approaches.

The new report confirms 12 previously identified potentially modifiable risk factors from two previous reports, published in 2017 and 2020. It also offers new evidence supporting two additional modifiable risk factors: vision loss and high levels of low-density lipoprotein (LDL) cholesterol, often called "bad" cholesterol.

Our study of published evidence found that collectively, addressing 14 modifiable risk factors could potentially reduce the prevalence of dementia by 45% worldwide. Even greater risk reductions could be possible in low- and middle-income countries and for people with low income in higher-income countries given the higher prevalence of dementia, health disparities and risk factors in these populations.

The report further indicates that reducing these 14 risks can increase the number of healthy years of life and reduce the length of time with poor health in people with dementia.

Additionally, the report cites clinical trials showing that nonpharmacological approaches, such as using activities tailored to interests and abilities, can reduce dementia-related symptoms and improve quality of life.

We are a general internist and an applied sociologist and intervention scientist, and our work focuses on memory and wellness in older adults. Together with 25 other internationally recognized dementia experts under the leadership of psychiatry professor Dr. Gill Livingston, we carefully reviewed the evidence to derive recommendations for prevention, intervention and care.

Prevention

The rapid growth of aging populations worldwide is a triumph of better public and personal health throughout the entire life span. Yet, given the lack of a dementia cure, this report highlights the importance of prevention as well as supporting quality of life for those with a dementia diagnosis.

In the new report, our team proposed an ambitious program for preventing dementia that could be implemented at the individual, community and policy levels

and across the life span from early life through mid and late life. The key points include:

- In early life, improving general education.
- In midlife, addressing hearing loss, high LDL cholesterol, depression, traumatic brain injury, physical inactivity, diabetes, smoking, hypertension, obesity and excessive alcohol.
- In later life, reducing social isolation, air pollution and vision loss.

Together, these add up to the Lancet Commission on Dementia's estimate that 45% of dementia risk can be reduced. And an abundance of new research shows that when risk factors are addressed, such as exposure to air pollution, they are linked with improved cognition and likely reduction of dementia risk.

New evidence supports the notion that in high-income countries, reducing dementia risk can translate to more healthy years, years free of dementia and a shorter duration of ill health for people who develop dementia.

The 45% reduction in dementia risk across the world's population is based on a calculation that assumes that risk factors are causal and can be eliminated. It shows how dementia prevention is critical and the impact it would have on individuals and families.

The commission emphasized the need for more research to identify additional risk factors, test risk factor changes in clinical trials, provide guidance for public health efforts, and identify and evaluate strategies for implementing and scaling evidence-based programs that support people with dementia and caregivers.

The updated report has worldwide public health and research impact and is being widely disseminated. It serves as a guideline to clinicians and policymakers and outlines new research directions. (AP)

Cut cancer deaths by 50 pct

Biden announces \$150m in cancer research fund

WASHINGTON, Aug 13, (AP) - President Joe Biden is zeroing in on the policy goals closest to his heart now that he's no longer seeking a second term and will visit New Orleans on Tuesday to promote his administration's "moonshot" initiative aiming at dramatically reducing cancer deaths.

The president and first lady Jill Biden will tour medical facilities, then, at Tulane University, will help announce \$150 million in awards from the Advanced Research Projects Agency for Health. Those will support eight teams of researchers around the country working on ways to help surgeons more successfully remove tumors for people facing cancer.

The teams receiving awards include ones from Tulane, Dartmouth College, Johns Hopkins University, Rice University, the University of California, San Francisco, the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, the University of Washington and Cision Vision in Mountain View, California.

Before he leaves office in January, Biden hopes to move the US closer to the goal he set in 2022 to cut US cancer fatalities by 50% over the next 25 years, and to improve the lives of caregivers and those suffering from cancer.

Experts say the objective is attainable - with adequate investments.

"We're curing people of diseases that we previously thought were absolutely intractable and not survivable," said Karen Knudsen, CEO of the American Cancer Society and the American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network.

Diagnosed

Cancer is the second-highest killer of people in the US after heart disease. This year alone, the American Cancer Society estimates that 2 million new cancer cases will be diagnosed and 611,720 people will die of cancer diseases.

Still, "if all innovation ended today and we could just get people access to the innovations that we know about right now, we think we could reduce cancer mortality by another 20 to 30%," Knudsen said.

The issue is personal enough for Biden that, in his recent Oval Office address about bowing out of the 2024 campaign, the president promised to keep fighting for "my cancer moonshot so we can end cancer as we know it."

"Because we can do it," Biden said then.

He said in that speech that the initiative would be a priority of his final

months in office, along with working to strengthen the economy and defend abortion rights, protecting children from gun violence and making changes to the Supreme Court, which he called "extreme" in its current makeup during a recent event.

Both the president and first lady Jill Biden have had lesions removed from their skin in the past that were determined to be basal cell carcinoma, a common and easily treated form of cancer. In 2015, their eldest son, Beau, died of an aggressive brain cancer at age 46.

The president's public schedule has been much quieter since he left the race and endorsed Vice President Kamala Harris, making Tuesday's trip stand out.

Advocates have praised Biden for keeping the spotlight on cancer, bringing stakeholders together and gathering commitments from private companies, nonprofit organizations and patient groups.

Attention

They say that the extra attention the Biden administration has paid to the matter has put the nation on track to cut cancer death rates by at least half, preventing more than 4 million deaths from the disease, by 2047. It has done so by bolstering access to cancer treatments and reminding people of the importance of recommended screening, which hit a setback during the coronavirus pandemic.

"President Biden's passion and commitment to this effort has made monumental differences for the entire cancer community, including those who are suffering from cancer," said Jon Retzlaff, the chief policy officer at the American Association for Cancer Research.

Looking ahead, Retzlaff said, "The No. 1 thing is for us to see robust, sustained and predictable annual funding support for the National Institutes of Health. And, if we see that through NIH and through the National Cancer Institute, the programs that have been created through the cancer moonshot will be allowed to continue."

Initiatives under Biden include changes that make screening and cancer care more accessible to more people, said Knudsen, with the American Cancer Society.

For instance, Medicare has started to pay for follow-up colonoscopies if a stool-based test suggests cancer, she said, and Medicare will now pay for navigation services to guide patients through the maze of their cancer care.

