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Kuwait secures mpox vaccine to counter any future threat

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

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 20: The Ministry of Health (MoH) continued its efforts to prevent the spread of mpox by securing vaccines and implementing precautionary measures as travelers return at the end of the summer holiday.

health zone directors met yesterday with heads of preventive health and public health centers to assess the readiness of these centers to handle any potential cases.

The sources confirmed that the Ministry of Health has secured hundreds of mpox vaccine doses, which are stored in medical warehouses in case of any future outbreaks. These vaccines will be administered only to those who show the mildest of symptoms.

The sources also noted that the mpox vaccines are similar to COVID-19 vaccines in that they require specialized refrigeration.

Therefore, they are stored in special medical warehouse coolers rather than the standard preventive health refrigerators used for routine vaccines. The medical warehouses will distribute the vaccines to health zones as needed.



KUNA photo

His Excellency the Ambassador of the State of Kuwait to Brunei, Salah Al-Mutairi, meets with His Majesty Sultan of Brunei Hassanal Bolkiah.

Sultan of Brunei seeks to upgrade Kuwait ties

KUALA LUMPUR, Aug 20, (KUNA): The Sultan of Brunei Darussalam Hassanal Bolkiah, praised Tuesday the strong bilateral relations with Kuwait, noting that they have significantly developed in all areas.

This was mentioned during a meeting held at the Sultan's office in the Nurul Iman Palace with Kuwaiti Ambassador Salah Al-Mutairi, on the occasion of the end of his tenure in Brunei, said a statement from the Kuwait Embassy in Brunei.

Sultan Hassanal Bolkiah conveyed his greetings to His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, as he expressed his wishes to visit Kuwait in the near future to meet the Amir and discuss ways to boost the bilateral relations between the two nations.

In turn, Ambassador Al-Mutairi affirmed Kuwait's commitment to working closely with Brunei to develop relations in various domains, expressing his gratitude to the government of Brunei for the support he received during his tenure.

'Biometrics' violated

Wastage of state funds seen in mission abroad

Al-Seyassah Special Report

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 20: A decision has been taken to terminate the role of the Health Attaché at Kuwait's Permanent Mission to the United Nations in Geneva and to close the office starting from September, despite the office having been open for less than a year, informed sources told Al-Seyassah daily.

According to the sources, the rent and furnishing of the residence of the Attaché cost approximately 400,000 dinars. Questions have also been raised about the five-year lease agreement for the residence.

Moreover, the sources said two cars were purchased for the Attaché at a cost of around 32,000 dinars. This led to further inquiries regarding the decision to appoint the Attaché on October 10 last year, given that he served for only 11 months, but cost the Ministry 432,000 dinars excluding his salary.

The sources questioned who is accountable for these decisions that result in significant financial waste, noting that the State Audit Bureau had previously raised concerns about the residence lease.

In an official letter dated December 26 last year, a copy of which was obtained by Al-Seyassah, the Audit Bureau requested the Ministry of Health to verify the contract terms, which were made in a currency other than the Kuwaiti dinar, and ensure that the offered price aligns with prevailing rates for Kuwait's UN Mission in Geneva.

The Bureau emphasized the importance of the Ministry taking measures that safeguard the public interest in selecting contractors and determining contract values, as well as ensuring the legal ownership of the property before signing the contract.

In a separate health-related issue, as the Civil Service Commission begins implementing the 'Flexible Biometric System' to monitor employee attendance across various ministries, after the 2023/2024 financial report by the Audit Bureau uncovered multiple violations regarding 11 employees in the offices of the Minister and Undersecretary of Health who did not adhere to the biometric attendance system.

This resulted in the unjustified disbursement of approximately 145,400 dinars to these employees.

The report showed nine employees in the Minister's office did not record attendance through the biometric system throughout 2023, even though their names were listed in the employee roster. Some employees also failed to clock in from January 1 to October 23, 2023.

The report further revealed that the staff in the office of the Undersecretary also did not comply with the biometric system between January 1 and October 10, 2023, yet continued to receive their salaries in full without any deductions.

NewsWatch

GAZA: US Secretary of State Antony Blinken said Monday that the "Israeli occupation" has accepted a proposal to bridge gaps in ceasefire negotiations and the next step is for Hamas to accept ahead of further negotiations expected to take place later this week.

"The next important statement is for Hamas to say yes, and then, in the coming days, for all of the expert negotiators to get together to work on clear understandings on implementing the agreement," Blinken said at a press conference in "Tel Aviv." (KUNA)

GAZA: The Palestinian Civil Defense said, Tuesday, that its members were able to recover 10 bodies among dozens of missing people under the rubble of Mustafa Hafez School, which shelters displaced people west of Gaza, following Israeli air strike.

In a statement, the civil Defense said that they would have to leave a number of bodies under the rubble due to the lack of mechanisms.

An entire wing of Mustafa Hafez School, which sheltered approximately 700 displaced people, was targeted, the statement added. (KUNA)

MADRID: The world's oldest living person, Spain's Maria Branyas, has died at the age of 117, said Spanish media Tuesday.

Guinness World Records had officially acknowledged Branyas' status as the world's oldest person in January 2023 following the death of French nun Lucile Randon at the age of 118.

In the wake of Branyas's death, the oldest living person in the world is Japan's Tomiko Itooka, who was born on May 23, 1908, and is 116 years old, according to El Pais Magazine. (KUNA)

Kuwait steps up reforms, prods global allies for robust economy

KIA taps foreign markets for investments



KUNA photo

The reception and handover ceremony at the headquarters of the Combined Naval Forces Command in the Bahraini capital, Manama.

Bahrain Naval HQ holds handover ceremony

Kuwait takes over command of CTF-152 from Saudi

MANAMA, Aug 20, (KUNA): The Kuwait Naval Force has officially assumed command of Combined Task Force 152 (CTF-152) from the Royal Saudi Naval Forces during a handover ceremony held at the Combined Naval Forces Command headquarters in Manama, Bahrain.

The ceremony was attended by the Commander of the Fifth Fleet Vice Admiral George Wyckoff. In his speech, Brigadier General Talal Al-Kandari, who took over the command of CTF-152, affirmed the significance of this transition in strengthening joint efforts among friendly and neighboring countries.

He also highlighted the importance of continuing with the training and gaining expertise to enhance maritime security in the Arabian Gulf region.

Brigadier General Al-Kandari emphasized that the ceremony serves not only to transfer command but also to highlight the joint commitment to fostering stability, cooperation, and peace among the participating countries.

He said, "The prosperity and security of our region are closely linked to the safety of these waters."

Brigadier General Al-Kandari stressed that the work of CTF-152, in collaboration with international partners, confirms the importance of unity and shared responsibility in addressing maritime challenges.

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'2 rejections for gov't job take applicants back to square one'

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 20: The Civil Service Commission (CSC) has clarified that the shifts in the ranking of candidates within the central employment system are largely due to rejections by candidates of their assigned job nominations, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

When a candidate rejects a nomination, they are returned to their previous position in the queue, causing changes in the rankings of others awaiting their turn, in line with the prioritization criteria.

In a press statement shared on the X platform, the CSC highlighted key changes in the new employment plan aimed at refining the mechanism for nomination.

The new system addresses two primary procedures to minimize frequent rejections by limiting the number of rejections allowed. Previously, candidates could reject offers without any cap, which contributed to delays in the employment process.

Under this revised system, if a candidate rejects nominations to two different government agencies, they are returned to the central employment system as eligible for fresh nominations, as if it were their first time being considered during that registration cycle.

Candidates are now required to complete all appointment procedures with their designated agency within 30 working days from the nomination date.

Failure to do so will result in them being marked as having rejected the nomination, reverting them to the central employment system.

The Commission emphasized that this updated employment plan for government agencies is intended to reduce waiting times for many specializations.

The nominations are aligned with job needs based on academic specializations, ensuring fairness and equal opportunity for all candidates.

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Day by Day

WHEN envy sets in people end up harming themselves with their actions.

Our destiny is in the hands of God Almighty. Those who are miser and plagued with envy, end up hurting themselves. Their negative emotions rule their minds and body.

By resisting the Divine Providence they challenge the fair distribution of provisions and end up living a pathetic life until death.

... Yet tomorrow is another day.

Zahed Matar



KUNA photo

Municipality inspectors in Khaitan tour.

Power switch off in singles homes

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 20, (KUNA): The Kuwait Municipality revealed on Tuesday that 26 properties housing bachelors in Khaitan area had their electricity cut off in cooperation with the Ministry of Electricity, Water, and Renewable Energy.

In a press release, the municipality said that the procedure was carried out due to various violations.

Owners of the real estate properties would be issued violation warrants, added the statement, noting that bachelors were prohibited from living in private residential areas.



KUNA photo

Kuwait's Ambassador to Austria Talal Al-Fassam, with Ms. Slagjana Taseva during her visit to the Kuwaiti Embassy in Vienna.

Joint bid to fight corruption eyed

VIENNA, Aug 20, (KUNA): Kuwaiti Ambassador to Austria and its Permanent Representative to United Nations offices in Vienna Talal Al-Fassam received the newly appointed Dean of the International Anti-Corruption Academy (IACA) Professor Slagjana Taseva during a visit to Kuwait embassy.

The visit was the Dean's first official activity with Kuwait since assuming office last month, said Al-Fassam in a press release to KUNA on Tuesday. During the meeting, Ambassador Al-Fassam congratulated Taseva on her appointment, and expressed Kuwait's support for her and academy's mission in combating corruption.

He also reaffirmed Kuwait commitment to promoting transparency, integrity, and good governance at both regional and international levels.

Ambassador Al-Fassam reiterated Kuwait's keenness to

Continued on Page 5

Summit historic chance for global harmony: UN

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 20, (KUNA): The 'Summit of the Future', scheduled in the UN headquarters New York on September 22 and 23, is a historic chance to create global harmony for the upcoming generations, said a UN official on Tuesday.

In an interview with KUNA, the Representative Secretary General of the United Nations and the Resident Coordinator in the State of Kuwait Ghada Al-Taher said that the State of Kuwait was always a great supporter and the first to implement international accords and agreements aimed at peace, stability, and overall development.

This attitude reflects Kuwait's keenness on the development of the world and humankind, added the official.

She stressed the importance of Kuwait's role within the frame of climate work especially in the Middle East region, reiterating that environmental challenges were one of the most crucial obstacles to tackle.

The official also commended the State of Kuwait's interest in the role of youth in innovation, saying that such interest would usher in a better world in the future and also enable young individuals to utilize their skills in overall technological and sustainable development.

Back to the Summit of the Future, Al-Taher said that world leaders would convene in the UN headquarters to exchange ideas and collaborate on matters that were concerned as challenges to the world, stressing the need to address these challenges to build a better future.

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Prayer Timings

Fajr 03:54 Asr 15:26
Sunrise... 05:19 Maghrib .. 18:24
Zohr 11:51 Isha 19:45

Local

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

MoH yet to implement 3rd fingerprinting; MEW witnesses congestion

Additional fingerprint system officially launched in all gov't offices

By Abdulrahman Al-Shammari, Mohammad Ghanem, Marwa Al-Bahrani, Mohammad Al-Musleh, Fares Al-Abdan, Najeh Bilal, Inaas Awadh, and Abdul Nasser Al-Aslami

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 20: In accordance with Civil Service Commission's Resolution No. 6/2024, Sunday, August 18 marked the official implementation of the additional fingerprint system across all ministry and government offices, requiring employees to verify their presence at their workplace during official working hours.

Ministry of Education

On Sunday, employees at the Ministry of Education began using the fingerprint devices located near their offices to record their additional fingerprint. This new measure is proving to be effective, as employees are able to record their attendance within the 60-minute window following the two-hour mark from the start of their workday, without disrupting their workflow.



Dr Al-Muhaissen

The employees began using the new fingerprint system to record attendance according to the following timings:

- For a 7:00 am start, attendance is recorded between 9:01 am and 10:00 am.
- For a 7:30 am start, attendance is recorded between 9:31 am and 10:30 am.
- For an 8:00 am start, attendance is recorded between 10:01 am and 11:00 am.

The engineers from the ministry's Information Systems Department are actively monitoring the system to address any issues related to the transfer of fingerprint data for the ministry's employees.

Ministry of Electricity and Water

On the other hand, the South Surra area witnessed severe congestion on Sunday after 10:00 am due to the presence of a large number of ministries and government service agencies in the area.

In the Ministry of Electricity, Water and Renewable Energy, the areas where the fingerprint devices are located witnessed congestion especially during the 60-minute period of the third fingerprint that follows the first fingerprint. However, the high number of devices had an impact in accommodating the large number of male and female employees in the ministry during the aforementioned period.

Bou Fahad, an employee at the ministry, expressed his surprise at the implementation of the fingerprint system, suggesting that it would have been more effective to establish clear roles for employees rather than relying on a tool for attendance and departure to evaluate employee performance.

He questioned how the ministry plans to manage the simultaneous presence of all employees, given the lack of adequate office space.

Ahmed Abdullah, another employee of the ministry, said, "We still don't understand the rationale behind the midday fingerprint for attendance verification. It is a known fact that the ministry's facilities cannot accommodate all employees at once. Each employee performs their assigned tasks to the best of their ability."

He also highlighted similar issues at the Ministry of Public Works, where the new fingerprint system led to significant congestion at device locations, raising concerns among employees about its effectiveness in assessing their performance or commitment.

Ministry of Health

While many ministries and government sectors have adopted the flexible attendance fingerprint system, the Ministry of Health has yet to implement it. This has raised questions about whether the Ministry of Health is included in the rollout of the fingerprint system, particularly given the distinct nature of its work compared to other ministries.

In this regard, informed health sources indicated that the undersecretary of the Ministry of Health has not yet issued a circular to implement the additional fingerprint system in the ministry's departments and sectors.

As a result, health employees are currently only required to use the attendance and departure fingerprint system. The third fingerprint has not been applied broadly within the Ministry of Health, though some administrative sectors have independently adopted it in anticipation of potential official directives.

The sources explained that the Civil Service Commission's fingerprint system currently applies only to morning shifts, while the Ministry of Health operates with a three-shift system - morning, afternoon and evening.

This raises the question of whether the fingerprint system will be applied only to morning shifts while other shifts are excluded. If this is the case, it may be perceived as unfair to apply the system to just one shift and ignore the others.

The sources said some state ministries have successfully implemented the fingerprint system on smartphones, which would have made it easier to apply the additional fingerprint system to their employees. In contrast, the Ministry of Health has not yet equipped its employees' smartphones for this service.

They stressed that the Ministry of Health operates around the clock, including during holidays and official vacations, adding that this continuous schedule may be a reason for the delay in issuing a circular to implement the fingerprint system, due to the unique nature of shifts in the Ministry of Health compared to other state ministries.

Ministry of Commerce and Industry

The ministry has been proactive in implementing the additional fingerprint system, similar to other state ministries such as the Ministry of Electricity, Water and Renewable Energy, Ministry of Municipal Affairs, and others. Various departments and sectors within the ministry observed a notable presence of employees who recorded the mid-day fingerprint before resuming their regular work activities.

Ministry of Information

The ministry has begun implementing the

Civil Service Commission's decision for fingerprint verification during official working hours.

The Undersecretary of the Ministry of Information Dr. Nasser Al-Muhaissen issued a circular, instructing employees to adhere to leave regulations and the designated grace period.