Seniors embracing technology

Older Americans are adapting to the age of 'artificial intelligence'

NORTHFIELD, Ill., Aug 13, (AP) - The students - most with gray hair, some with canes, all at least in their 60s - couldn't believe what they were hearing.

"Oh, my God," whispered a retired college professor.

"Does it come with viruses?" wondered a bewildered woman scribbling notes in the second row.

A 79-year-old in a black-and-white floral shirt then asked the question on many minds: "How do you know if it is fake or not?"

This is how older adults - many of whom lived through the advent of refrigeration, the transition from radio to television and the invention of the Internet - are grappling with artificial intelligence: taking a class. Sitting in a classroom in an airy senior center in a Chicago suburb, the dozen students were learning about the latest - and possibly greatest - technological leap in their lives.

And they are not alone. Across the country, scores of such classes have sprung up to teach seniors about AI's ability to transform their lives and the threats the technology poses.

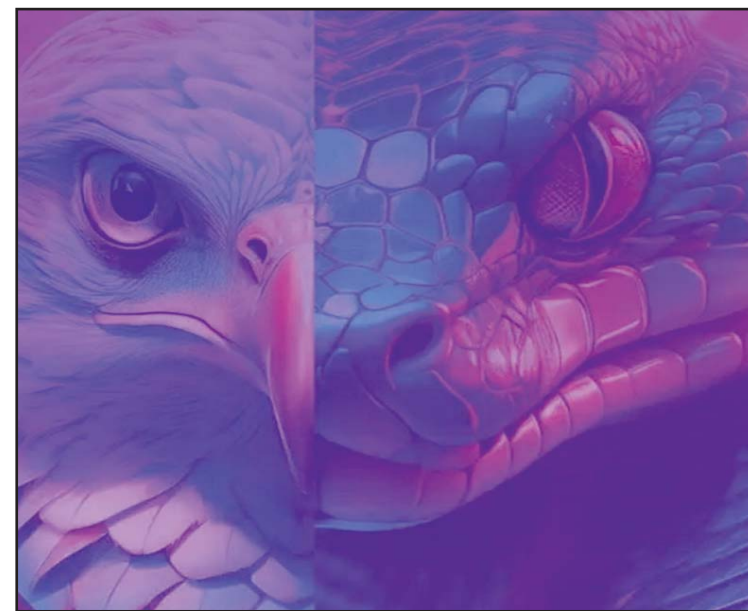
Revolution

"I saw ice boxes turn into refrigerators, that is how long I have been around," said Barbara Winston, 89, who paid to attend the class put on at the North Shore Senior Center in Northfield. "And I think this is probably the greatest technical revolution that I will see in my lifetime."

Older adults find themselves in a unique moment with technology. Artificial intelligence offers significant benefits for seniors, from the ability to curb loneliness to making it easier for them to get to medical appointments.

But it also has drawbacks that are uniquely threatening to this older group of Americans: A series of studies have found that senior citizens are more susceptible to both scams perpetrated using artificial intelligence and believing the types of misinformation that are being supercharged by the technology. Experts are particularly concerned about the role deepfakes and other AI-produced misinformation could play in politics.

Winston left the class to start her own AI journey, even if others remained skeptical. When she got home,



The Falcon Mamba 7B is the No. 1 globally performing open source State Space Language Model (SSLM) by UAE's TII. (Business Wire)

Falcon Mamba 7B unveiled

UAE's TII revolutionizes AI with new language model

ABU DHABI, United Arab Emirates, Aug 13, (AP) - The Technology Innovation Institute (TII), a leading global scientific research center and the applied research pillar of Abu Dhabi's Advanced Technology Research Council (ATRC), has released a new large language model in its Falcon series, the Falcon Mamba 7B. The new model is the no. 1 globally performing open source State Space Language Model (SSLM) in the world, as independently verified by Hugging Face.

As the first SSLM for Falcon, it departs from prior Falcon models which all use a transformer-based architecture. This new Falcon Mamba 7B model is yet another example of the pioneering research the institute is conducting and the breakthrough tools and products it makes available to the community in an open source format.

H.E. Faisal Al Bannai, Secretary General of ATRC and Adviser to the UAE President for Strategic Research and Advanced Technology Affairs, said: "The Falcon Mamba 7B marks TII's fourth consecutive top-ranked AI model, reinforcing Abu Dhabi as a global hub for AI research and development. This achievement highlights the UAE's unwavering commitment to innovation."

the retired professor downloaded books on the technology, researched the platforms she wanted to use from

her kitchen table and eventually queried ChatGPT about how to treat a personal medical ailment.

"This is the beginning of my education," she said, her floral cup of coffee nearby. "I'm not worried about protecting myself. I'm too old to worry about that."

Classes like these aim to familiarize aging early adopters with the myriad ways the technology could better their lives but also encourage skepticism about how artificial intelligence can distort the truth.

Balanced skepticism, say experts on the technology, is critical for seniors who plan to interact with AI.

"It's tricky," said Michael Gershbein, the instructor of the class in Northfield. "Overall, the suspicion that is there on the part of seniors is good but I don't want them to become paralyzed from their fears and not be willing to do anything online."

Implications

The questions in his class outside Chicago ranged from the absurd to the practical to the academic. Why are so many new shoes no longer including shoelaces? Can AI create a multi-day itinerary for a visit to Charleston, South Carolina? What are the geopolitical implications of artificial intelligence?

Gershbein, who teaches classes on a range of technological topics, said interest in AI has ballooned in the last nine months. The 52-year-old teaches an AI course once or twice a week, he said, and aims to create a "safe space where (seniors) can come in and we can discuss all the issues they may be hearing bits and pieces of but we can put it all together and they can ask questions."

During a 90-minute-long session on a June Thursday, Gershbein discussed deepfakes - videos that use generative AI to make it appear someone said something they did not. When he played a few deepfakes, the seniors sat agog. They could not believe how real the fakes seemed. There are widespread concerns that such videos could be used to trick voters, especially seniors.

The threats to seniors go beyond politics, however, and range from basic misinformation on social media sites to scams that use voice-cloning technology to trick them. An AARP report published last year that Americans over 60 lose \$28.3 billion annually to financial extortion schemes, some assisted by AI.

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SPORTS

'You gave us strength, and thank you for that'

Djokovic & Jokic lead Serbia's triumphant return from Paris Games

BELGRADE, Aug 13, (Xinhua): Thousands of fans and sports enthusiasts gathered outside the Belgrade City Assembly on Monday to welcome Serbia's Olympic medalists returning from Paris, including Olympic gold medalist Novak Djokovic and multiple NBA MVP Nikola Jokic.

Before stepping onto the balcony of the assembly building, the Serbian Olympic medalists, their teams, coaches, and the president of the national Olympic committee, Bozidar Maljkovic, attended a reception at the presidency,

where they were received by Serbian President Aleksandar Vucic. "The whole country of 7 million people felt pride and immense joy as we climbed to the peak where nothing seems

OLYMPICS

unreachable ... You gave us strength, and thank you for that," Vucic told the medal winners in his speech.

In addition to Djokovic's historic tennis gold and the bronze-winning basketball team, the wel-

coming ceremony celebrated the water polo team, achieving their third consecutive gold medal, the golden 10m air pistol mixed pair Damir Mikec and Zorana Arunovic, and Aleksandra Perisic, who secured a silver medal in Taekwondo.

Maljkovic highlighted that 29 individuals at the reception carried Olympic medals, calling it a remarkable achievement for a country of Serbia's size and resources-ranking 27th in the Olympic medal count, within the top 15 percent.

Water Polo team captain Niko-

la Jaksic thanked the state and fans on behalf of all the athletes.

"Thank you for your support and for being with us from the beginning, and I hope we will have many more opportunities to make you happy," Jaksic said.

Captain of the Serbian basketball team, Bogdan Bogdanovic, also addressed the fans from the balcony, expressing gratitude for their unwavering support throughout the tournament, not just for the basketball team but for all Serbian athletes.

"Thank you for tonight. We really enjoyed it," said Bogdanovic.



Team Serbia celebrate their bronze medal during a men's gold medal basketball game at Bercy Arena at the 2024 Summer Olympics in Paris, France. (AP)

Economic crisis likely to hurt chances of Barca this season



In this file photo, Lamine Yamal (left) of Barcelona vies with Aramburu of Real Sociedad during the Spanish league (La Liga) football match between FC Barcelona and Real Sociedad in Barcelona, Spain. (Xinhua)

Predictions about the club's prospects difficult to make

MADRID, Aug 13, (Xinhua): The thousands of fans and tourists who traveled to the former Olympic Stadium in Montjuic on Monday night for FC Barcelona's traditional 'Joan Gamper' pre-season friendly game will have gone hoping to see a display of football to raise their hopes for the new season.

What they actually witnessed was a 3-0 defeat at home to Monaco and a warning that the club's economic situation seriously threatens to derail their campaign despite a change of coach.

Any predictions about FC Barcelona's prospects for the coming LaLiga season are difficult to make due to the club's debts of over 1,000 million euros, which have made it difficult for them to move in the transfer market due to financial fair-play rules.

The club have signed Spain attacking midfielder Dani Olmo from RB Leipzig, but with just three days to go before the start of the season, they have still not been able to inscribe him into their first team squad.

SOCCER

That squad currently contains just 16 players, which includes goalkeepers Marc Andre Ter Stegen and Inaki Pena. Central defender Ronald Araujo will miss the first three months of the season with a serious hamstring operation. Gavi, who still hasn't recovered from his knee injury, and Frenkie de Jong and Pedro, neither of whom are likely to be fit for the big kick-off.

Ferran Lopez will also miss the start of the campaign after forming part of the Spain squad for the European Championships and Olympic Games.

Barcelona have spent most of the summer in a fruitless pursuit of Athletic Club Bilbao winger Nico Williams, but the only time they are likely to see him in town is on August 24th when the two teams face each other on matchday two of the season.

It is hard to see how Barcelona can manage their finances to fill the obvious gaps in their squad: lack of cover at left and right back and cover for De Jong (whose high wages are a huge problem for the club).

In the face of these problems, new coach Hansi Flick is the most im-

JAKARTA, Indonesia, Aug 13, (AP): Despite being a three-time world champion in her sport, Liv Stone realized earlier this year that she may never get a chance to compete at the Olympic level.

The 21-year old para-surfer was one of many in the sport's international community who was distressed to find out that despite years of advocacy, para-surfing - a form of surfing that allows people with physical disabilities to ride waves on a board or wave ski - wouldn't be included in the 2028 Los Angeles Olympics.

With para-surfing not being selected for the Los Angeles Games, Stone and other members of the para-surfing and surfing communities are strengthening their advocacy for the sport to be included in future Paralympics, offering creative solutions to help keep their Paralympic surfing dreams afloat.

The push for para-surfing to be included in the Paralympics has been a priority for over half a decade, said Stone. "We pushed for over five years to get into the Paris Olympics," said Stone. "Then Paris came and we weren't there ... I realized we need to keep pushing."

Advocates quickly turned their efforts to the 2028 Los Angeles Games, feeling that the sport met many of the criteria needed to be considered, including a certain number of countries and International Paralympic Committee regions, a classification system

portant arrival of the summer, with the former Bayern Munich and Germany coach charged with injecting more energy into a side that at times looked pedestrian under Xavi Hernandez.

Flick has to look to Barcelona's youth system for players and will be buoyed by the performances of young central defender Pau Cubarsi last season, along with Fermin Lopez, possibly Hector Fort, and of course Lamine Yamal.

17-year-old Lamal was Barca's standout player last season, despite his youth and was outstanding for Spain

based on impairments and approximate gender parity for certain divisions, said five-time para-surfing world champion Victoria Feige, who is 38.

But then came the announcement: para-surfing would be passed over for the Los Angeles Paralympics, with para-climbing being included instead.

"LA28's assessment of Para Climbing and Para Surfing was informed by the global and domestic popularity, the universality at major international events as well as the cost and complexity of both sports within the LA28 venue master plan context," a Los Angeles Olympics spokesperson wrote in an email to The Associated Press.

"In finalizing our proposal LA28 needed to strike a balance between its commitment to growing the Paralympic Movement and our commitment to manage the size of the Games and our financial responsibility towards the City of Los Angeles."