According to the circular, every employee's attendance, departure, and presence at the workplace must be verified through fingerprint, face scan, or flexible fingerprint smartphone applications when available. Employees must record their attendance within 60 minutes after the first two hours of their shift. This rule applies to all official working hours and shift regulations. An employee is not bound by this fingerprint if he has obtained leave and signs any part of it within the 60-minute period.

If an employee does not record their presence as described within the 60-minute period, they will be considered to have left during official working hours without permission. In such cases, the time between two hours after their initial attendance and their fingerprint recording will be counted as part of the monthly delay period under Article 18 of Civil Service Council's resolution No. 6/2021.

Ministry of Social Affairs

Informed sources at the Ministry of Social Affairs affirmed that the ministry is preparing to implement the additional fingerprint system, as this requires further arrangements, including upgrading and activating fingerprint devices.

They revealed that the Ministry of Social Affairs did not introduce the "third fingerprint" system on Sunday but is working on developing and activating the fingerprint devices and smartphone applications.

Ministry of Oil

The Ministry of Oil, being the first government agency to implement the facial scan and the third fingerprint system for all employees, witnessed significant activity and usage of fingerprint devices Sunday morning.

While the daily was observing employees enter the ministry's gate, an unnamed official in the oil sector affirmed that the Ministry of Oil is one of the most committed government agencies to the attendance and departure timings.

He explained that the implementation of the "third" fingerprint system poses no difficulties or obstacles for the ministry's employees.

This fingerprint system does not pose any issues for the employees in the oil companies affiliated with Kuwait Petroleum Corporation, irrespective of whether it is in summer when they are restricted from open work sites between 11:00 am to 4:00 pm, or in winter, as the third fingerprint is adaptable and can be applied during work periods.

The official highlighted that a dedicated employee will always ensure their attendance, regardless of how many fingerprints are required, but those less diligent are the first to resist the additional fingerprint process.

He emphasized that, despite its unique nature, the oil sector's commitment and attendance standards are consistent with those of all state agencies.

Kuwait Municipality

In line with the recent Civil Service Commission's decision to implement the third fingerprint starting August 18, the Director General of Kuwait Municipality Saud Al-Dabbous instructed the Financial and Administrative Affairs Sector via an administrative circular to introduce a mobile application, which will enable all male and female employees of the municipality to register their mid-day fingerprint via their smartphones



Al-Dabbous

to prove their presence during official working hours.

The new application for the third fingerprint, introduced by the Development and Information Sector, requires municipality employees to adhere to leave regulations and the designated grace period. Employees must register their third fingerprint via the app within 60 minutes after the first two hours of the workday. Those on leave and who have signed for any part of it within the initial 60 minutes are exempt from this requirement.

The instructions specify that failure to record the third fingerprint will be treated as an unauthorized absence, and the period between the two-hour mark and until the time the mid-day fingerprint is recorded will be counted towards the monthly delay period, as outlined in Article 18 of the Civil Service Commission's decision.

Public Authority for Food and Nutrition

The Public Authority for Food and Nutrition (PAFN) has mandated their employees to record an additional fingerprint to verify their presence during official working hours, in line with the Civil Service Commission's decision.

According to Circular No. 15/2024, employees must register their presence at the workplace within 60 minutes after the first two hours of each workday.

In response, Head of the PAFN's Workers' Union Mubarak Al-Shammari has requested clarification on how employees working on a shift system (inspectors) should record their attendance and departure while offsite.

He suggested addressing the Civil Service Commission to set timings that suit their work nature, or exploring the use of smartphone applications.

Al-Shammari has also readdressed the Chairman of the Board of Directors and the Director General of PAFN for clarification on how to record fingerprint attendance for employees working on a shift system (inspectors). This inquiry follows a previous letter submitted by the union to PAFN on August 5, 2014, requesting an exemption from the flexible fingerprint system for employees in specialized roles, including inspectors.

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Weather

Expected weather for next 24 hrs:

By Day: Hot and humid especially over coastal areas with light variable wind to light to moderate southeasterly wind, with speeds of 08-35 km/h.

By Night: Hot to rather hot and humid especially over coastal ar-

eas with light to moderate north-westerly wind to light variable wind, with speeds of 08-30 km/h with a chance for fog forming at night.

Station	Max Exp	Min Rec
Kuwait City	48	36

Kuwait Airport	48	35
Abdaly	48	31
Jahra	49	36
Salmiyah	41	35
Jal Aliyah	49	32
Nuwaisib	43	31
Wafra	48	29

HH Crown Prince and Prime Minister send greetings

HH Amir congratulates president of Hungary on National Day

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 20, (KUNA): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah sent on Tuesday a cable of congratulations to the President of Hungary Tamas Sulyok on his country's National Day. In the cable, His Highness wished the

president good health and wellness and hoped for further progress and development.

Meanwhile, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah sent a cable to President Tamas Sulyok, congratulat-

ing him on his country's National Day. Also, His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad

Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah sent a cable of congratulations to President Tamas Sulyok on his country's National Day.

'Education' ends non-Kuwaiti contracts under bonus system

Ministry terminated 2,048 expat employees last year

By Abdulrahman Al-Shammari Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 20: The Ministry of Education says it has not appointed non-Kuwaitis in administrative and technical positions under comprehensive bonus contracts for two years, and that it will continue issuing termination decisions in line with Civil Service Commission's Resolution No. 11/2017.

According to a memorandum issued by the ministry, which includes statistics, the total number of non-Kuwaitis whose services ended last year, in accordance with the replacement policy, was 2,048. This includes 54 expatriates in engineering positions, 1,100 in teaching, education, and training positions, 324 in social, educational, sports, and information technology positions, 24 in roles related to science, 17 in roles related to arts, media, and public relations, and 13 in financial and economic positions.

The memorandum stated that the Ministry of Education will train and enhance the technical and administrative skills of its Kuwaiti employees who were hired in place of the non-Kuwaiti employees. This effort is in line with the state's general policy for the Kuwaitization of jobs in government agencies.

The ministry explained in the memorandum that it provides the Civil Service Commission (CSC) with data on both Kuwaiti and non-Kuwaiti employees based on the requests it receives. It has issued termination decisions for non-Kuwaiti employees according to the figures specified in the CSC's letters. The expatriate contracts primarily involve second contracts for teachers and fixed salaries for service roles.

Over KD 6m hike in MEW salary budget

By Mohammad Ghanem

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 20: A government report revealed an increase estimated at KD6.454 million in the budget for salaries, bonuses and allowances of employees in the Ministry of Electricity, Water and Renewable Energy for fiscal 2024/2025.

The total amount approved to cover the employee compensation item reached KD747.423 million, compared to KD740.969 million in the previous fiscal year.

Sources explained that the increase will cover the salaries of new employees appointed during the aforementioned fiscal year and the costs of social changes affecting the employees. Sources said the employee compensation budget is estimated based on the total number of employees; including those working under the shift and allowance system, excellent job performance bonus, other employment benefits, and promotion by selection and seniority.

In another development, sources revealed that the contract for the construction of nine fresh water towers in Mutlaa Residential City (Site No. 3) and the corresponding works was referred to the State Audit Bureau (SAB) this week for review and further study. They disclosed that the value of the contract is KD8.368 million and it aims to increase the strategic water reserve for the residents in the city, while ensuring the availability of water round the clock -- without interruption or weakness.

Sources affirmed that the ministry is committed to the circulars of SAB and the relevant regulations, considering it is one of the ministries and government agencies subject to the bureau's control.



Sheikh Athbi honoring Arshid Al-Qafidi.

Al-Seyassah photo

Farwaniya governor hosts retired officers

Farwaniya Governor Sheikh Athbi Al-Nasser recently hosted at his office retired Major General Mahmoud Boushehri and retired Major General Walid Al-Saeed, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

During the visit, Sheikh Athbi also honored Arshid Al-Qafidi, the official in charge of the Khaitan Cleaning Center.

Sheikh Athbi's gesture of recognition highlights

the spirit of collaboration and the importance of diligent follow-up in managing community affairs.

The honor bestowed upon Al-Qafidi underscores the governor's appreciation for the effective cooperation and dedication shown by individuals in maintaining public services and enhancing community well-being.



Sheikh Faisal Al-Hamoud receiving the diagnostic nursing robot project team.

Al-Anba photo

Young people urged to focus on science and technology

Sheikh Al-Hamoud commends team behind innovative diagnostic nursing robot project

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 20: Advisor at the Amiri Diwan Sheikh Faisal Al-Hamoud recently received the team responsible for the diagnostic nursing robot project, including engineers Atyab Mohammad Khalifa, Faris Hamoud Al-Mutairi, Khaled Salem Al-Azmi, and Fahad Jazaa Al-Qahs, reports Al-Anba daily.

Sheikh Faisal congratulated them for their innovative project, which addresses the severe shortage of nurses in health facilities and modern hospitals.

The robot, powered by Artificial Intelligence, can perform basic health examinations such as measuring tem-

perature and blood pressure, estimating height and weight using face recognition and image processing without the need for manual intervention, and assessing visible injuries. It can generate detailed medical reports for physicians with results of its findings.

Sheikh Faisal praised their work and encouraged young people to focus on science and technology, wishing them success in their future endeavors.

In a related context, Sheikh Faisal also welcomed a recent graduate of the Spanish Aviation College, Assistant Pilot Mishal Yaqoub Al-Najjar.

He congratulated him on earning

a commercial aviation license from the European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) and beginning his role as an assistant pilot on Airbus A320.

Sheikh Faisal wished Al-Najjar continued success in his career, and said he hoped Al-Najjar would contribute positively to the country and its people.

It is worth highlighting that all guests of Sheikh Faisal expressed their gratitude for the warm reception and honor they received from Sheikh Faisal, as it served as a significant motivator for them to excel in technology and other scientific and practical fields.

Some employees face third fingerprint dilemma

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 20: While the application of fingerprint for employees of ministries and government institutions continued for the second day (two hours after the start of work), a number of government establishments that have employees working outdoors have requested the Civil Service Commission to find a mechanism to solve the di-

lemma facing their employees regarding the fingerprint issue, until the completion of the process, reports Al-Rai daily.

One of the solutions they recommended is activating programs for smart phones through which the employee can confirm his location and presence in the workplace.

Some sites belonging to ministries and government agencies witnessed congestion, with many employees working outdoors having to present simultaneously in centers affiliated with their establishments to complete the third fingerprint, since the fingerprint application has yet to be activated via the smart phone.

'Death leaves behind trail of unanswered questions'

"AT FIRST glance, it seems that the legacy of creative thinking and enlightened criticism ended with the passing away of Dr. Ahmed Al-Rubei. As we revisit his iconic article, which evokes nostalgia for the past and a sense of our failure to keep up with the present, we encounter a profound reflection on life," **Yaqoub Abdulaziz Al-Sanea** wrote for **Al-Qabas** daily.

"In his article published on April 18, 2007, Dr. Ahmed Al-Rubei explores the notion that, apart from death and love, humans are driven by their choices, their rational will, and their ability to confront their emotions." He observes that if people relinquish the idea of choice and surrender to anxiety and regret over the past, they lose their freedom. He advises: "The more I contemplate things, the sadder I become! I said: Do not stare at things too much ... Half a smart look is enough!" He reflects on the brevity of life, likening it to the short-lived beauty of flowers, and suggests that true enjoyment comes from letting things be rather than clinging to them. He urges us to handle ourselves and our bodies with care, for gentleness is the essence of life.

"Dr. Al-Rubei then poses existential questions: 'People die against their will, but aside from death and love, we choose our joys and sorrows! We smile and frown by our own volition; we write, draw, and sing as we please! We read poetry, arrange flowers, play with children, and bask in the sun according to our own will!' He concludes that 'joking with death and love is a betrayal of our rational will! Death arrives like a lightning strike, and love comes like thunder, both beyond our



Al-Sanea

control. From the first cry of birth to the delirium of love and the final breath of death, life's stations operate efficiently, with passengers boarding and disembarking in a grand cosmic system, filled with many strangers."

"He spoke and vanished like a ghost, yet his presence lingers, filling both space and time. The echo of his probing questions stirs the still air, and his wistful, sorrowful face captures the essence of our feelings, as if we are mere feathers drifting on the wind.

"He left behind many unanswered questions!" * * *

"I will refrain from commenting on jurisprudence, constitutional law, and exceptional legislation. However, we must recognize that increasing the fees for cancellation and suspension requests places a burden on appellants, whether they are public employees or private citizens.

"In light of the recent ruling by the Administrative Court of Appeals, it is crucial to address issues such as lengthy registration times and session scheduling that can extend beyond a year at the start of litigation. Judges should adhere to administrative judicial principles consistently across all circuits to prevent disorder and inconsistencies in rulings from the same administrative bodies.

"To reduce litigation periods, it is also essential to ensure that pleadings and sessions are timely, so that the efforts of lawyers and litigants are not wasted. This is necessary across all courts." Moreover, the increase in fees could restrict access to legal representation, as multiple decisions or requests for suspension could impede the constitutional right to litigation.

"For over a decade, the minister of justice has promised a legislative overhaul and the approval of the Kuwaiti State Council and Bar Association Law. It seems, however, that we are witnessing a reversal of progress. Thank you."

— **Compiled by PFX Fernandes**

Additional fingerprint

Continued from Page 2

In his letter, Al-Shammari said, "Upon reviewing PAFN's circular, it became apparent that the document did not address how employees on a shift system, who are often outside the workplace during most of their working hours, should record their attendance."



Al-Otaibi

He said the Civil Service Commission's Circular No. 9/2024 states that entities with work centers or jobs where employees find it challenging to access fingerprint verification sites during official working hours should utilize smartphone applications for attendance and departure verification. The circular also recommends implementing a flexible fingerprint system for these circumstances.



Dr Al-Mutairi

Al-Shammari stressed that the PAFN's circular did not address this issue, which could make it difficult for inspectors and other employees who are frequently outside the workplace to complete the additional fingerprint check.

He requested clarification on how these employees should record their attendance and departure while offsite, and suggested PAFN consult with the Civil Service Bureau to set timings that suit their work nature or explore the use of smartphone applications.

Nevertheless, PAFN has affirmed to its employees the necessity of adhering to the flexible fingerprint process.

It explained that employees who do not record their presence will be considered to have left without permission. In this case, the period between two hours after their arrival and the time they recorded their presence through their fingerprint will be included in their monthly delay periods.

PAFN has established a fingerprint timing schedule based on each employee's official working hours. The designated times are as follows:

■ 9:00 am to 10:00 am for employees starting work at 7:00 am

■ 9:30 am to 10:30 am for employees starting work at 7:30 am

■ 9:45 am to 10:45 am for employees starting work at 7:45 am

■ 10:00 am to 11:00 am for employees starting work at 8:00 am

■ 10:30 am to 11:30 am for employees starting work at 8:30 am

■ 10:45 am to 11:45 am for employees starting work at 8:45 am

■ 11:00 am to 12:00 noon for employees starting work at 9:00 am

Directorate General of Civil Aviation

On Sunday, the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) implemented the Civil Service Commission's decision requiring employees to record an additional fingerprint to confirm their presence during official working hours.

Acting Director General Duaij Al-Otaibi issued a circular stating that, in addition to existing leave regulations and grace periods, employees must use fingerprint or facial scan verification to record their attendance, departure, and presence at the workplace during official hours.