Feige said that she was disappointed when she heard the announcement, but with a fresh sense of determination to get parasurfing included in the Games - be it at the Los Angeles 2028 or Brisbane 2032 Olympics, she said. "Cost is a real factor. We recognize that," Feige said. "But I've really been trying to think of how can we showcase our value in terms of corporate sponsorship, how can we showcase our value in terms of viewership, and how can we, as athletes, showcase our sport in a way that would justify a

higher cost."

Feige said she and others began brainstorming solutions that could help lower costs or ease logistical difficulties, including the idea that a wave pool could be used to address water safety and infrastructure concerns, or corporate sponsorships or crowd-funding could be utilized to address the higher costs.

The ideas and advocacy garnered attention, and in June an online petition asking for para-surfing to be included in the Los Angeles Games began, getting over 19,000 signatures.

The push to get para-surfing into the Paralympics also has the backing of the International Surfing Association, the world governing authority for surfing that is recognized by the International Olympic Committee, which has advocated for para-surfing to be included in the Games and hosted the ISA World Para (Adaptive) Surfing Championship since 2015.

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"You don't get all the waves that you want - you don't even get all the waves you paddle for. So what do you do? You go out and paddle harder. That's what we're doing to do," ISA president Fernando Aguerre told The AP. "We're going to continue to develop para-surfing around the world, including explaining why it should be part of the Paralympic Games." While the battle for para-surfing to be included in the next Paralympics is ongoing, Feige said she remains optimistic.

son, and even if they are able to sort out their economic problems to reach a situation where they can make more signings, LaLiga rules regarding their economy mean every arrival must be balanced by a departure.

Oriol Romeu has returned to Girona, and the club are looking for a way out for Vitor Roque - a disastrous winter signing last year, but in reality, the only players who will bring in serious cash are De Jong, Ilkay Gundogan and Raphinha, and the last two were vital last season, while De Jong's ankle problems and high wages make him hard to move.

'Retaliation for being pregnant'

Hamby sues WNBA, Aces alleging 'discrimination'

LAS VEGAS, Aug 13, (AP): Los Angeles Sparks All-Star Dearica Hamby sued the WNBA and her former team in federal court Monday regarding her treatment from the Las Vegas Aces while pregnant.

Hamby's lawsuit alleged the Aces discriminated and retaliated against her, leading to her January 2023 trade to the Sparks.

"We are aware of today's legal filing and are reviewing the complaint," a WNBA spokesperson said.

The Aces did not immediately respond to requests for comment, but the club and coach Becky Hammon previously refuted the allegations. Hammon said in May 2023 that Hamby was traded for strategic reasons, namely putting the club in position to sign likely future Hall of Famer Candace Parker.

BASKETBALL

"We made the decision to move Hamby because we could get three bodies in her one contract, and we wanted to get three more people in," Hammon said at the time. "I think it's very evident (with) who we signed on why we made the move."

Hamby, a bronze-medal winner in 3X3 women's basketball in the recently completed Olympic Games, twice previously made public claims against the Aces.

The WNBA investigated the matter and in May 2023 suspended Hammon for two games without pay. The club also was docked their first-round 2025 draft pick for providing impermissible player benefits involving Hamby.

Hamby, however, insisted the league didn't go far enough. She filed a complaint with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission in September saying she was discriminated against and amended the filing in October.

According to the lawsuit, the EEOC ruled in May she had a "right to sue."

"The WNBA is, at its core, a workplace, and federal laws have long shielded pregnant women from discrimination on the job," Hamby's



WNBA basketball player Caitlin Clark is photographed before a baseball double header game between the New York Yankees and the Texas Rangers in New York. (AP)

attorneys said in a statement. "The world champion Aces exiled Dearica Hamby for becoming pregnant and the WNBA responded with a light tap on the wrist. Every potential mother in the league is now on notice that childbirth could change their career prospects overnight. That can't be right in one of the most prosperous and dynamic women's professional sports leagues in America."

Hamby played for the organization from 2015-22, beginning when the Aces were based in San Antonio as the Stars. She was named the league Sixth Player of the Year in 2019 and 2020 and made the All-Star team three of the past four seasons.

This season, Hamby is averaging career highs 19.2 points and 10.0 rebounds.

Hamby's lawsuit is the latest off-court issue for the Aces.

They also are being investigated by the WNBA regarding a two-year sponsorship deal offered by the Las Vegas Convention and Visitors Authority in which each player receives \$25,000 per month and up to \$100,000 per season.

Job on interim basis

Vivas to manage Costa Rica

SAN JOSE, Aug 13, (Xinhua): Argentine coach Claudio Vivas has been appointed interim manager of Costa Rica after the resignation of compatriot Gustavo Alfaro, the Central American country's football federation said on Monday.

Vivas will be in charge of Los Ticos for their Confederation of North, Central America and the Caribbean Association Football (CONCACAF) Nations League fixtures in September and October.

"We appreciate that you accept this challenge, congratulate you and wish you the greatest success because your success will be the success of all," Costa Rica federation president Osael Maroto said after a meeting of the entity's executive committee.

Vivas has had spells in charge of Argentinos Juniors, Racing Club and Banfield, among other clubs, in a managerial career spanning more than three decades.

The 56-year-old has also worked as an assistant coach with Argentina's national as well as Spanish clubs Espanol

SOCCER

and Athletic Bilbao.

Alfaro stepped down last week following Costa Rica's group-stage exit from the Copa America in June and July.

He led Los Ticos to five wins, two draws and four losses after taking charge of the team last November.

Refugee Olympic Team '24 inspires as it makes history

PARIS, Aug 13, (Xinhua): From the team's first-ever medal to its final appearances and some personal bests, refugee athletes at the Paris Olympics showcased their determination and the power of sport to transform lives.

A fortnight-long celebration of sports in Paris that began with smiles in the rain on the Seine ended with joy and pride for the Refugee Olympic Team, including its first-ever Olympic medal.

The Refugee Olympic Team, which made its inaugural appearance at Rio 2016, was established by the International Olympic Committee (IOC) and the Olympic Refugee Foundation (ORF) - with support from UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency - to give forcibly displaced athletes the chance to showcase their talents on the highest sporting stage.

"These refugee athletes have overcome immense challenges, but their success is a reminder to the world of what can be achieved when refugees are given a helping hand to pursue their dreams," said Deputy High Commissioner for Refugees, Kelly T. Cle-

ments, who watched the team take part in the Paris 2024 closing ceremony on Sunday.