According to the circular, employees must record their fingerprint within 60 minutes after two hours from the start of their shift. Failure to do so will be considered as unauthorized absence during official hours, and the time between the two hours after their arrival and the time of their fingerprint recording will count as a delay in accordance with Article 18 of Civil Service Council's Resolution No. 41/2006.

All entities with employees in roles of a special work nature, either inside or outside the workplace, are called to set timings consistent with the nature of their work for their additional fingerprint verification and to coordinate with the Civil Service Commission as needed.

Ministry of Awaqaf and Islamic Affairs
The Ministry of Awaqaf and Islamic Affairs initiated the additional fingerprint verification for official working hours from Sunday, August 18, as mandated by Civil Service Commission's Resolution No. 6/2024, and the employees of the ministry have begun following the new fingerprint verification system to confirm their presence at work starting Sunday, in line with the recent directive for government agencies.

According to a circular issued Sunday morning, the fingerprint and facial scan verification timings for its employees during official working hours are as follows:

- For employees starting at 7:00 am, the verification period is from 9:01 am to 10:00 am.

- For those starting at 7:30 am, the period is from 9:31 am to 10:30 am.

- For employees starting at 7:45 am, the verification period is from 9:46 am to 10:45 am.

- For those starting at 8:00 am, the period is from 10:00 am to 11:00 am.

- For employees starting at 8:30 am, the period is from 10:30 am to 11:30 am.

In this context, the Undersecretary of the Ministry of Awaqaf and Islamic Affairs Dr. Bader Al-Mutairi announced the launch of the additional fingerprint verification system for all employees during official working hours, in line with Civil Service Bureau's Circular No. 9/2024.

He issued a directive requiring employees to record their presence at the workplace within 60 minutes following two hours from the start of their workday using facial recognition and other electronic methods.

Dr. Al-Mutairi noted that the ministry has added this flexible fingerprint verification into the existing fingerprint systems.

Dr. Al-Mutairi insisted that every employee at the ministry must record their presence at the workplace scanning their finger within 60 minutes following two hours from the start of their shift, unless they have obtained permission to not do so. Employees who fail to record their presence as required will be considered to have left work without permission. Consequently, the time beyond the end of the fingerprint verification period will count towards their monthly delay periods as per Article 18 of Civil Service Commission's Resolution No. 41/2006. This requirement does not affect the grace period stipulated in the same resolution.



Al-Seyassah photo

One of the mobile caravans being seized and lifted on a trailer truck.

Municipality gets tough with law violators

Violations cited, 4 mobile caravans impounded

By Inaas Awadh

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 20: During a recent inspection campaign conducted by the General Cleanliness and Road Occupations Department of the Ahmadi Governorate Municipality branch, four violations for road

occupation were issued, and four mobile caravans were impounded and transferred to the Municipality's impounding garage.

The Public Relations Department of Kuwait Municipality reported that, in addition to these actions, 19 warnings were issued to other caravan owners, with a notice that their

vehicles would be impounded if they failed to comply with regulations.

This operation underscores the Municipality's ongoing efforts to maintain order and cleanliness in public spaces, serving as a reminder for all vehicle owners to follow the rules and avoid illegally occupying public roads.

5-man gang of thieves targeting shops, money exchanges busted

Court sets Sept 8 to look into trial of former MP Al-Fikr

By Jaber Al-Hamoud

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff and Agencies

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 20: The Court of Appeals has set Sept 8 for the trial of former MP Anwar Al-Fikr in a State security case filed against him for challenging the powers and rights of His Highness the Amir and intruding in the Amiri position.

Earlier, the Criminal Court, headed by Counselor Nayef Al-Dahoum, sentenced Al-Fikr to three years in prison with hard labor for interfering in the powers of His Highness the Amir regarding the appointment of HH the Prime Minister.

The court affirmed in the grounds of its ruling that Al-Fikr was found guilty, explaining that the phrases he uttered contained words deemed disrespectful in terms of addressing His Highness the Amir and interfering in the latter's position.



African gang of thieves arrested: The Ministry of Interior announced that personnel from the Criminal Investigation Department in Hawalli Governorate have arrested a five-member gang of Ethiopians specializing in breaking into shops, restaurants, and money exchange offices, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The arrest followed a report filed at a local police station regarding a nighttime robbery at a money exchange office, where the complainant stated that someone had broken in to commit theft.

The Salimiya Police Station responded swiftly, forming a search and investigation team. Through intensified efforts, modern technology, and monitoring the crime scene, the suspects were identified and apprehended.

During interrogation, the suspects confessed to all charges and were referred to the relevant authorities for legal action.



KD 87.750 robbed at knife point: A 43-year-old expatriate residing in Al-Qasr lodged a complaint at Jahra Police Station against three unknown persons who allegedly robbed him of KD 87.750 at knife point, reports Al-Anba daily.

The victim revealed that the suspects threatened to kill him by stabbing him with a knife, and then beat him severely. He said the incident occurred at 10:30 pm on Saturday in the parking lot of a center affiliated with the Ministry of Endowments in Jahra.

He provided police with a medical certificate, stating that he felt pain in his elbow and face.

A case classified as felony under the title, 'Robbery by Force', was registered.

The Jahra Public Prosecution then instructed the Jahra Investigations Unit to arrest the culprits.



Municipality issues 20 citations: The Public Relations Department of Kuwait Municipality announced that an inspection team from the Safety Department of the Capital Governorate Municipality recently conducted a tour of the Shuwaikh Industrial Area, according to Al-Seyassah daily.

During the campaign, the team issued 20 citations and two violations to properties that were found to be non-compliant with safety regulations and requirements. These properties were identified as potential hazards to passers-by.

These enforcement actions are part of ongoing efforts to ensure compliance with safety standards and protect public safety in the area.



Elevator technician dies: An elevator maintenance technician, in his 40s, died when he fell from the third floor of a house in Rumaithiya while performing maintenance work, reports Al-Anba daily.

The victim's colleague reported the incident to the Ministry of Interior's Operations Unit. Security officers and paramedics were immediately dispatched to the location. They were informed that the technician lost his balance while working on the elevator and fell into the elevator pit. He sustained multiple fractures and severe bleeding, which led to his death.

Upon confirming the technician's death, the paramedics notified the forensic evidence personnel. The forensic doctor ordered the transfer of the body, while security forces started investigating the incident by questioning the technician's colleagues.



2 persons rescued from sinking boat: The Public Relations and Media Department of the Directorate-General of Fire Department (DGFD) reported that firefighting and marine rescue teams rescued two persons from a sinking boat near the Failaka Island Sunday evening, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The rescued men were subsequently handed over to the relevant authorities for further assistance.

Bedoun loses KD 4,784 in new bank scam case

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 20: Bank balance theft cases remain prevalent with a new modus operandi – deceiving people into thinking their bank card has been disabled, reports Al-Anba daily. Recently, a 41-year-old Bedoun lost his entire bank balance amounting to KD 4,784 within minutes. He disclosed that he received a text message from a local mobile phone number stating: "Your bank card has been disabled. Call +9*****+." Thinking the text message was legitimate he called the number, then he was asked for his bank details to resolve the issue. Upon providing the information, he was surprised to discover that a total of KD 4,784 had been withdrawn from his account in nine separate transactions. He stressed that he did not authorize these transactions, without naming any suspect. In response to the complaint, the Attorney General's representative ordered registration of the case as a felony and initiated an investigation. Authorities suspect that the perpetrator is part of a network specializing in bank balance theft.

A case titled, 'Bank Account Forgery', was referred to Sulaybiya Criminal Court. Investigations are continuing to identify and arrest the culprit.

A security source reiterated his advice for the public to refrain from responding to telephone calls from individuals pretending to be bank employees, and then request personal information. He emphasized that the Ministry of Interior and the banks do not ask for customer data or card updates by telephone.



Al-Jarida photo

New cleaning equipment introduced by Kuwait Municipality.

Municipality launches hi-tech equipment

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 20: The Kuwait Municipality has introduced advanced equipment and updated practices in its new cleaning contracts to boost public cleanliness across the governorates, reports Al-Jarida daily.

Municipality Director Eng. Saud Al-Dabbous detailed the improvements in response to a query from Council Member Eng. Alia Al-Farsi about enhanced waste management and cleanliness levels after new municipal regulations were approved.

The upgrades include a modernized fleet with new vehicles such as piston waste collection trucks equipped with winches for efficient waste handling, automatic sweepers with double cutting and suction systems for thorough street cleaning, and medium bulldozers for heavier tasks. Additionally, vacuum tanks with a 3,000-gallon capacity are now in use for sediment removal and container washing,

along with environmentally friendly electric sweepers for the Mubarakiya area.

New waste collection containers have been introduced, ranging from 360-liter plastic bins for general waste to three-cubic-meter metal containers for larger volumes. Manual sweeping carts have also been deployed for detailed street cleaning.

The Municipality has also implemented a waste-sorting system with 19 specialized vehicles equipped with new box designs divided into four compartments for glass, plastic, paper, and metals. These vehicles have hydraulic arms for automatic loading and unloading of 240-liter containers, ensuring efficient sorted waste collection from cooperative societies, public markets, and other locations. The sorted waste is then transported to designated landfills for appropriate processing.

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New committee to ensure fair academic assessment

Canadian study programs expanded

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 20, (Agencies): Minister of Education and Minister of Higher Education, Dr. Adel Al-Adwani, has taken a significant step toward ensuring quality and transparency in the equivalence and evaluation of academic qualifications by forming a committee, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The committee is tasked with standardizing the verbal evaluation scale and grade averages for all academic degrees issued by European scholarship countries.

This initiative aims to enhance the quality of certificate equivalency processes, thereby supporting students studying abroad and easing their transition into the labor market.

The committee, led by the Acting Undersecretary of the Ministry of Higher Education, includes key officials from various educational and governmental bodies, including representatives from Kuwait University, Abdullah Al-Salem University, and the Public Authority for Applied Education and Training.

The committee is expected to submit its findings and recommendations to Minister Al-Adwani within three months, paving the way for a more streamlined and transparent approach to evaluating international academic qualifications in Kuwait.

Additionally, Dr. Adel Al-Adwani, has issued a new ministerial decision expanding the list of approved study programs and degrees at higher education institutions in Canada, reports Al-Jarida daily.

The addition includes Master's and doctoral degrees in Computer Science; Master's and doctoral degrees in Statistics; Bachelor's degrees in Demography and Statistics at the University of Montreal; Bachelor's degrees in Statistics at the University of Alberta and Bachelor's degrees in Statistics at the University of Ottawa.

The decision mandates that these programs must adhere to a traditional education system with regular attendance during the academic week.

It also stipulates that the programs must be completed within the specified academic period, and the first batch of graduates must have completed the program.

Additionally, the decision outlines the requirement to follow existing regulations for enrollment and study systems at educational institutions outside Kuwait.

In a related move, Dr. Al-Adwani also issued a decision removing certain study programs and degrees from the list of recommended institutions in the United States.



Al-Jarida photo
Dr. Adel Al-Adwani, Minister of Education and Minister of Higher Education and Scientific Research.

Apply online until Aug 29

MoE accepts applications for study leave in nursing

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 20: The Ministry of Education has announced that applications for study leave in nursing (for diploma and bachelor's degree programs) are now open and can be submitted electronically, according to Al-Seyassah daily.

Applicants, both in and outside Kuwait, can apply for this leave in accordance with the detailed conditions available on the Ministry's X platform.

Eligible candidates are encouraged to apply via the Ministry's official website, www.moe.edu.kw, starting today until August 29.

The Ministry emphasized the importance of this program in enhancing the skills and qualifications of nursing staff, noting that it is part of a coordinated effort with the Civil Service Commission.

This initiative follows the Bureau's approval of the secondment plan, underscoring the shared commitment to raising the standards of healthcare in Kuwait.

Expanded facilities to support registration

MoCI expands control centers for beneficial ownership compliance

By Marwa Al-Bahrawi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 20: The Ministry of Commerce and Industry has reiterated its call for companies and commercial establishments to register their beneficial owners on the commercial registry portal in compliance with the regulations.

The ministry defines the 'beneficial owner' as any natural person who owns or exercises direct or indirect control over the entity, or the person on whose behalf the transaction is carried out, or the natural person who exercises control over a legal person or legal arrangement.

In addition, the ministry has allocated 20 commercial control and consumer protection centers, along with four emergency centers, in various governorates.

ous governorates.

On its official social media account, the ministry announced the allocation of three centers in Farwaniya Governorate: Farwaniya, Abdullah Al-Mubarak, and Jleeb Al-Shuyoukh centers; two in Hawally Governorate: Jabriya and Salmiya centers; two in Mubarak Al-Kabeer Governorate: Qurain and Mubarak Al-Kabeer centers; two in Jahra Governorate: Jahra and Saad Al-Abdullah centers; seven in the Capital Governorate: Kuwait City, Mubarakiya, Faiha, Shuwaikh, Dasma, Sulaibikhat, and Rai centers; and four in Ahmadi Governorate: Jaber Al-Ali, Ali Sabah Al-Salem, Fahaheel, and Sabahiya centers. The four emergency centers are the Capital, Al-Siddiq, Jahra, Kabad, and Al-Kout emergency centers.

KU unveils names of accepted candidates

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 20: Kuwait University's College of Graduate Studies has announced the names of those accepted and nominated for registration in its programs for the 2024/2025 academic year under the non-registered system, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The College has advised candidates to reach out to program directors if they have any inquiries or need further information.

Funds for shelter, food and medical aid

PAMA donates KD 150K to Sudan crisis

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 20: The Public Authority for Minors Affairs has announced a donation of 150,000 dinars to support the Kuwait Red Crescent Society's campaign aimed at alleviating the humanitarian crisis in Sudan, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

This contribution reflects the Authority's commitment to social and humanitarian efforts, providing aid to those in need.

The funds will be used to help secure shelter, food, and health support, including medicines and medical supplies, for affected families, displaced persons, and injured individuals in Sudan.

In a press statement, the Authority emphasized that this donation aligns with its leadership role in social responsibility and sustainability.



Al Rai photo
File photo of a Kuwaiti aid plane in the recent humanitarian aid campaign.

It also reinforces Kuwait's dedication — at both the state and community levels — to supporting global

humanitarian initiatives and embodying the country's vision for compassionate and impactful aid.

Plan aims to improve animal welfare, tourism

Council member proposes to allocate suitable site for zoo

By Inaas Awadh

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 20: Municipal Council member Fahad Al-Abduljader has submitted a forward-thinking proposal aimed at enhancing Kuwait's zoological facilities. The proposal advocates for the establishment of a new zoo on a site that is considerably more spacious and better equipped to handle Kuwait's extreme summer temperatures. Specifically, Al-Abduljader recommends that the new zoo be located far from residential areas and be at least twice the size of the existing facility. This larger, more suitable site would also include ample parking to accommodate the anticipated increase in visitors.

In presenting his proposal, Al-Abduljader underscored the significant role that zoos play as tourist attractions, which contribute positively to the local economy by drawing visitors from both within and outside Kuwait. He emphasized that zoos are cru-

cial educational resources, particularly for children. Many families and schools rely on these institutions for educational outings, offering children an opportunity to learn about wildlife and conservation in an engaging setting. Given this importance, Al-Abduljader noted that it is common for countries around the world to invest in well-maintained zoological parks.

The impetus for his proposal stemmed from recent developments concerning the current zoo. The Municipal Council's decision to allocate the existing zoo to the Public Institution for Social Security prompted Al-Abduljader to address several pressing issues. The current zoo's location within a residential area has long been criticized for its lack of space and its inability to provide a suitable environment for animals and visitors alike. Additionally, the current facility's constraints do not support the creation of an optimal experience for the public, particularly during the scorching summer months.

Al-Abduljader's proposal reflects a comprehensive approach to improving Kuwait's zoological infrastructure. By advocating for a larger, better-situated zoo with enhanced amenities, he aims to foster a more enriching experience for visitors and ensure that the zoo continues to serve its educational and recreational purposes effectively.

Delayed salaries deliberate

Municipality security employees have not been paid for 5 months

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 20: Some security companies in charge of securing the Kuwait Municipality building have not been paying the salaries of their employees for five months now, report Al-Jarida daily quoting a source from the Municipality.

The source pointed out to the daily that the repeated delays in the payment of salaries reflect the mismanagement of some companies that signed contracts with government agencies.

According to the source, this has been happening even if the Municipality regularly pays the abovementioned companies for the services they render; hence, the delayed payment of salaries is deliberate.

The source said the Municipality is monitoring the performance of companies monthly, especially in terms of the payment of salaries. He confirmed that the Municipality sent a number of warnings to these companies, stressing it is unreasonable to not pay the salaries of employees for almost half a year.

On the other hand, a source from the Public Authority for Manpower (PAM) affirmed that the authority receives delayed salaries complaints from many employees of companies with government contracts every month. He explained the Disputes Department in the authority handles labor files and investigates the reasons for not paying monthly salaries. Investigations revealed that some companies do not pay the salaries of employees even if they collect monthly dues from the government agencies; while others are at the brink of bankruptcy due to mismanagement, which exposes them to the burden of debts, the source added.

The source stated that government con-

35 warnings issued for car sheds near schools

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 20: The Violations Removal Team at the Kuwait Municipality branch in Hawally Governorate issued 35 warnings to those who committed violations that were uncovered around schools in the governorate like illegal car sheds adjacent to school fences; in response to the complaints submitted by the Ministry of Education, reports Al-Rai daily.

Head of the team Eng. Ayed Al-Qahtani confirmed to the daily that the team will not leave any illegal carpools around school fences. He said the team removed 27 illegal car sheds in Bayan within two days, indicating the initial inventory revealed there are more than 200 expanded car sheds with a capacity of more than one car near the school fences throughout the governorate.

He explained it is not possible to license these car sheds, as they obstruct traffic and endanger lives.

He added the team also dealt with complaints from the Ministry of Electricity, Water and Renewable Energy about illegal canopies on transformer fences, which pose a grave danger, especially during summer, because they block the entry and exit points for the ministry's vehicles and the maintenance vehicles.

tract workers are the victims whenever there is a problem or misunderstanding between the government agencies and companies, resulting in the non-payment of salaries.



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KRCS dispatches third relief plane with 10 tons of aid

Sudan's sovereignty council hails Kuwait humanitarian efforts

KHARTOUM, Aug 20, (KUNA): The Transitional Sovereignty Council of Sudan has thanked Kuwait for rushing to aid the conflict-traumatized people in his country. This remark was made by member of the sovereignty council lieutenant general Ibrahim Jaber during his meeting on Tuesday with Kuwaiti Ambassador to Sudan, Dr. Fahad Al-Dhafaeri.

Kuwait is of the first countries to launch an air bridge to transport aid to Sudan, only days after the war started, remarked Jaber adding that they want Kuwait as part of rebuilding process after the war.

Ambassador Al-Dhafaeri told KUNA that during the meeting Jaber spoke of efforts to end the war, whether the Jeddah platform or the bilateral meetings with third parties.

Jaber hailed Kuwait's statement on sovereignty council opening of Adre crossing to allow for aid through neighboring Chad.

Furthermore, Ambassador Al-Dhafaeri affirmed continuation of aid flow to Sudan through the air bridge, saying that this was as directed by His Highness the Amir.

Meanwhile, the Kuwait Red Crescent Society (KRCS) announced on Tuesday the departure of the third relief plane in the Kuwaiti airlift to Port Sudan Airport. The plane is carrying 10 tons of food supplies to support and relieve the displaced people in Sudan affected by rains, floods, and ongoing conflicts.

The Society's Director General, Abdulrahman Al-Aoun, told Kuwait News Agency (KUNA) that this aid is in response to the directives of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, may God protect him, and is part of Kuwait's ongoing support for the Sudanese people. It reflects Kuwait's commitment to aiding them in facing their difficult circumstances.

Al-Aoun added that the Kuwaiti airlift also aims to address shortages of food, shelter, and medicine, and to provide essential supplies that help improve living conditions and increase survival chances.

He explained that the dire situation in Sudan requires immediate intervention from humanitarian organizations to provide relief. He stressed that KRCS has undertaken, and continues to undertake, many initiatives to support the affected Sudanese people.

Al-Aoun noted that Kuwait has a long history of supporting humanitarian work, contributing generously and responding swiftly to crises and disasters. He hopes this aid will help alleviate the suffering of the Sudanese people.

He also emphasized the continuation of relief flights to Sudan, coordinated directly with the Kuwaiti Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Air Force, and the Sudanese Red Crescent. He expressed his gratitude to the Kuwaiti Ministry of Defense for providing aircraft and to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for their contribution to the success of the humanitarian mission.



The third plane takes off from the air bridge to Sudan, loaded with food supplies.

KUNA photo

Kuwait steps

Continued from Page 1

as the authority decided on June 25, 2024 to open an office in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to enhance cooperation with Saudi and international companies in joint projects.

Al-Zour Refinery project, which was inaugurated by His Highness the Amir last May, added a new strategic dimension to Kuwait with the aim to advance development and strengthen the country's leading position.

The government is also planning to launch major policies and create solid legislative structure that keeps pace with the process of economic and financial reform, and creates an attractive environment for investments.

In order to integrate a vision in this regard, The Council of Ministers assigned the Ministry of Finance to draw up policies about financial and economic reforms in a way that ensure the financial sustainability as well as maximizing non-oil revenues.

The Council of Ministers also formed a committee to prepare priorities and main theme of the for its action plan and a specific execution timetable. The committee is headed by the Minister of Finance with Minister of Public Works, Minister of Commerce and Industry, the Minister of Electricity, Water and Renewable Energy and members.

On July third, 2024, the Minister of Finance and Minister of State for Economic Affairs and Investments Dr. Anwar Al-Mudhaf, affirmed that the pillars of economic reforms have the support of His Highness the Amir.

During the first general budget forum held by the Ministry of Finance of July 14th, 2024, the Ministry confirmed that Kuwait is embarking on comprehensive financial reform to address areas of waste and develop revenues for the state's financial sustainability.

The expected reforms in this aspect include improving government procurement contracts, repricing public services and rents of state-owned lands, in addition to develop financial performance of government bodies.

Summit historic

Continued from Page 1

The official touched on the UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres report "Our Common Agenda", which called for holding regular meetings based on the principles of human rights to renew commitment to policies aimed at keeping the dignity of humans across the globe.

The report also called for renewing the multiparty system throughout meetings concerned with the future of the world, saying that such step would benefit all people from all walks of life.

Kuwait takes

Continued from Page 1

He said, "Together, we have made great strides in raising maritime awareness, conducting joint exercises, and strengthening the spirit of cooperation that transcends national borders".

Brigadier General Al-Kandari affirmed that the Kuwait Naval Force is unwavering in its commitment to this mission.

He said, "We will build on the strong foundation established by our Saudi counterparts, focusing on maintaining high levels of readiness, enhancing alignment with our allies and partners, and ensuring our contributions to regional stability."

Joint bid

Continued from Page 1

strengthen the relations with the academy and to explore new partnership opportunities to combat corruption.

In turn, Taseva provided an overview of the academy's current initiatives and strategic goals, including its academic programs, capacity-building efforts, and global partnerships aimed at enhancing anti-corruption measures.

Taseva also highlighted the importance of cooperation with member countries like Kuwait in achieving the academy's mission.

Real Estate Union welcomes decision by Cabinet to expedite rental case appeals

New ruling aims to ease court congestion

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

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 20: Head of the Real Estate Union Ibrahim Al-Awadhi affirmed the union's support for the recent decision by the Cabinet to transfer real estate rental cases to the Plenary Court from the Court of Appeals in the event of an appeal against the first-degree ruling.

He said he considers this decision as a step in the right direction for alleviating the pressure on the judiciary, including the Court of Appeals and Court of Cassation, and expediting the litigation process for ensuring quicker resolutions for cases.

In a press statement, Al-Awadhi said, "There has been a noticeable increase in the number of cases recently, including those related to rents, in the Kuwaiti courts. Cases in the Court of Cassation, in particular, take a long time to resolve, and then the Court of Appeals. This creates a huge burden and pressure on the judiciary, as a result of the large number of cases. This is why the Cabinet's decision is considered important".

Regarding the impact of the decisions on the real estate sector in the country, Al-Awadhi said, "It is known to everyone that rental cases are typically appealed and proceed to the Court of Appeal, where conditions dictate that the losing party must file an appeal after a first-degree ruling.

"Currently, all such lawsuits are being transferred to the Plenary Court instead of the Court of Appeals, which can expedite the litigation process.

"There is no doubt that this is a good thing, particularly considering the accumulation of cases. It ensures that both the landlords and tenants can obtain their rights quickly and ef-

fectively, thereby resolving rental issues more efficiently. This approach aligns with our goals and is expected to significantly expedite the adjudication of cases."

Meanwhile, real estate expert Abdul Aziz Al-Dughhaishim stressed the importance of studying the laws and coordinating them with relevant ministries, such as the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and the Ministry of Justice.

He highlighted the need for continuous coordination between these two ministries to strengthen oversight of contracts and better manage the landlord-tenant relationship.

Al-Dughhaishim said, "Solving the problem of contracts by just adopting electronic contracts will not work if they are not backed by proper discipline and commitment from the start.

"There must be a link between the property owners and the Ministry of Municipal Affairs or other relevant government sectors. For example, rental contracts are issued in Dubai through the Real Estate Registration Department in the municipality. These contracts are not issued if the property owner violates laws or regulations, such as if the number of apartments in the property does not match the number mentioned in the contract or if a residential property is being used for investment purposes. Such measures ensure that property owners comply with regulations before renting out their apartments."

Al-Dughhaishim highlighted Dubai's real estate system, which uses a coding system to manage transactions.

He explained that the Ministry of Municipality assigns a unique code to each property owner based on the number of apartments they own.

For instance, if a property owner provides contracts to prove his ownership of 40 compliant apartments, the municipality issues 40 individual contracts, each with its own code for each apartment.

Dr Al-Huwailah highlights Kuwait's role in global humanitarian efforts

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 20, (KUNA): Minister of Social Affairs, Family, and Childhood Affairs, and Minister of State for Youth Affairs, Dr. Amthal Al-Huwailah, highlighted Kuwait's exceptional global humanitarian efforts as the world commemorates "World Humanitarian Day", focusing on urgent humanitarian issues.



Dr Al-Huwailah

Al-Huwailah told KUNA in a press statement that the world celebrates the humanitarian efforts of individuals and institutions to improve people's lives globally, alleviating the suffering of the poor, and

aiding those afflicted by poverty, disease, or facing natural disasters and humanitarian crisis.

Furthermore, she highlighted Kuwait's global humanitarian leadership, including fundraising and aid campaigns in over 70 countries, with no discrimination.

Al-Huwailah expressed gratitude and recognition to all humanitarian and charitable organizations in Kuwait for their efforts in coordinating and advancing humanitarian work in the country.

Kuwait's exceptional humanitarian efforts earned global recognition, with the UN designating it as an international center for humanitarian efforts and naming the late Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah a "Humanitarian Leader" in 2014.

Also, the real estate offices that offers properties on rent also receive unique codes, which helps prevent manipulation and ensures a documented and transparent transaction process among all parties.

Regarding the rental values of properties, Al-Dughhaishim explained that Dubai has established average rental rates for each area, which helps prevent manipulation and overestimation of rents.

The rental contracts in Dubai are renewed annually with a ten-percent increase each year, rather than every five years. This system simplifies the landlord's decision to accept or reject a renewal and helps reduce rental disputes.

Furthermore, the Council of Ministers approved a draft decree-law for amending certain provisions of decree-law No. 35/1978 concerning real estate rentals.

The new provisions stipulate that both the

lessor and the lessee can agree to make the lease contract an executive instrument to collect overdue rent, provided that the lessee is notified and a certificate is submitted indicating non-payment of rent.

The lease contract must be written and signed by both parties, specify a fixed amount of rent due on a specified date. The contract must be documented based on law No. 10/2020 with the executive formula appended.

The appeals of decisions issued by rental departments will be heard by the General Court in its appellate capacity.

In addition, all cases currently pending before the Court of Appeals in its various departments will be referred to the Plenary Court, except for cases already reserved for judgment, which must be resolved within one month of the issuance of this decree-law.

Fishermen warn of rising market prices

Diesel shortage threatens Kuwait's fish supply

By Abdul Nasser Al-Aslami
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 20: The "un-subsidized" diesel has become a real problem threatening the fishing sector in the country, as it portends a significant increase in fish market prices in conjunction with the cessation of fishing trips in anticipation of the new 'subsidized' share at the beginning of next month.

In a press statement Tuesday, the Kuwaiti Fishermen Union warned about the consequences of continu-

ing the implementation of the decision issued last year to reduce the diesel quota by half. It stressed that "the fishermen have become victims of the decision to reduce the diesel quota."

It added: "The continuation of this diesel shortage causes Kuwait to lose almost half of its share of shrimp and fish supply, and results in huge losses for the fishermen. The Economic Committee in the Council of Ministers should fulfill the union's demand to restore the previous subsidized diesel quota."

The union also pointed out the accumulation of fishing boats waiting to be filled with fuel, emphasizing that the depletion of the designated quota makes them wait until the beginning of the new month without entering the sea.

It called for "reconsidering the current diesel quota, returning to the previous quota and canceling the reduction that experience has proven to be ineffective and has a negative impact on the fishing sector." It noted that most fishing license holders are indebted to the Industrial Bank,

brokerage offices and commercial banks.

The union asserted: "The challenges we face make the fishing profession repulsive, and prompted trained technical fishing workers to flee to neighboring countries, because they have been unemployed for almost half the month, which affects their income, especially since their income is linked to production."

It revealed that unsubsidized die-

sel makes fishing trips expensive; thereby, halting fishing trips to wait for the new quota of subsidized diesel at the beginning of the month. It said: "One trip costs KD1,000 of unsubsidized diesel; while the same trip costs KD600 of subsidized diesel along with other expenses."

It then appealed to the concerned officials to put an end to the suffering of fishermen and achieve this fair demand by restoring the diesel quota as it was.

Employees must submit by Sept 30

Ministry of Information extends certificate submission deadline

By Mohammed Al-Musleh
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 20: A month after its initial announcement, the Ministry of Information has extended the deadline for submitting post-secondary academic certificates for both Kuwaiti and non-Kuwaiti employees until September 30.

The ministry's Undersecretary, Nasser Al-Muhaisen, issued a new circular, emphasizing that this extension is intended to facilitate the process for employees. The circular is a follow-up to the original directive from July 24, 2024, which required the submission of academic certificates for verification, covering all qualifications obtained from January 1, 2000, to the present.