"After a historic Games for the Refugee Olympic Team, we can certainly say that these 37 athletes have demonstrated what refugees can achieve if they have the opportunity to thrive," said Jojo Ferris, Head of the Olympic Refugee Foundation.

Boxer Cindy Ngamba won bronze in the women's 75kg category, becoming the first member of the Refugee Olympic Team to take to the podium.

In athletics, Dominic Lokinyomo Lobalu came within a fraction of a second of a medal in the men's 5,000-metre final on Saturday, finishing fourth. Earlier in the Games, Perina Lokure Nakang and Jamal Abdelmaji both ran personal bests in their races, the women's 800m and men's 10,000m respectively.

On the water, three refugee canoe sprinters reached the quarterfinals: Fernando Dayan Jorge Enriquez in the men's canoe 1,000m, Saeid Fazloulou in the men's kayak 1,000m, and Saman Soltani in the women's kayak 500m.

Free buffets for life

Filipino gymnast who won 2 golds gets hero's welcome

MANILA, Philippines, Aug 13, (AP): Filipino gymnast Carlos Yulo, who won two gold medals in the Paris Olympics, flew home to a hero's welcome Tuesday with a planned national tribute by the president and donors pledging more than \$1 million worth of cash and gifts, including a resort house and free lunch buffets for life.

The 24-year-old's wins in the men's floor exercise and vault were the largest victory ever by a Filipino athlete since the Philippines joined the Games a century ago. Two Filipino boxers, Nesthy Petecio and Aira Villegas, won bronze medals in women's boxing in Paris.

The euphoria over Yulo's wins has provided a respite for a nation long ridden with poverty, deep divisions and conflicts.

"Filipinos all over the world stood united, cheering and rooting for you," Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. said after Yulo, fondly called Caloy by friends, captured his second Olympic gold. "No words can

express how proud we are of you, Caloy. You have achieved GOLD for the Philippines, not once, but twice!"

Arriving in Manila, Yulo and the other Filipino athletes who participated in the Olympics were welcomed by flag-waving admirers who yelled his name, reached out for handshakes

OLYMPICS

and took selfies. The athletes were met by their families before proceeding to the Malacanang palace, where Marcos would honor them with medals and cash gifts, officials said.

Cash and gifts pledged by the government, business tycoons and leading Philippine corporations for Yulo, including a condominium unit and a resort house south of Manila, would amount to more than 58 million pesos (\$1 million). Prominent companies offered free pizzas, ice cream and lunch and dinner buffets for life.

Filipino boxing legend Manny Pac-

quiao, who rose to global fame for winning titles in eight different weight classes and for his rags-to-riches life story, promised to reward Yulo with an unspecified amount of cash.

A celebratory parade for Yulo and the other athletes on Wednesday along Manila's main streets is expected to draw thousands of people. It will pass near a poor community where he grew up and first trained in gymnastics with his siblings in a public gym, where a coach first noticed the impressive skills of the then-7-year-old.

"I'll welcome him with a hug and we'll jump together in joy," Rodrigo Frisco, a 74-year-old relative, told The Associated Press in the neighborhood where the gold medalist has become a poster boy for hope. "Who would believe that these narrow alleys and small houses would produce a champion?"

Weightlifter Hidilyn Diaz clinched the first-ever Olympic gold for the Philippines in Tokyo in 2021.



Olympic double gold medalist in gymnastics, Carlos Yulo, right, poses with President Ferdinand Marcos Jr., left, First Lady Liza Araneta Marcos, second from left, and their sons during a welcome ceremony at the Malacañang presidential palace in Manila, Philippines. (AP)

City facing 'tumultuous' season in bid to retain status as kings of EPL

United set the ball rolling at Old Trafford against Fulham

LONDON, Aug 13, (AP): Manchester City's reign of dominance in the Premier League is like nothing previously seen in the 136-year history of England's top division.

The Abu Dhabi-owned club is hunting a record-extending fifth straight title under Pep Guardiola and his squad of superstars when the season starts on Friday.

The world might be about to discover if it comes with a catch.

So much is hanging over City heading into what promises to be a tumultuous year for the serial champions, whatever happens on the field.

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Can City hold off Arsenal for a third season in a row - and perhaps a Liverpool team under a new coach in its post-Jürgen Klopp era?

Will this be the final year in charge of Guardiola? The generational coach's latest contract expires at the end of the season and he is wavering about whether to sign a new one.

Is this also the last year for Kevin De Bruyne, the playmaker who has bestridden the Premier League for nearly a decade?

Perhaps the big question, though, is this: Will City be punished after being hit with 115 charges for allegedly breaking the Premier League's financial rules in what could be one of the biggest potential scandals in English soccer?

The hearing, long-awaited by rival teams and soccer fans alike, will reportedly take place in late autumn - nearly two years after the welter of charges landed at the door of the Etihad Stadium. If found guilty, penalties for City could include a deduction of points or even expulsion from the Premier League.

City denies wrongdoing and it is a sensitive, complex case, not least because of the political implications it could have regarding relations between Britain and the UAE.

Away from it, City has just kept on winning, with its fourth successive title coming in May to surpass the three-in-a-rows by Huddersfield in the 1920s, Arsenal in the 1930s, Liverpool in the 1980s and Manchester United, twice, in Alex Ferguson's long tenure.

How long this streak continues depends plenty on Guardiola, who is heading into his ninth season in charge and said over the summer he doesn't rule out extending his contract.

"When we arrive at the competition, my energy rises again," he said. "I'm fully excited for this season because I'm seeing things that I like. It's a new



Tottenham Hotspur's James Maddison, left, and Bayern Munich's Josip Stanisic challenge for the ball during the friendly soccer match between Tottenham Hotspur and Bayern Munich, at the Tottenham Hotspur Stadium, London. (AP)

challenge to break our own records ... now we'll see the ambition of ourselves."

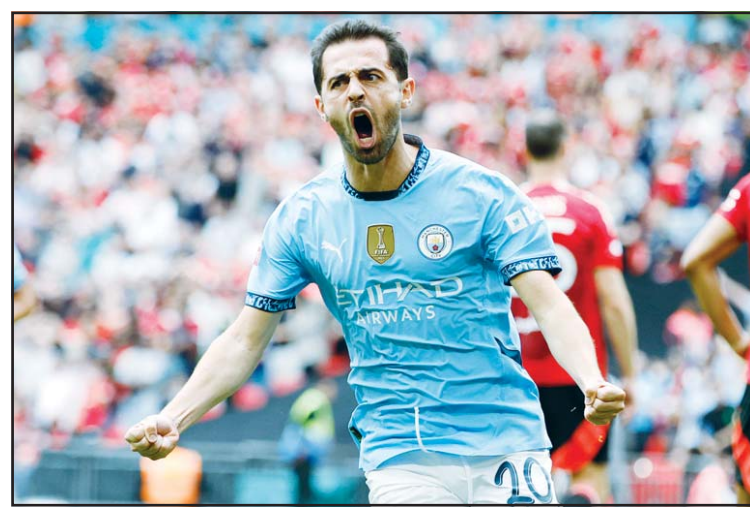
Guardiola's presence will always give City the edge over its rivals, even if Arsenal looks in prime shape to end its wait for a league title stretching back to 2004. The Gunners have been City's biggest threat the past two years - the title race went to the final day last season - and should be again this time around in Mikel Arteta's fifth season in charge.

"We have to continue to do all the right things that we are doing and just make those small margins that are going to be able to win the tournaments," Arteta said.

Then there's Liverpool, embarking on a new era under Arne Slot, the successor to Klopp. That brings an element of the unknown to the Reds and likely a new playing style, too, with a high-energy approach set to make way for one which is more possession-based.

"Now we want to have all the ball and completely kill a team," Liverpool midfielder Curtis Jones said in preseason.

Slot, who arrives from Feyenoord in the Dutch league, is one of five new



Manchester City midfielder Bernardo Silva celebrates scoring his side's first goal during the FA Community Shield soccer match between Manchester City and Manchester United at Wembley Stadium in London. (AP)

managerial appointments in the Premier League, along with Enzo Maresca at Chelsea, Fabian Hürzeler at Brighton, Julen Lopetegui at West Ham and Steve Cooper at Leicester.

Erik ten Hag kept his position at Manchester United, however, in a surprising show of faith by a club undergoing upheaval in its leadership, which might need a few more years to effect

Brentford sign Carvalho

Wan-Bissaka ends 5-yr spell at United to join West Ham

MANCHESTER, England, Aug 13, (AP): Manchester United sold Aaron Wan-Bissaka to Premier League rival West Ham on Tuesday, ahead of the

likely arrivals of two more defenders to Old Trafford.

Wan-Bissaka moved for a reported fee of 15 million pounds (\$19 million) to end a five-year spell at United. One of the best one-on-one defenders in the English game, Wan-Bissaka will compete with Vladimir Coufal for the right-back spot at West Ham.

United appears to have lined up a replacement for Wan-Bissaka in Morocco full back Noussair Mazraoui, who is reportedly close to joining from Bayern Munich along with Netherland center back Matthijs de Ligt.

There was footage on Monday of De Ligt heading to Manchester to complete the move.

United has already bolstered its defense in this transfer window by signing 18-year-old center back Leny Yoro from Lille for 62 million euros (\$68 million).

Wan-Bissaka returns to London, having started his career at Crystal Palace.



Wan-Bissaka

Premier League club Brentford has completed the signing of forward Fabio Carvalho from Liverpool on a five-year contract.

British media reported that the deal was worth up to 27.5 million pounds (\$35 million).

"Fabio is a player with a lot of qualities. He can play in all of the front

SOCCER

three or four positions in a 4-3-3 or a 4-2-3-1. His best position is probably as a No. 10 or coming in from the left," Brentford head coach Thomas Frank told the club's website. "Offensively, he has great abilities on the ball: he can go past players, slide a pass, create chances and get on the end of chances. He's a type of player that we don't have many of in the squad so he will add that something extra for us."

Carvalho spent last season on loan at RB Leipzig and then Hull, where he scored nine goals in 20 appearances.

Also Monday, AC Milan completed the signing of defender Emerson Royal from Tottenham.

The 25-year-old Brazil international has signed a four-year contract with the Serie A club, with the option of a further 12 months.

Emerson scored four goals in 101 appearances for Spurs after joining from Barcelona in 2021.

New Chelsea signing Caleb Wiley will spend the season on loan at French team Strasbourg, the two clubs said Monday.

Chelsea signed the 19-year-old American left-back from Atlanta United last month, and he then played for the U.S. at the Paris Olympics. He will now join up with the club that is being coached by Liam Rosenior.

"We look forward to supporting his development throughout the season," Chelsea said in a statement.

Wiley, who was born and raised in Atlanta, signed a six-year contract with Chelsea after joining for a fee in the region of \$11 million.

Chelsea has signed Pedro Neto from Wolverhampton on a seven-year contract for a reported transfer fee of 54 million pounds (\$69 million).

The Portugal international joins Enzo Maresca's team ahead of Chelsea's Premier League opener against Manchester City next weekend.

Neto spent five seasons at Molinex, scoring two goals and providing nine assists in 20 appearances last season.

He told Chelsea's official website: "I feel really grateful to have joined this club."

"I have worked really hard in my career to be here and I'm looking forward to getting on the pitch with this shirt." The 24-year-old winger was unveiled at Stamford Bridge at halftime of Chelsea's final pre-season match against Inter Milan on Sunday.

Everton to undergo surgery for torn Achilles

Messi not yet ready for Inter Miami return: Martino

MIAMI, Aug 13, (Xinhua): Inter Miami manager Gerardo Martino said Monday that captain Lionel Messi has yet to fully recover from an ankle injury sustained while playing for Argentina in the Copa America final last month.

Martino admitted he still does not know when Messi will return to full fitness, but said the 37-year-old was recovering in a satisfactory manner.

"He's making progress within our expectations," Martino told reporters.

"We still don't know when he will be able to be with the [first team] group. For the time being, he continues to train separately." Messi has not played since straining ligaments in his right ankle during Argentina's 1-0 victory over Colombia in the Copa America final on July 14.

His most recent match for Inter Miami was a 3-3 home draw with St. Louis in the MLS.

Messi has scored 14 goals and provided 11 assists in 15 appearances

across all competitions for Inter Miami this year.