Employees are instructed to visit the ministry's official website to complete the certificate examination and authentication process through the My Identity application. They are also required to upload copies of their academic qualifications, along with equivalency certificates from the Ministry of Higher Education. Non-Kuwaiti employees must submit their certificates to the Administrative Affairs Department for job arrangement monitoring.

The ministry warned that failure to submit the required documents by the extended deadline will result in employees bearing full responsibility for any actions taken by the authorities concerning the qualification review process.



Fishing boats idle as diesel costs soar, threatening shrimp and fish supplies.

Al-Seyassah photo

World News Roundup

Europe

Charles meets with survivors of stabbing rampage: King Charles III is visiting the seaside town of Southport to meet with survivors of the stabbing rampage that killed three young girls and sparked more than a week of unrest across the UK.

The monarch traveled to the community northwest of Liverpool on Tuesday for a private meeting where he will hear the experiences of some of the children who were attacked at a Taylor Swift-themed dance class on July 29.

Crowds cheered for the king as he arrived at Southport Town Hall, where mourners have placed bunches of flowers and cuddly toys in tribute to the slain children.

Bebe King, 6, Elsie Dot Stancombe, 7, and Alice Dasilva Aguiar, 9, were killed in the attack which was followed by rioting in Southport and across the country.

Violence rocked Britain for more than a week after the stabbings, with crowds spouting anti-immigrant and Islamophobic slogans clashing with police.

Charles is also expected to meet with police, paramedics and other emergency service workers who responded to the attack and the disorder that followed.

The U.K.'s worst unrest in more than a decade led to some 1,100 arrests. (AP)

'Ukraine controls 92 settlements in Russia': The Ukrainian army has taken control of 92 settlements in western Russia's Kursk region, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky said on Monday.

Ukrainian troops have seized more than 1,250 square kilometers of Russian territory, Zelensky said on social media platform X, formerly Twitter.

"The Russian border area opposite our Sumy region has been mostly cleared of Russian military presence," Zelensky said.

The Ukrainian army continues its military operation in the designated areas of the Kursk region, he added.

Ukraine started a military operation in the Kursk region on Aug 6. On Aug 15, **Oleksandr Syrsky**, commander-in-chief of the Ukrainian Armed Forces, said that his army had captured 82 settlements in the region. (Xinhua)

Fire rages for 3rd day at Russia oil depot: Russian authorities struggled Tuesday to put out a massive fire in the southern Rostov region for a third consecutive day after an oil depot was hit by Ukrainian drones as Ukrainian forces push into Russia's Kursk region.

The fire at the depot in the town of Proletarsk burned across an area of 10,000 square meters, according to Russian state news agencies. There are 500 firefighters involved in the operation, and 41 of them already have been hospitalized with injuries, according to the Russian state-owned news agency TASS, citing local officials.

Ukraine's Army General Staff claimed responsibility Sunday for attacking the oil depot, which was used to supply the needs of Russia's army, calling it a measure "to undermine the military and economic potential of the Russian Federation."

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said the daring Kursk incursion has allowed his army to capture a significant number of prisoners who could be used in exchange for captured Ukrainians, expanding on Kyiv's objectives for the mission launched two weeks ago. He earlier said that Ukraine sought to create a buffer zone that might prevent further attacks by Moscow across the border, especially with long-range artillery, missiles and glide bombs. (AP)

Chinese premier arrives in Moscow: Chinese Premier Li Qiang arrived in Moscow Tuesday to chair the 29th regular meeting between Chinese and Russian heads of government and visit Russia at the invitation of Russian Prime Minister Mikhail Mishustin.

During his stay, Li will meet with Mishustin to exchange in-depth views on bilateral relations, practical cooperation and key issues of common interest.

The regular meeting between Chinese and Russian heads of government, held every year since its inception in 1996, is an important mechanism for implementing the consensus reached by the two heads of state and promoting bilateral cooperation and people-to-people exchanges.

This year marks the 75th anniversary of the diplomatic ties between China and Russia and the launch of the China-Russia Years of Culture. (Xinhua)

'Talks with Ukraine impossible': Russian President Vladimir Putin has asserted that there cannot be any talks with Ukraine after its attack on Russia's border Kursk region, Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov said on Monday.

"The president made it very clear that following the attacks on the Kursk region, any talks are impossible," Lavrov said in an interview with local media.

Meanwhile, he refuted some allegations that the two countries made contacts mediated by the third party, claiming them as pure rumors.

The top Russian diplomat also indicated that the entire process within the frames of the conference on Ukraine in Switzerland is unacceptable for Russia because "it is about promoting the Zelensky formula as an ultimatum." (Xinhua)

Putin meets Azerbaijani president: Russian leader Vladimir Putin held talks on Monday with his Azerbaijani counterpart as part of a two-day trip to secure Moscow's under-pressure trade routes and shore up ties in the South Caucasus.

Business links were high on the agenda as Putin and President Ilham Aliyev met in the Azerbaijani capital of Baku, with Aliyev announcing that \$120 million had been earmarked to boost cargo transport between the two countries.

"We're talking about the possibility of transporting 15 million tons of cargo per year or more," he said, adding that the two countries crossed the \$4 billion mark for Russia-Azerbaijan turnover last year and "neither of us think that is where things will stop."

Such ties are a priority for Putin, who increasingly depends on countries such as Azerbaijan to access global markets because of sanctions imposed on Moscow over Russia's war on Ukraine, said independent political scientist Zardust Alizade.

"Azerbaijan is an important transit country for Russia at a time when it needs to have free access to world markets, including Iran and ports in the Indian Ocean," Alizade told The Associated Press.

Putin's overtures have been warmly welcomed by Baku. For Azerbaijan, retaining Moscow's good-will is important for national security over tensions with neighboring Armenia, says Alizade.

Russia has been Armenia's longtime sponsor and ally since the fall of the Soviet Union. (AP)

Search resumes for 6 from sunken yacht: Police divers resumed searching Tuesday for six people, including British tech magnate Mike Lynch, believed trapped some 50 meters (164 feet) underwater in the hull of a superyacht that sank in a storm off Sicily.

Divers in wetsuits and oxygen tanks returned to the site off Porticello, near Palermo, to tag-team in 12-minute underwater search shifts where the luxury sailboat went down. Fire rescue crews reported that divers only made it to the bridge during a first search, and were unable to access the below-deck cabins because they were blocked by furniture that had shifted during the violent storm that toppled the vessel early Monday.

Fifteen people survived, including a mother who reported holding her 1-year-old baby over the waves to save her. One body has been recovered, identified as the on-board chef, officials said.

The Bayesian, a 56-meter (184-foot) British-flagged luxury yacht, had been moored about a half-mile off Porticello when a storm rolled in around 4 a.m. Monday. Civil protection officials said they believed the ship was struck by a tornado over the water, known as a waterspout, which had passed through the area. (AP)



US Democratic presidential nominee Vice President Kamala Harris, (left), clasps her hand in the air with President Joe Biden at the Democratic National Convention, on Aug 19, in Chicago. (AP)

Politics

US prez gives Harris enthusiastic endorsement

Biden gets rousing ovation from Dems

CHICAGO, Aug 20, (AP) — US President Joe Biden delivered his valedictory address to the Democratic National Convention on Monday night, saying, "I gave my best to you" and basking in a long ovation that reflected the energy released by his decision to cede the stage to Vice President Kamala Harris.

Biden, 81, received a hero's welcome weeks after many in his party were pressuring him to drop his bid for reelection. One month after an unprecedented mid-campaign switch, the opening night of the convention in Chicago was designed to give a graceful exit to the incumbent president and slingshot Harris toward a faceoff with Republican Donald Trump, whose comeback bid for the White House is viewed by Democrats as an existential threat.

On Monday, Biden insisted he did not harbor any ill will about the impending end of his tenure - despite reports to the contrary - and called on the party to unite around Harris.

"I made a lot of mistakes in my career, but I gave my best to you," Biden said.

Speaking clearly and energetically, Biden relished the chance to defend his record, advocate for his vice president and go on the attack against Trump. His delivery was more reminiscent of the Biden who won in 2020 than the mumbling and sometimes incoherent one-time candidate whose debate performance sparked the downfall of his reelection campaign.

Emotional

Visibly emotional when he took the stage, Biden was greeted by a more than four-minute-long ovation and chants of "Thank you Joe."

"America, I love you," he replied. He called his selection of Harris as his running mate four years ago "the very first decision I made when I became our nominee, and it was the best decision I made my whole career."

"She's tough, she's experienced and she has enormous integrity, enormous integrity," he said. "Her story represents the best American story."

"And like many of our best presidents," he added in a nod to his own career, "she was also vice president."

Harris and second gentleman Doug Emhoff came out after his address to embrace him and his family.

Decision

First lady Jill Biden alluded to her husband's wrenching decision to leave the race in her remarks minutes before Biden took the stage. She said she fell in love with him all over again "just weeks ago, when I saw him dig deep into his soul and decide to no longer seek reelection and endorse Kamala Harris."

A long list of high-profile speakers tried to connect both Biden and Harris to what the party sees as the governing pair's most popular accomplishments.

Former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, who was greeted with prolonged applause, saluted Harris while noting her potential to break the "highest, hardest glass ceiling" to become America's first female president. Clinton was the Democratic nominee in 2016, but she lost that election to Trump.

"Together, we've put a lot of cracks in the highest, hardest glass ceiling," Clinton said, invoking a metaphor she referenced in her concession speech eight years ago. "On the other side of that glass ceiling is Kamala Harris taking the oath of office as our 47th president of the United States. When a

barrier falls for one of us, it clears the way for all of us."

Clinton also saluted Biden for stepping aside, saying, "Now we are writing a new chapter in America's story."

Highlighting the party's generational reach, Clinton, 76, followed New York Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, 34, who endorsed Harris while delivering the first mention of the war in Gaza from the convention stage, addressing an issue that has split the party's base ever since Hamas' Oct. 7 attack and Israel's resulting offensive.

Focus

Meanwhile, Democrats also looked to keep the focus on Trump, whose criminal convictions they mocked and who they asserted was only fighting for himself, rather than "for the people" - the night's official theme.

Michigan State Sen Mallory McMorrow hoisted an oversized copy of "Project 2025" - a blueprint for a second Trump term that was put together by the Heritage Foundation, a conservative think tank - onto the lectern and quoted from portions of it.

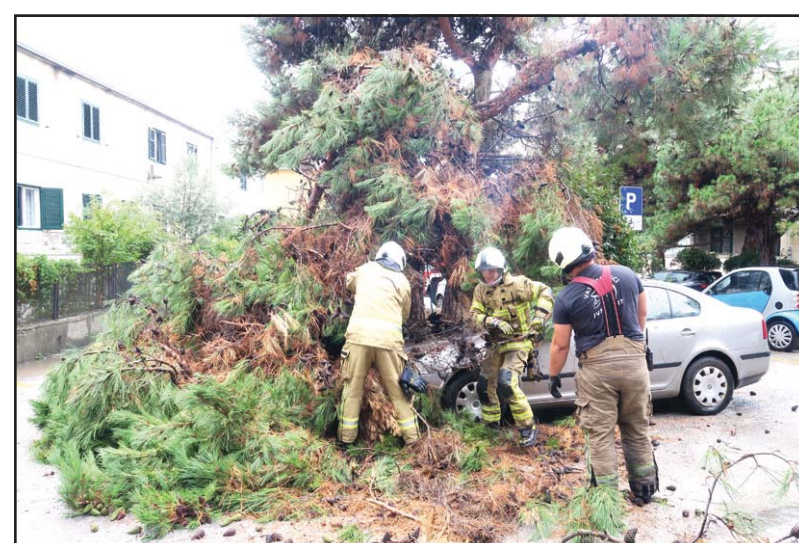
Democrats kept abortion access front and center for voters, betting that the issue will propel them to success as it has in other key races since the Supreme Court overturned Roe v. Wade two years ago. Speakers Monday included women whose healthcare suffered as a result of that decision, and one woman who was raped and became pregnant by her stepfather attacked Trump for trying to roll back access to abortion. The convention program included a video of Trump praising his own role in getting Roe struck down.

The convention program also honored the civil rights movement, with an appearance from the Rev. Jesse Jackson, the founder of the Chicago-based Rainbow PUSH Coalition, who is ailing with Parkinson's disease. There were several references to Fannie Lou Hamer, the late civil rights activist who gave a landmark speech at a Democratic convention in 1964.

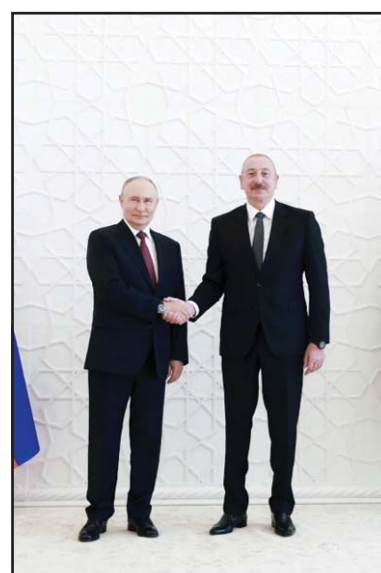
Hamer was a former sharecropper and a leader of the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party, a racially integrated group that challenged the seating of an all-white Mississippi delegation at the 1964 Democratic National Convention.

face masks and other activities related to protests as students return for the new school year to its 10 campuses.

In a letter to the university system's community, UC President **Michael V. Drake** said the university will take sev-



Firefighters clear debris after a storm in Split, Croatia, on Aug 19. (Xinhua)



Russian President Vladimir Putin, (left), and Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev, (right), shake hands during their meeting at Zagulba state residence in Baku, Azerbaijan on Aug 19. Putin held talks on Monday with his Azerbaijani counterpart as part of a two-day trip to secure Moscow's under-pressure trade routes and shore up ties in the South Caucasus. (AP)



Santos



Drake

America

2 dead in Connecticut floods: Torrential rains turned streets into raging rivers in parts of Connecticut and New York's Long Island, trapping people in cars and a restaurant, covering vehicles in mud, and sweeping two women to their deaths, authorities said.

Dramatic rescues unfolded as a foot (30 centimeters) of rain fell on some parts of western Connecticut late Sunday and early Monday, coming down so fast that it caught drivers unaware. Connecticut Gov. Ned Lamont, who declared a state of emergency, said more than 100 people were evacuated by search and rescue teams Sunday evening.

The bodies of two women who had been in separate cars were recovered Monday in Oxford, a town of 13,000 about 35 miles (56 kilometers) southwest of Hartford, officials said. State police identified them Monday afternoon as Ethelyn Joiner, 65, and Audrey Rostkowski, 71, both of Oxford. (AP)

Santos pleads guilty: **George Santos**, who spun lies about his life into an 11-month stint in Congress, pleaded guilty Monday to wire fraud and aggravated identity theft in a case that led to his expulsion from office. He blamed his ambition for clouding his judgment and said he was "flooded with deep regret."

Santos, 36, is likely to spend at least six years in prison and owes more than \$570,000 in restitution and forfeiture after tearfully admitting that he duped voters, deceived donors and stole the identities of 11 people, including his own family members, to make donations to his campaign.

Santos' guilty plea in federal court on Long Island came weeks before the case was to go to trial, punctuating one of the more bizarre stories in modern political lore. He remains free on bond awaiting sentencing Feb 7. (AP)

UC bans encampments: The president of the University of California (UC) announced on Monday that the top public university systems in the United States will enforce rules to ban encampments,

eral steps to facilitate more consistency across its campuses. These include establishing policies that prohibit camping or encampments, unauthorized structures, restrictions on free movement, masking to conceal identity, and refusing to reveal one's identity when asked to do so by university personnel. (Xinhua)

Soldier indicted for lying: An active-duty soldier based in North Carolina has been indicted on charges of having lied to military authorities about his association with a group that advocated overthrowing the US government and of trafficking firearms.

Kai Liam Nix, 20, who is stationed at Fort Liberty, made his first federal court appearance Monday on the four criminal counts, the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Eastern District of North Carolina said in a news release.

A grand jury returned the indictment against Nix - also known as Kai Brazelton - last Wednesday, and he was arrested the next day, the release said. A magistrate judge ordered Monday that Nix be held pending a detention hearing in Raleigh later this week. (AP)

Lat/Am

Obrador slams US

Fascism failed in Venezuela: leader

CARACAS, Aug 20, (Agencies): Venezuelan President **Nicolas Maduro** declared "fascism has failed in Venezuela" in a meeting Monday with the national leadership of the governing United Socialist Party of Venezuela (PSUV) and its allies in the Great Patriotic Pole coalition.

"We will not allow fascism to assault power in Venezuela," Maduro said, calling on supporters "to consolidate the victory against hatred, against lies, against manipulation."

Assessing Venezuela's political landscape after the July 28 presidential elections, Maduro said the coalition and its supporters were "defeating a coup d'etat." He described post-election attempts to destabilize the country through online disinformation campaigns as a "cyber coup d'etat," warning that "woe betide anyone who falls for the narrative that attempts to justify a coup d'etat and the establishment of a violent regime."



Maduro

"Fascism has failed in Venezuela, we have defeated it," he said.

Immediately following the presidential elections, violence broke out in parts of the capital Caracas and other cities, which the government said was instigated by opposition groups.

Obrador slams US gov't: Mexico's President **Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador**, in a letter to his American counterpart Joe Biden, denounced the "interference" of US government agencies in Mexico's domestic affairs, particularly their financing of an opposition-controlled non-governmental association (NGO).

During his daily press conference on Monday, Lopez Obrador presented a letter dated Aug. 16, in which he condemned the U.S. government for financially supporting a Mexican NGO, Mexicans Against Corruption and Impunity, which has been a vocal critic of his administration.

"This procedure is completely offensive and contrary to relations respectful of sovereignty," the president wrote in the letter.

Lopez Obrador also reminded Biden of his consistent opposition to such interference and urged him to take action to halt the activities of the United States Agency for International Development that supports these practices.

Lopez Obrador, whose term concludes at the end of September, has repeatedly raised concerns about the financial support the NGO has been receiving from the United States.

Mexico federal court employees strike: Employees at Mexico's federal courts went on strike on Monday over measures that would make all judges stand for election as part of a judicial overhaul proposed by outgoing President **Andrés Manuel López Obrador**.

Unionized court employees put chains and locks on the gates at several courthouses, saying the measures would deal a significant blow to checks and balances in Mexico and also threaten their working conditions, benefits and salaries. The strike comes amid a long-running rift between the populist leader and the judiciary, spurring on democratic concerns.

Striking employees also objected to changes that would eliminate the system by which judges and court employees accumulate experience and move up to higher positions.

Organizers said thousands of federal court workers joined the strike, which they plan to continue until Lopez Obrador drops his proposals.

Argelia Román Mojica, a federal judge who has worked in Mexico's judiciary for nearly 25 years, was outside a federal court in Mexico City on Monday morning, alongside hundreds of other protesters.

"It's a way to put an end to judicial power, a violation of the separation of powers," said Román Mojica, adding that it's not the "way to improve a justice system."

Lopez Obrador's proposals would allow anyone with a law degree and a few years of experience as a lawyer to be elected a judge.

The president, who leaves office Sept 30, says many judges in Mexico are corrupt and has frequently publicly sparred those whose rulings he disagrees with. His administration has also botched many of the cases it brings to court and then blamed the judges.

Gilma staying away from land: Tropical Storm Gilma has strengthened in the eastern Pacific Ocean and is forecast to remain away from land this week.

No coastal watches or warnings were in effect Monday night for the storm, which was located about 720 miles (1,158 kilometers) southwest of the southern tip of the Baja California peninsula of Mexico.

Gilma had strengthened to tropical storm status on Sunday, the National Hurricane Center said, and could approach hurricane strength by the middle of the week.

The storm had maximum sustained winds of 60 mph (96 kph) and was moving west at about 10 mph (16 kph). Slow strengthening of Gilma was expected during the next few days, forecasters said.

The storm comes as Hurricane Ernesto churns in the northeastern Atlantic Ocean, sending powerful swells toward the U.S. East Coast, generating dangerous rip currents and prompting many rescues.

Paraguay lawmaker killed in shootout: A pre-dawn police raid targeting the home of a Paraguayan lawmaker in a notorious drug smuggling haven near the country's border with Brazil turned into a chaotic shootout on Monday, authorities said, leaving the lawmaker dead and the nation on edge.

The killing of Eulalio "Lalo" Gomes, a 67-year-old rancher and lawmaker from Paraguay's long-ruling Colorado party, also served as a grim reminder of the web of collusion between politicians' families and organized crime in Paraguay, experts said.

"This is not an isolated case, on the contrary, it's the continuation of many other cases linking politics to narco-trafficking and organized crime," said Paraguayan lawyer and political analyst Leonardo Gómez Berniga.

Security forces equipped with firearms and search warrants arrived simultaneously at the separate homes of Gomes and his son, 32-year-old Alexandre Rodrigues Gomes, early Monday in the lush borderland to look for evidence in what authorities described as a wide-scale investigation into drug smuggling and money laundering in local real estate.



Fishing boats are anchored at a port as Typhoon Jongdari approaches Jeju Island, South Korea on Aug 20. (AP)

South Korea braces for strong winds, rain as tropical storm Jongdari nears

Tropical storm Jongdari moved toward South Korea's coast on Tuesday, prompting officials to shut roads and parks as the country braced for strong winds and rain. As of 6:30 p.m., Jongdari was 100 kilometers (62 miles) west of the southern island of Jeju and headed north at 33 kph (20 mph) while packing 65 kph (40 mph) winds. It was forecast to weaken around midnight, hours before making land-

fall near the western city of Seosan.

The storm isn't expected to bring destructive winds as it passes through the densely populated Seoul metropolitan area on Wednesday. Government officials still urged public vigilance, emphasizing securing objects and vessels and monitoring high-risk areas, including underground passages and basement dwellings.

South Korea's weather agency forecast the storm would dump around 10 centimeters (3.9 inches) of rain on Jeju and some southern mainland areas. Some central areas could see up to 8 centimeters (3.1 inches) of rain. The southern cities of Busan and Ulsan received about 5 centimeters (1.9 inches) of rain Tuesday afternoon, but there were no immediate reports of injuries or major property damage. (AP)

Asia

Japan's ruling party to pick new leader on Sept 27

Malaysia, India to expand defense cooperation

NEW DELHI, Aug 20, (AP): India and Malaysia will seek to expand economic ties and strengthen cooperation on defense and security, the leaders of the two countries said on Tuesday.

This came during Malaysian Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim's visit to India, his first since he took office in 2022, where he met with his Indian counterpart Narendra Modi.

Recently, Anwar has sought to move closer to China, with whom New Delhi has been locked in a long-running border dispute. A key part of Modi's foreign policy has been to deepen trade and ties with other Asian countries, including Malaysia, to push back against growing Chinese influence in the region.

Both heads of state addressed reporters after signing a slew of new agreements, including digital technologies, tourism and traditional medicine. Anwar said the two countries have enjoyed good relations for years, adding that "we realized this must be strengthened in a multitude of areas," including construction, agriculture and military collaborations to safeguard both nations' borders.

Modi said the two had discussed cooperation in the defense sector, and that trade and investment between the two countries should grow while they collaborate on new industries like the production of semiconductors. He also stressed how the partnership between the two countries had grown, taking on "new momentum and energy" over the years.

Earlier on Tuesday, the Malaysian prime minister received a ceremonial welcome at India's presidential palace Rashtrapati Bhavan before paying his respects to Indian independence leader Mahatma Gandhi at the Rajghat memorial site in New Delhi.

Bilateral trade between the two countries is strong at \$20 billion. Malaysia is India's 16th largest trading partner, while India is among the top ten largest trading partners for Malaysia. There are around 70 Malaysian companies operating in India and more than 150 Indian ones in Malaysia, where Indians comprise about 7% of the country's population.

Also:

JIUPENG, Taiwan: Taiwan's military

launched surface-to-air missiles in live-fire drills conducted Tuesday in response to growing military pressure from China.

The exercises took place at the Jiupeng Military Base in a remote area in southern Taiwan. Among the missiles launched were Taiwan's domestically made Sky Bow III anti-ballistic missiles along with the U.S.-made Patriot PAC II and surface-to-air Standard missiles.

China claims the democratically ruled island of Taiwan as its own territory, to be brought under its control by force if necessary and ramped up its military threat in recent years.

Beijing in particular dislikes Taiwan's new President **Lai Ching-te**, who took office earlier this year and whom Beijing has called a separatist.

Taipei has boosted its deterrence capabilities in response. Missiles, both domestically built and US-made, are key to its defense strategy.

Defense Ministry spokesperson **Sun Li-fang** said all the missiles launched Tuesday hit their targets.

would be allowed to temporarily stay in the Philippines at any time while their special immigrant visas for resettlement to the U.S. are being completed.

A senior Philippine official, however, told The Associated Press that only 150 to 300 applicants would be accommodated in the Philippines under the "one-time" deal. The official who had knowledge of the negotiations agreed to speak on condition of anonymity because of a lack of authority to speak publicly.

Department of Foreign Affairs spokesperson Assistant Secretary Teresita Daza said Afghan nationals should secure a visa to enter the Philippines and would be subjected to "full security vetting." Each visa applicant can stay not more than 59 days.

Beijing did not immediately react to Taiwan's drill. China sends military jets and vessels near Taiwan frequently in what critics call an intimidation tactic.

Taiwan's Defense Ministry said early Tuesday it spotted five Chinese military jets and 11 ships close to its shores over the previous 24 hours.

TOKYO: Japan's ruling party said Tuesday it will hold a vote on Sept 27 to choose its new leader after Prime Minister **Fumio Kishida's** surprise announcement that he will be stepping down.

The internal election must be held by the end of September, which marks the end of Kishida's three-year term and will only include the party's parliamentarians and its 1.1 million dues-paying members. The winner will be the head of the Liberal Democratic Party and the country's prime minister as the party and its smaller coalition partner control Japan's two-chamber parliament.

son of the provincial police office. The health conditions of all injured in the accident were reported as critical, Badri added.

Similarly, two children lost their lives and eight others were injured due to a road incident in eastern Ghani province Monday night.

Road accidents are prevalent in Afghanistan due to poor road conditions, reckless driving, challenging terrains, overloading, overtaking and speeding. (Xinhua)

India's SC creates task force: India's top court on Tuesday set up a national task force of doctors who will make recommendations on safety of health care workers at their workplaces, days after the rape and killing of a trainee doctor that sparked outrage and nationwide protests.

The Supreme Court said the doctors' panel will frame guidelines for ensuring safety and protection of medical professionals and health care workers across the country.

"Protecting safety of doctors and women doctors is a matter of national interest and principle of equality. The nation cannot await another rape for it to take some steps," Chief Justice **Dhananjaya Yeshwant Chandrachud** said.

Doctors and medics across India have been holding protests, candlelight marches and even temporarily refused care for non-emergency patients since Aug. 9 when the killing in the eastern city of Kolkata, the capital of West Bengal state. (AP)



An onboard mechanic checks an EMU train during a test run on the Huinong-Yinchuan section of the high-speed railway linking Baotou of north China's Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region and Yinchuan of northwest China's Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region, in Shizuishan City, northwest China's Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region on Aug 19. Fault simulation and emergency rescue drills were conducted on the Huinong-Yinchuan section on the high-speed railway linking Baotou and Yinchuan on Monday. (Xinhua)



Sharif



Chandrachud

Subcontinent

Quake hits Pakistan, Kashmir: A magnitude 5.3 earthquake shook parts of Pakistan and the Himalayan region of Kashmir early Tuesday, panicking residents. There were no immediate reports of damage, officials said.

The epicenter of the quake was in southwestern Kashmir, a predominantly Muslim region that is divided between neighboring India and Pakistan, both of which claim it in its entirety.

According to the National Seismic Monitoring Centre in Pakistan's capital, Islamabad, the depth of the tremors was 20 kilometers (12 miles). Shaking was felt across much of Pakistan, including Islamabad, some areas in the eastern Punjab northwestern Khyber Pakhtunkhwa provinces bordering Afghanistan.

A magnitude 7.6 quake in 2005 killed thousands of people in Pakistan and Kashmir. (Xinhua)

Pakistan suffers net slowdown: People in Pakistan reported much slower internet over the past several days with some experts on Monday estimating its speed falling to less than half its usual capacity at times.

The problem has affected millions of users, disrupting businesses and drawing nationwide complaints, while authorities have denied allegations that the installation of a national firewall was behind the slowdown.

Since February, users have been either unable to use social media or allowed limited access following a governmental crackdown before the Feb 8 parliamentary election. However, internet speed has now noticeably slowed down.

Users are unable to quickly send emails or use the messaging service WhatsApp, with businesspeople and doctors saying it has negatively affected their daily work, particularly receiving statements and medical reports. Pakistan's prime minister is **Shehbaz Sharif**.

Chaudhry Arif, who runs a software company in the capital, Islamabad, said the internet speed was from 40% to 80% slower than the previous week, with no signs of improvement. (AP)

Afghanistan road mishap kills 4: A road accident in western Afghanistan's Ghor province left four dead and injured 14 others late Monday, the provincial police office reported Tuesday.

The fatal accident took place after a passenger vehicle turned turtle in the province's Lal wa Sarjantal district. All the victims of the mishap were members of one family, said Mawlawi Abdul Rahman Badri, spokesperson.



India and Malaysia will seek to expand economic ties and strengthen cooperation on defense and security, the leaders of the two countries said on Tuesday. (AP)

Boursa Kuwait general index slightly declines

The Boursa Kuwait experienced a slight decline in its general index, closing at 7127 points, down by 0.7 points or 0.01 percent from the previous session, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The market saw a decrease in its overall market value, which dropped by 4 million dinars to 42.141 billion dinars, compared to 42.145 billion dinars in the previous session. During the session 198.2 million shares were traded worth 14,395 transactions; the total trading value was 45.5 million dinars (approximately \$138.7 million).

The Main Market Index rose by 27.8 points to 6,050 points (+0.4 percent), with 87 million shares

traded worth 14.3 million dinars (approximately 43.6 million dollars). The Premier Market Index fell by 8.3 points to 7756.82 points (-0.1 percent), with 111.2 million shares traded worth 31.2 million dinars (approximately 95.16 million dollars).

The Main 50 Index increased by 29.4 points to 5886.31 points (+0.50 percent), with 53.4 million shares traded worth 10.5 million dinars (approximately 32 million dollars).

The sector performance shows six sectors increased, led by insurance (+2.81 percent); five sectors declined, with energy leading the decrease (-0.44 percent) and two sectors remained unchanged.

81% of Fitch-rated sukuk classified as investment grade

According to Fitch Ratings, less than 0.25 percent of global sukuk had defaulted by the end of the first half of 2024, reports Al-Seyassah daily. The agency also noted that 81 percent of the sukuk it rated were classified as investment grade.