The Florida outfit lead the MLS Eastern Conference standings with 53 points from 25 games, five points clear of second-placed Cincinnati.

Flamengo forward Everton Soares will miss the rest of the South American football season after suffering a

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ruptured Achilles tendon, the Rio de Janeiro club said on Monday.

The Brazil international sustained the injury during Flamengo's 1-1 home draw with Palmeiras in Brazil's Serie A championship on Sunday.

Subsequent exams confirmed the attacker's worst fears and he will undergo surgery in the coming days before beginning a rehabilitation period that



Inter Miami midfielder Diego Gómez (20) scores a goal during the first half of an MLS soccer match against Toronto FC. (AP)

is expected to take six to eight months. "I will come back stronger," the

28-year-old said in a brief social media post.

Everton, who has been capped 25 times for Brazil, has scored just 14 goals across all competitions since joining Flamengo from Benfica in 2022.

Flamengo are currently third in Brazil's 20-team Serie A standings, two points behind leaders Botafogo.

Uruguay international defender Damian Suarez is poised to leave Botafogo, less than midway through his two-year contract with the Brazilian Serie A club.

Suarez has been a mainstay at right-back for Botafogo since joining the Rio de Janeiro outfit from Spain's Getafe in February.

But the 36-year-old has fallen out of favor after submitting a transfer request earlier this month amid reports linking him with Uruguay's Penarol, Globo Esporte reported.

It said that Botafogo manager Artur Jorge has told Suarez that he is no longer a part of the club's plans.



Pyrotechnics fire behind Jessica Pegula, of the United States, as she lifts her trophy following her women's singles win at the National Bank Open tennis tournament in Toronto. (AP)

Sports

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

Popyrin wins biggest title of career

Anisimova defends Canadian Open crown

MONTREAL, Aug 13, (Agencies): Australia's Alexei Popyrin, the No. 62-ranked player in the world, defeated fifth-seeded Andrey Rublev of Russia 6-2, 6-4 at the National Bank Open on Monday night to win the biggest singles title of his career.

Popyrin had two lower-level ATP Tour titles on his resume coming into a week in which he faced five top-20 players in a row and defeated all of them.

First came No. 11 seed Ben Shelton in the second round, then No. 7 seed Grigor Dimitrov, a contest in which he saved three match points. In the quarterfinals came No. 4 seed Hubert Hurkacz, who was up a set and a break in the second before Popyrin came back to win 7-5 in the third set.

Then American Sebastian Korda, who won the tournament in Washington, D.C., last week and was on a nine-match winning streak, in the semifinals late Sunday night.

And finally Rublev, who was looking for his third career ATP Masters 1000 title, his first on hard courts. But he had no answers against a player with whom he often trains at their mutual home base in Monte Carlo.

Once it was over, Popyrin put his hands to his face and let the tears flow. Popyrin won the first seven points of the match and from there, the hill was just too steep to climb for Rublev, who moves from No. 8 to No. 6 in the rankings with a week that included a win over world No. 1 Jannik Sinner.

Popyrin will rise in the rankings from No. 62 to No. 23.

As with Rublev, whose on-court emotions have often held back his career progress, Popyrin had been known more for his temper on the court than his game.

On Monday night, he was cool, calm and collected.

Rublev wasn't as serene. But he's happy with his progress on that front.

Meanwhile, world No. 6 American Jessica Pegula defended her Canadian Open singles title in Toronto with a 6-3, 2-6, 6-1 victory over her compatriot Amanda Anisimova on Monday evening.

TENNIS

The 30-year-old native of Buffalo, New York captured her sixth career WTA singles title and third in a WTA 1000 event. All three have come on hard court, with wins in Montreal last year and Guadalajara in 2022.

With the win, Pegula earned 523,485 U.S. dollars and 1,000 WTA ranking points to become the first woman since Martina Hingis (1999-2000) to win consecutive Canadian Opens.

She holds an incredible 17-2 record in the annual tournament alternating between Toronto and Montreal each year. Last year, Pegula defeated Russian Liudmila Samsonova and reached the semi-finals in 2021 and 2022.

After an early exit in the Paris Olympics with a second round loss to Elina Svitolina, Pegula regained her form in Toronto as the No. 3 seed. She cruised through to the finals without dropping a set.

In the finals, Pegula capitalized on nine double faults from her opponent,



Alexei Popyrin, of Australia, plays a shot to Andrey Rublev, of Russia, during the final of the National Bank Open men's tennis tournament in Montreal. Inset: Popyrin holds up the winner's trophy. (AP)

including four in the deciding set to clinch the win.

Runner-up Anisimova, who entered the tournament as No. 132, had a more

challenging road to the finals, defeating four top-20 ranked opponents, including No. 3 Aryna Sabalenka in straight sets in the quarterfinals.

With her first ever WTA 1000 finals appearance, the 22-year-old earned 650 ranking points to climb 83 spots to No. 49. In January, the former world

No. 21 returned to the court in January at the Australian Open following an eight-month absence due to burnout and mental health concerns.

India's East Bengal host Altyn Asyr

'Players are eager to deliver'

Kuwait Club battles Al-Ahli for spot in AFC Champions League 2 group stage

By Hassan Musa

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

MANAMA, Aug 13: Kuwait Club will face Al-Ahli of Bahrain at 7:15 pm at Bahrain International Stadium in a play-off match to qualify for the AFC Champions League 2.

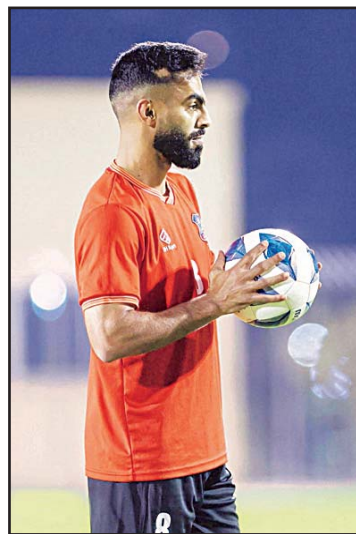
In the same round, East Bengal of India will play against Altyn Asyr of Turkmenistan at Yuba Bharti Krirangan Stadium in Kolkata, India.

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This round consists of a single match, with the winner advancing directly to the tournament's group stage, while the loser will compete in the Challenge League for the AFC Cup.