Among the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) countries, the UAE and Qatar received the highest ratings for debt recovery, while many other member states had lower ratings. Despite this, no sovereign sukuk have defaulted to date, with most defaults involving companies. Many of these cases have been resolved outside of court, limiting transparency around their outcomes.

Bashar Al-Natour, Global Head of Islamic Finance at Fitch Ratings, highlighted in an interview with Al Arabiya Business that sovereign sukuk are less prone to default due to backing from governments and central banks.

Sukuk, or Islamic financial certificates, represent undivided ownership in tangible assets associated with specific projects or investments. They comply with Islamic law by offering profits instead of interest and are issued by sovereign governments, corporations, quasi-government entities, and the private sector to raise funds for various needs.

Market Movements

20-08-2024

	Change	Closing pts		Change	Closing pts
SAUDI - TASI	+80.79	12,103.82	PAKISTAN - KSE 100	-24.55	77,782.06
DUBAI - DFMGI	+17.35	4,254.87			
JAPAN - Nikkei 225	+674.30	38,062.92			
PHILIPPINES - PSEi	+54.89	6,944.76			
EGYPT - EGX 30	+595.06	29,915.24			

Business

Kuwait imports \$262 million in US automobiles in H1 '24

US oil imports from Middle East total \$83.858 billion

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 20: In the first half of 2024, Kuwait engaged in significant trade with the United States, focusing on automotive imports and oil exports, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

Kuwait imported American cars and automotive parts valued at \$262 million. This amount was distributed among various categories: \$194 million for passenger cars, \$42 million for passenger trucks and buses, and \$26 million for spare parts. In June alone, Kuwait's imports totaled \$31 million, comprising \$23 million for passenger cars, \$3 million for trucks and buses, and \$5 million for spare parts.

According to data reviewed by Mubasher, the United States exported a total of \$3.9 billion worth of cars, buses, and spare parts to three major Arab nations -- Saudi Arabia, the UAE, and Kuwait. This included \$2.496 billion for passenger cars, \$1.129 billion for trucks and buses, and \$262 million for spare parts.

The UAE was the largest importer of American vehicles, with total imports amounting to \$2.496 billion. This included \$2.050 billion for passenger cars, \$94 million for trucks and buses, and \$352 million for spare parts.

In June 2024, the UAE imported \$384 million worth of American vehicles, broken down into \$311 million for passenger cars, \$22 million for trucks and buses, and \$51 million for spare parts.

Saudi Arabia also made substantial purchases, totaling \$1.129 billion. This comprised \$914 million for passenger cars, \$90 million for trucks and buses, and \$125 million for spare parts. In June, Saudi Arabia's

imports amounted to \$159 million, including \$121 million for passenger cars, \$14 million for trucks and buses, and \$24 million for spare parts.

Overall, US exports of cars, buses, and spare parts during the first half of 2024 reached approximately \$90.549 billion. This figure was distributed as follows: \$30.635 billion for passenger cars, \$15.041 billion for trucks and buses, and \$44.873 billion for spare parts.

In addition to automotive imports, Kuwait exported oil to the United States worth \$249 million during the same period.

In the first half of 2024, Kuwait exported approximately 3.227 million barrels of oil to the United States, with the total value reaching around \$249.335 million. This aligns with Kuwait's ongoing commitment to the global energy market.

In contrast, Saudi Arabia's crude oil exports to the US were significantly higher, totaling 55.18 million barrels valued at \$4.73 billion.

During June 2024 alone, Saudi Arabia exported 7.14 million barrels to the US, generating \$616.14 million in revenue. This was a decrease from the \$1.014 billion earned in May 2024 from 11.679 million barrels. Notably, Saudi Arabia's crude oil production fell by 76,000 barrels per day in June compared to the previous month, according to a recent OPEC report.

US oil imports from January to June 2024 totaled approximately 1.179 billion barrels, amounting to \$83.858 billion. The UAE, another key player in the oil market, exported 5.099 million barrels to the US valued at over \$439.48 million.

In June 2024, UAE's oil imports reached about 1.996 million barrels, contributing to a total value of \$175.8 billion for the period.

These figures highlight the dynamic nature of global oil trade and the significant role played by Middle Eastern countries in meeting US energy needs.

Silver rises 0.4%, platinum steady, palladium declines 0.7%

Gold prices decline slightly, hover near record highs around \$2,500

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 20: Gold prices saw a slight dip yesterday but continue to hover near historic highs around the \$2,500 level, reports Al-Jarida daily.

Investors are locking in profits after gold hit a record peak of \$2,509.65 per ounce in the previous session, spurred by expectations of a potential U.S. interest rate cut next month.

In the latest trading, spot gold declined by 0.2 percent to \$2,503.10 per ounce, while U.S. gold futures edged up 0.2 percent to \$2,541.50 per ounce.

The recent surge in gold prices has been driven by investor optimism over a possible Federal Reserve rate cut in September, alongside rising geopolitical tensions and robust central bank gold purchases. Gold has gained more than 20 percent this year.

Tim Waterer, Chief Market Analyst at MTrade, noted that gold has been steadily climbing toward the \$2,500 mark, and now that it has reached this level, some profit-taking is underway.

Strong retail sales and lower-than-expected jobless claims have bolstered confidence in the U.S. economy, while traders are betting on a 25-basis-point rate cut by the Federal Reserve next month, with a 75.5 percent likelihood, according to CCI's FedWatch tool. Market participants are also closely watching Federal Reserve Chair Jerome Powell's upcoming speech in Jackson Hole and the release of the Fed's July meeting minutes for further clues.

Kyle Rodda, a Financial Markets

Recipients free to choose careers

New scholarship program aims to develop Kuwaiti experts in FinTech

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 20: The Institute of Banking Studies has launched an internal scholarship program for Kuwaitis to pursue a Master's degree in Financial Technology, in collaboration with the Gulf University for Science and Technology, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

This initiative is part of the Central Bank of Kuwait's strategy to develop highly skilled national professionals in the evolving financial and banking sector.

The scholarship aims to enhance the skills of Kuwaiti professionals to support economic and social development in Kuwait. It is designed to build expertise in the rapidly growing field of financial technology.

The program, which is the first of its kind, will be offered in partnership with Kuwaiti banks and the Gulf University for Science and Technology.

Scholarship recipients are not ob-

ligated to work in the banking sector or for the Central Bank of Kuwait upon graduation. They have the flexibility to pursue career opportunities in both the public and private sectors.

Basil Ahmed Al-Haroun, Governor of the Central Bank of Kuwait and Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Institute of Banking Studies, has acknowledged the support of Kuwaiti banks and the Gulf University for Science and Technology.

He emphasized the program's role in advancing Kuwait's economic development and thanked the institutions involved for their contributions.

This scholarship program reflects a strategic effort to foster local talent and address the growing need for expertise in financial technology, aligning with the broader goals of national development and innovation.

Analyst at Capital.com, emphasized that factors like a slowing U.S. economy, anticipated rate cuts, a weaker dollar, geopolitical risks, and strong central bank demand will likely continue to support gold prices in the

long term. Among other precious metals, silver rose 0.4 percent to \$29.11 per ounce, platinum remained steady at \$954.65 per ounce, and palladium fell 0.7 percent to \$944.43 per ounce.

Company's donations have provided roughly 1 million meals

WFP receives new donation from Agility to support food assistance in Palestine

DUBAI, Aug 20: The World Food Programme (WFP) has welcomed a new financial contribution from their longstanding partner Agility, a supply chain services, infrastructure and innovation company, to support WFP's operations in Palestine. This donation will contribute to WFP's efforts to provide essential food assistance to those suffering in one of the worst hunger crises the world is facing today.



Tarek Sultan

With this latest contribution from Agility, WFP will be able to provide nearly 779,000 hot meals in Gaza ensuring that the most vulnerable populations receive the necessary support amidst ongoing challenges. This will bring the total donations by Agility and its employees to 1 million meals since the start of the current crisis in October last year.

"Agility's generous contribution comes at a crucial time for Palestine, where food insecurity and humanitarian needs are escalating. This support will have an impact on our efforts to provide life-saving assistance to those who need it most. The involvement of the private sector, particularly leaders like Agility, is vital in helping us address these challenges and achieve our mission of zero hunger," said Maged Yahia, WFP Representative to the GCC.

The latest WFP Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) report finds that 96 percent of the population is facing acute food insecurity at crisis level or higher (IPC Category 3+), with almost half a million people in catastrophic conditions (IPC Category 5).

Adequate and sustained levels

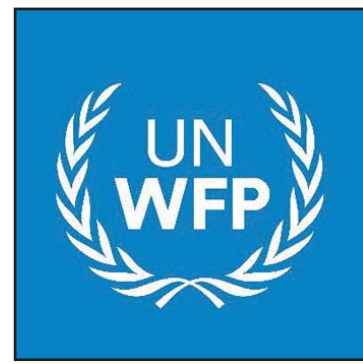
of humanitarian assistance must be provided, including more fresh food, better nutritional diversity, clean water and sanitation, access to health care and the rebuilding of clinics and hospitals.

"Agility supports WFP's efforts to save lives by delivering critical humanitarian assistance around the world. We've worked closely with WFP in more than 20 countries since we became a WFP partner in 2008, focusing our support on WFP's food assistance program and supply chain services that provide logistics resources to the broader humanitarian community. WFP's brave, committed staff brings assistance to communities in dire need, often amid conflict. In Gaza, WFP is leading efforts to prevent famine and further suffering," said Tarek Sultan, Agility Vice Chairman.

Agility has been a long-standing partner of WFP, consistently demonstrating its commitment to humanitarian causes. As a member of the Logistics Emergency Teams (LETs) and through its bilateral partnerships, Agility has supported over 75+ humanitarian crises by providing free



Agility logo



logistics expertise and services such as transportation and warehousing. This partnership, which began in 2008, has been instrumental in enhancing WFP's emergency response capabilities.

In addition to its involvement with LET, Agility has made several direct contributions to WFP over the years, a testament of its unwavering support and dedication to humanitarian efforts.

In July alone, WFP assisted 1.1 million people. Nearly 1 million people in Gaza received in-kind food rations, while nearly 150,000 in the West Bank received cash-based transfers.

WFP needs \$303 million between now and the end of the year to be able to provide critical support for Gaza and the West Bank.

Confirming its commitment to nationwide Kuwaitization strategy

Burgan Bank appoints Bader Al-Turkait as Deputy GM of Financial Institutions

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 20: Burgan Bank announced the appointment of Mr. Bader Al-Turkait as Deputy General Manager of Financial Institutions (FI) under the umbrella of its Treasury and Financial Institutions Group.

In a series of new leadership appointments across its various functions, the latest talent acquisition comes as part of the Bank's comprehensive human capital development strategy, which centers on acquiring and developing Kuwait's most talented and aspiring calibers.

The strategy aims to advance Burgan's business role as well as raise the bar of qualifications across the domestic banking market's talent pool.

Commenting on Al-Turkait's appointment, Mr. Abdullah Abdulmajeed Marafie, General Manager - Treasury and Financial Institutions at Burgan Bank, said: "In the intricate environment of Burgan Bank, every acquired talent is instrumental to our collective success, and today, we are delighted to welcome on board Mr. Bader Al-Turkait, whose role is pivotal to fortifying our position in the market through building profound relationships with external financial entities.

We are certain that Al-Turkait will add value to his team and the organization in adherence to our standards for quality and governance." Prior to joining Burgan Bank, Al-Turkait was the Executive Manager of the Treasury and Financial Institutions Division at the Kuwait Finance House (KFH).

In addition to his most recent responsibilities, Al-Turkait brings with him 25 years of experience in the banking sector with similar positions at the National Bank of Kuwait (NBK) and Al Ahli Bank of Kuwait (ABK).

Al-Turkait's unique perspective is owed to his diverse academic journey, beginning with acquiring his



Bader Al-Turkait



Abdullah Abdulmajeed Marafie

bachelor's degree in Political Science from Colorado State University, followed by earning his MBA in Finance from the University of Denver and completing the General Management Program at Harvard Business School.

About Burgan Bank
Established in 1977, Burgan Bank is a Kuwait-based conventional bank with a significant focus on the corporate and financial institution sectors. From its earliest days, the Bank has significantly sought to diversify its offering to cater to its growing retail and private banking customer base.

Burgan Bank has majority-owned subsidiaries, collectively known as the "Burgan Bank Group", in the MENAT region. This Group is supported by one of the largest branch networks across the region and includes: Gulf Bank Algeria - AGB (Algeria), Tunis International Bank - TIB (Tunisia), and Burgan Bank Turkey. Furthermore, Burgan Bank has a presence in the UAE through its corporate office, Burgan Financial Services Limited.

The Bank has continuously improved its performance over the years, through an expanded revenue structure, diversified funding sources, and

a strong capital base. The adoption of state-of-the-art services and technology has positioned it as a trendsetter in the domestic market and within the MENA region. Moreover, Burgan Bank's brand has been built on a foundation of real values - trust, commitment, excellence, and progression - which serve as a reminder of the high standards to which the Bank always aspires. In fact, the Bank's core philosophy of "Driven by You" is the foundation on which its products and services are continuously developed.

The Bank obtained the ISO/IEC 27001:2022 Information Security Management Systems certificate (ISMS), ISO /IEC 27701:2019 Privacy Information Management Systems (PIMS), ISO/IEC 20000-1:2018 Information Technology Service Management System (ITSMS) and was re-certified with the prestigious ISO 9001:2015 Quality Management System (QMS), making it one of the few banks in the GCC and Kuwait to receive such certification for five consecutive times. The Bank also has the distinction of being the only Bank in Kuwait to have won the JP Morgan Chase Quality Recognition Award for twenty consecutive years.

Dubai real estate market hits record valuations

'As Middle East frets about conflict, Dubai booms with an influx of anxious wealth'

DUBAI, Aug 20, (AP): As conflicts cast a shadow across the Middle East, people are getting rich in Dubai.

The desert sheikdom's economy is buzzing with tourism and construction as it positions itself as a safe haven in a region that's resting on a knife's edge following the assassination of Hamas leader Ismail Haniyeh in Iran.

"Dubai is in a very unique position. We happen to be the net beneficiary of crisis in the region, for good or bad," Zhaan Jochinke, the chief operating officer of real estate consultancy Property Monitor, told The Associated Press.

Dubai has a long history of indirectly benefiting from crises in the region. When the ultra-wealthy worry about turmoil, the city offers stability, low taxes and a friendly visa system.

The current turmoil has situated Dubai to capitalize once again, as it did during the COVID-19 pandemic and Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

Demand is running red hot in Dubai's real estate market, catapulting glitzy

properties to record-breaking valuations. Not even historic flooding in April could dampen the bull market.

State-backed Emaar Properties, whose name is splashed across Dubai's skyline, announced that its development business made \$8.1 billion in sales through the first half of the year, up from \$5.2 billion over the same time period last year.

Across the city, valuations for Dubai's upscale villas have set a new record, increasing around 38% in the second quarter of 2024 compared to last year, according to real estate consultancy ValuStrat. The average price for a villa - the local term for any freestanding home - exceeded \$2.7 million for the first time in a decade. Rises in premium apartments are close behind with locations in Palm Jumeirah, a man-made archipelago jutting out into the Arabian Gulf, already surpassing 2014 peaks.