Kuwait Club arrived in Manama last Sunday with a full squad, except for Mohammed Daham and Mashari Ghannam, who didn't travel with the team. The administrative staff is working hard to finalize their travel arrangements before the crucial match.

Kuwait Club has made several changes to the team, including hiring Montenegrin coach Nebojsa Jovovic to replace Tunisian coach Nabil Maaloul. The club also signed Moroccan professionals Yahya Jabrane and Ayman Abu Al-Fath, joining foreign players Yassin Al-Khenisi (Tunisia), Moham-



Ahmed Al-Dhafiri prepares to throw the ball during a training session.

med Marhoun (Bahrain), and Arsene "Malik" Zola (Congo).

Kuwait Club recently secured a 1-0 victory over Al-Qadisiya last Thursday in the opening match of the Zain Premier League, boosting the players' morale ahead of the play-off.

The "Whites" understand the challenge they face against a strong opponent on their home turf and in front of their fans, especially with the absence

of top scorer Mohammed Daham and defender Mishari Ghannam. However, coach Nebojsa has confidence in his squad's ability to secure a valuable victory and await the group stage draw, which will take place next Friday in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

Kuwait Club boasts players with the talent and potential to win, including Yousef Nasser, Sami Al-Sanea, Fahad Hamoud, Ahmed Al-Dhafiri, Ali Hussein, Reda Hani, Faisal Zayed, Fahad Al-Hajri, and Amr Abdel Fattah, along with the five foreign professionals.

Meanwhile, Al-Ahli has also prepared thoroughly for this match, holding an external camp in Turkey and making several team changes. The club appointed new Spanish coach Angel Lopez in July and strengthened its roster with key signings, including left winger and striker Julio Victor Sousa Ferreira, attacking midfielder Ramon Cesar Sereno, defensive midfielder Juda Aguiar da Silva, and Argentine striker Tobares.

During the Turkey camp, Al-Ahli played three friendly matches, losing all three: 2-4 to Shabab Belouizdad of Algeria, 1-2 to Inegol Spor of Turkey, and 0-5 to Persepolis of Iran.

Al-Ahli finished fourth in the Nasser bin Hamad Premier League last season.

The match will be officiated by Omani referee Qasim Al-Hatmi.

Kuwait poised for West Asian Championship

By Khaled Al-Anzi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 13: Vice President of the Volleyball Federation, Nasser Al-Owaid, affirmed the readiness of Kuwait's national youth team for the upcoming West Asian Volleyball Championship, set to commence on Friday in Al Ain, UAE, and continue until the 25th of this month.

He stated, "The national team players, along with the technical staff led by national coach Jassim Al-Tararwah, are eager to deliver a distinguished performance that meets our aspirations."

VOLLEYBALL

Al-Owaid noted that the tournament will feature 10 participating Gulf and Arab nations, divided into Two Groups: the First Group includes Kuwait, Qatar, Yemen, Syria, and Bahrain, while the Second Group consists of Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Palestine, Lebanon, and Jordan.

He highlighted that the team has thoroughly prepared for competitive participation in this tournament, with a focus on enhancing the players' skills and improving



Vice President of the Volleyball Federation, Nasser Al-Owaid.

their technical and physical performance.

Al-Owaid added, "We are optimistic about our team's capabilities and are confident in achieving positive results that reflect the efforts of both the players and the technical staff."

We believe in our ability to compete strongly in this championship."

He also expressed hope that the tournament would contribute to the development of volleyball in the region and strengthen the bonds between the participating countries, emphasizing the importance of sports competition in fostering the exchange of experiences and building strong relationships among Arab youth.

Mbappe, Endrick signings make Real even clearer favorites in new season

MADRID, Aug 13, (Xinhua): If last season was a virtual stroll for Real Madrid in La Liga, this season should also be relatively comfortable for the European champions.

Real Madrid won the league by 10 points in the 2023-24 campaign and the win would probably have been even more comfortable but for easing off at the end of the season as they chased their 15th Champions League title.

Carlo Ancelotti's side lost just one game (against Atletico Madrid) and won the title with 87 goals in their favor and just 26 against.

The bad news for other clubs is that this season, Real Madrid (with one exception) look to be even stronger, after finally signing Kylian Mbappe from

Paris Saint Germain, along with 18-year-old Brazilian forward, Endrick.

Mbappe has dominated French football and his pace and power will make an already fearsome Madrid attack even more threatening. Last season saw Real Madrid at times happy to see rivals have the ball, before hitting them with a counter-attack led by Fede Valverde, Vinicius Jr and Rodrygo.

If you add Mbappe to the mix, the threat on the break is even more potent, although there is a slight doubt about where he will play. Both the Frenchman and Vinicius like to start and cut in from the left, but obviously, they can't both do that, so either Vinicius moves to the right or Mbappe plays more through the center -

which seems likely.

Toni Kroos' retirement has

left a hole in midfield and his ability to keep the ball, with a



In this file photo, Bayern's Noussair Mazraoui, left, challenges Real Madrid's Federico Valverde during the Champions League semifinal first leg soccer match between Bayern Munich and Real Madrid at the Allianz Arena in Munich, Germany. (AP)

pass accuracy of well over 90 percent will be missed, but Madrid have shown that with their forwards, they need very little to create clear chances and the fitness of Turkish teenage Arda Guler gives them further options up front and also with shots from outside of the penalty area.

SOCCER

Veteran central defender Nacho Fernandez has moved to Saudi Arabia, and David Alaba's knee injury means Madrid currently look a bit light at the back, but expect them to make a new signing in that area before the end of August, with Spain international Aymeric Laporte thought to

be a target.

Thibaut Courtois has also recovered to play in goal and although Andriy Lunin filled in effectively last time around, Courtois is an upgrade between the posts. Lunin's future is uncertain, and he may opt to leave this summer, leaving the club to sign a backup goalkeeper.

Carlo Ancelotti remains a calming influence on the bench and his stability is a factor in Real Madrid's success. He may have to work hard to keep some egos in check over the season but with Real Madrid's spending ceiling almost three times that of their nearest rivals (Atletico Madrid) and three and a half times that of Barcelona, it would need disaster for them not to retain the league title - and that will allow them to again focus on Europe.