Tariq Shah, the head of sales at Pat & Co., a brokerage firm that deals in high-end properties, said the demand from his clientele seeking to buy has risen exponentially.

"The demand for luxury is way above the expectation," Shah told the AP.

Meanwhile, Dubai International Airport - the world's busiest for international travel - saw a record 44.9 million travelers in the first half of this year. Dubai plans to move operations to a nearly \$35 billion new airport in the next decade.

"We are heading for a forecast number for the balance of the year of 91.8 million passengers through DXB, which is again another record for us," Dubai Airports CEO Paul Griffiths told the AP.

Some 9.3 million tourists visited the global hub through the first half of the year, beating pre-pandemic heights, according to research from the Dubai government-owned bank Emirates NBD.

The city state's population has grown from 3.2 million in 2018 to nearly 3.7 million in 2024, with an additional 1.1 million who temporarily live in the city or commute there for work each day. The hereditary monarchy seeks to increase Dubai's population to 5.8 million by 2040.

Cbanks of Cambodia, Philippines sign MoU on co-op

The central banks of Cambodia and the Philippines have signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) on the enhancement of bilateral cooperation, said a joint news release issued on Tuesday.

The deal was inked on Monday in northwest Cambodia's Siem Reap province between National Bank of Cambodia (NBC) Governor Chea Serey and Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas

(BSP) Governor Eli Remolona. "The MoU signifies the willingness and commitment of both the BSP and NBC to provide a clear framework for the facilitation of bilateral ties and the enhancement of cooperation between the two central banks which have had a history of collaboration in both bilateral and regional fronts," the news release said. The signing ceremony was

followed by a high-level bilateral meeting where the BSP and NBC exchanged views on recent macroeconomic and financial developments and outlook, payment system developments, artificial intelligence, cybersecurity, and sustainable finance, the news release said, adding that the two central banks also discussed opportunities for further cooperation on these areas. (Xinhua)

owner of 7-Eleven store chain gets takeover bid

The owner of 7-Eleven convenience stores and other retail chains has received a buyout offer from Canada's Alimentation Couche-Tard.

Japan's Seven & i Holdings on Monday said that a special committee that made up of outside directors has been formed to review the bid, but released no other details. Shares of Seven & i jumped 23% in Tokyo, the largest sin-

gle day jump for the stock in the company's history.

"This potential takeover bid is a huge deal. 7-Eleven is the biggest operator in the US convenience retail store space with a 14.5% share of the market in 2023," said Neil Saunders, managing director of GlobalData. "By comparison, Alimentation Couche-Tard's banners had a 4.6% market share. So, combining the two would produce an entity that controls al-

most a fifth of the market."

The company has been trying to streamline operations and last year sold the department store chain Sogo & Seibu Co. to a U.S. investment fund.

Seven & i said that its board, as well as the special committee, have not made any decision yet as to accepting or rejecting the offer, to enter into talks with Couche-Tard or to pursue alternative options. (AP)

Powell may use Jackson Hole speech to give a hint

How fast and how far could the Fed cut rates?

WASHINGTON, Aug 20, (AP) - Federal Reserve officials have said they're increasingly confident that they've nearly tamed inflation. Now, it's the health of the job market that's starting to draw their concern.

With inflation cooling toward its 2% target, the pace of hiring slowing and the unemployment rate edging up, the Fed is poised to cut its benchmark interest rate next month from its 23-year high. How fast it may cut rates after that, though, will be determined mainly by whether employers keep hiring. A lower Fed benchmark rate would eventually lead to lower rates for auto loans, mortgages and other forms of consumer borrowing.

Chair Jerome Powell will likely provide some hints about how the Fed sees the economy and what its next steps may be in a high-profile speech Friday in Jackson Hole, Wyoming, at the Fed's annual conference of central bankers. It's a platform that Powell and his predecessors have often used to signal changes in their thinking or approach.

Powell will likely indicate that the Fed has grown more confident that inflation is headed back to the 2% target, which it has long said would be necessary before rate cuts would begin.

Economists generally agree that the Fed is getting closer to conquering high inflation, which brought financial pain to millions of households beginning three years ago as the economy rebounded from the pandemic recession. Few economists, though, think Powell or any other Fed official is

17,000 AT&T workers in Southeast strike over contract negotiations

WASHINGTON, Aug 20, (AP) - More than 17,000 AT&T workers in nine states across the Southeast are on strike after accusing the company of unfair labor practices during contract negotiations this summer.

The Communications Workers of America - the union representing the striking employees - said workers walked off the job Friday in response to AT&T's failure to bargain in good faith. Workers have been attempting to reach a new contract since June. The labor organization

said AT&T did not send representatives to the bargaining table who had authority to make decisions and that the company has reneged on agreements made in bargaining.

"Our union entered into negotiations in a good faith effort to reach a fair contract, but we have been met at the table by company representatives who were unable to explain their own bargaining proposals and did not seem to have the actual bargaining authority

required by the legal obligation to bargain in good faith," Richard Honeycutt, vice president of CWA District 3 in the Southeast, said in a statement. The strike involves AT&T technicians, customer service representatives and others who install, maintain and support AT&T's residential and business wireline telecommunications network. It involves workers in Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina and

Tennessee. The union said it filed an unfair labor practice complaint with the National Labor Relations Board.

AT&T denied the union's accusations.

"CWA's claims of unfair labor practices are not grounded in fact. We have been engaged in substantive bargaining since Day One and are eager to reach an agreement that benefits our hard-working employees," the company said in emailed statement. AT&T said it

reached three separate agreements this year covering more than 13,000 employees.

The labor union on Monday also accused AT&T of "sending under-trained managers and contractors to perform highly technical work" during the strike. AT&T said it has "various business continuity measures in place to avoid disruptions to operations and will continue to provide our customers with the great service they expect."

prepared to declare "mission accomplished."

"I don't think that the Fed has to fear inflation," said Tom Porcelli, U.S. chief economist at PGIM Fixed Income. "At this point, it's right that the Fed is now more focused on labor versus inflation. Their policy is calibrated for inflation that is much higher than this."

Still, how fast the Fed cuts rates in the coming months will depend on what the economic data shows. After the government reported this month that hiring in July was much less than expected and that the jobless rate reached 4.3%, the highest in three years, stock prices plunged for two days on fears that the U.S. might fall into a recession.

Some economists began speculating about a half-point Fed rate cut in September and perhaps another identical cut in November. But healthier economic reports last week, including another decline in inflation and a robust gain in retail sales, have largely dispelled those concerns. Wall Street traders now expect three quarter-point Fed cuts in September, November and December, though in December it's nearly a coin-toss between a quarter- and a half-point cut. Mortgage rates have already started to decline in anticipation of a rate reduction.

A half-point Fed rate cut in September would become more likely if there were signs of a further slowdown in hiring, some officials have said. The next jobs report will be issued on Sept. 6, after the Jackson Hole conference but before the Fed's next meeting in mid-September.

Raphael Bostic, president of the Fed's Atlanta branch, said in an interview Monday with The Associated Press that "evidence of accelerating weakness in labor markets may warrant a more rapid move, either in terms of the increments of movement or the speed at which we try to get back" to a level of rates that no longer restricts the economy.

Even if hiring stays solid, the Fed is set to cut rates this year given the steady progress that's been made on inflation, economists say. Last week, the government said consumer prices rose just 2.9% in July from a year ago, the smallest such increase in more than three years.

Bostic noted that the economy has changed from just a couple of months ago, when he was suggesting that a rate

cut might not be necessary until the final three months of the year.

"I've got more confidence that we are likely to get to our target for inflation," he said. "And we've seen labor markets weaken considerably relative to where they were" last year. "We might need to shift our policy stance sooner than I would have thought before."

Both Bostic and Austan Goolsbee, president of the Fed's Chicago branch, say that with inflation falling, inflation-adjusted interest rates - which are what many businesses and investors pay most attention to - are rising even as inflation has slowed. When the Fed first set its key rate at its current 5.3%, inflation - excluding volatile energy and food costs - was 4.7%. Now, it's just 3.2%.

"Our policies are getting tighter with every moment in that type of situation,"

Bostic said. "We have to be concerned" that rates are so high they could cause an economic slowdown.

Still, Bostic said that for now, the job market and the economy appear mostly healthy, and he still expects a "soft landing," whereby inflation falls back to the Fed's 2% target without a recession occurring.

With the economy's outlook unclear and the Fed focusing heavily on what future data shows, there may be only so much Powell will be able to say Friday about the central bank's next steps.

Given the Fed's focus on how the economic data comes in, "it will be difficult for Powell to pre-commit to a particular trajectory at Jackson Hole," Matthew Luzzetti, chief U.S. economist at Deutsche Bank, said in a research note.

Announcement draws criticism

Kenya will 'reintroduce' some new tax proposals

NAIROBI, Kenya, Aug 20, (AP) - Kenya's new finance minister says some of the proposed taxes that led to weeks of deadly protests earlier this year will be reintroduced through a tax amendment bill as the country struggles to find revenue to pay off debts to lenders including the World Bank, International Monetary Fund and China.

The announcement by John Mbatia in a local television interview broadcast Sunday has already drawn criticism from some Kenyans whose anger over the rising cost of living had led demonstrators to storm Parliament and pressure President William Ruto to drop a contentious finance bill and fire most of his Cabinet.

But now some of the proposals in that unpopular finance bill are back. Mbatia said the tax amendment bill will include dozens of measures including a tax on goods considered not environmentally friendly.

"This country is not a dumping place," he said.

Critics had said the tax would increase the cost of goods like sanitary towels and diapers.

Already, the youth-led protest

movement has responded to the minister's remarks, saying demonstrations across Kenya will continue. More than 50 people have died since the protests started in mid-June, according to the Kenya National Commission on Human Rights, amid accusations of police brutality.

An opposition lawmaker, Robert Mbui, on Monday told a local television station that the plan to reintroduce certain proposals was a "mistake" and accused the new minister of "double speak" after saying earlier this month he had no plans to increase taxes.

Kenya's president had defended the new taxes and warned there would be consequences after withdrawing the previous bill. The IMF, which supports an economic reform program in Kenya, earlier suggested some of the controversial tax changes.

"We are confident that we will be able to find a balanced path forward," the IMF said after the finance bill was withdrawn.

Protesters also have called for the president's resignation, but Ruto said he would not do it.

Beijing 'relaxes' foreign investment restrictions

BEIJING, Aug 20, (Xinhua) - An executive meeting of the State Council, presided over by Premier Li Qiang has reviewed and approved four documents, discussed policy measures to support the high-quality development of innovative small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), and approved five nuclear power projects.

Among the approved documents was the 2024 edition of a set of special administrative measures -- a negative list -- for foreign investment access.

According to the negative list, China will relax restrictions on foreign investment further by completely abolishing entry barriers in the manufacturing sector, while accelerating the opening up of sectors such as telecommunication, education and health care services.

Another document approved at the meeting was a set of guidelines on promoting the high-quality development of services trade through high-level opening up.

The meeting stressed that accelerating the development of services trade is essential to expanding high-level opening up and fostering new foreign trade drivers. Efforts should be made to pro-

mote innovative development in key services trade areas, as well as the integration of services trade and goods trade, according to the meeting.

It also highlighted the importance of efforts to create new services trade growth drivers, and to support the international development of professional services such as finance, consultation, design and certification.

The meeting discussed measures with a focus on strengthening policy coordination in areas of taxation, finance, science and technology, industry and human resources, in order to foster innovative SMEs that use specialized, sophisticated technologies to produce novel or unique products.

Efforts must also be made to make those SMEs smarter, and more digitalized and eco-friendly in a bid to enhance their core competitiveness, according to the meeting.

Noting that safety is the lifeline of nuclear power development, the meeting stressed the need to strengthen safety regulations to ensure the utmost safety of nuclear power and promote the long-term healthy development of the industry.

NEW YORK, Aug 20, (Xinhua): Americans are increasingly worried about losing their jobs, according to a new survey from the Federal Reserve Bank of New York released on Monday.

The New York Fed's July survey of labor market expectations showed that the expected likelihood of becoming unemployed rose to 4.4 percent on average, up from 3.9 percent a year earlier and the highest in data going back to 2014.

"In fact, the new data showed signs of the labor market cracking across a range of metrics. People reported leaving or losing jobs, marked down their salary expectations and increasingly thought that they would need to work past traditional retirement ages," said The New York Times in its report of the survey.

The share of workers who reported searching for a job in the past four weeks jumped to 28.4 percent, the highest level since the data started, up from 19.4 percent in July 2023, it said.

"The survey, which quizzed a nationally representative sample of people on their recent economic experience, suggested that meaningful fissures may be forming in the labor market," said the newspaper.

While it is just one report, it came at a tense moment, as economists and central bankers watch nervously for signs that the job market is taking a turn for the worse, it noted.



KUNA photo

The first coin bearing the image of King Charles III goes into circulation.

UK: King Charles III 1-pound coin enters circulation

First 1-pound coins featuring King Charles III entered circulation, according to the Royal Mint, the UK's official maker of British coins, almost three million coins have been issued to post offices and banks across the country.

The new coin design marks the King's new reign and celebrates his love of nature, featuring a pair of bees on the reverse side, the bees are one of eight new designs that will appear on the nation's coins, from the 1-p to the £2.

The tail side of every coin will feature the UK's flora and fauna, animals ranging from the red squirrel to the capercaillie grouse, as part of an effort to show the importance of the natural world.

Each coin has been created with the support of the Royal Horticultural Society and the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds.

Even as the King becomes a familiar sight on coins, those featuring Queen Elizabeth II will remain in circulation.

New sets of coins are made in response to demand, and the size and shape of the coins will remain unchanged, because of the widespread use of coins in vending machines, supermarket self-checkouts, and parking meters.

The previous set featured a shield formation, which was introduced under Queen Elizabeth II in 2008 and will still dominate the 29 billion coins in circulation in the UK for some time yet. (KUNA)

The Conversation

US charitable giving dipped to \$557bn in 2023

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



By Anna Pruitt, Indiana University and Jon Bergdol, Indiana University

U.S. charitable giving declined in 2023, by 2.1% to US\$557 billion in 2023, but the flow of funds began to stabilize following several years of volatility.

The annual report from the Giving USA Foundation, produced in partner-

ship with the Indiana University Lilly Family School of Philanthropy, detected a lower level of giving in inflation-adjusted terms. Giving in nominal dollars, without that adjustment, climbed by \$10 billion in 2023.

Total giving has swung up and down more sharply than usual in recent years. It first spiked thanks to donors' responses to the COVID-19 pandemic and the movement for racial justice.

The stock market's performance has played a role too. Stocks declined sharply in 2022 after a strong three-year streak, which culminated in 2021. Conditions were more stable in

2023: Stocks performed well. Unemployment rates remained low, and the economy grew despite fears of a recession. Though inflation remained higher than the historical norm, rates fell below the high levels reached in 2022.

In addition, Americans were not reacting to the unusual events that have shaped philanthropy in the past four years.

As two of the report's lead researchers, we see more signs of charitable giving's strength than weakness in this new data. For example, giving from all sources - individuals, foundations, estates and corporations - remained

above 2019 levels. Grants from foundations receded to \$104 billion in 2023 from \$106 billion a year earlier. Still, for the second year in a row, nearly \$1 out of every \$5 going to charities came from a foundation. In contrast, about \$1 out of every \$20 donated to charities 40 years ago flowed from foundations.

Until the dip in 2023, giving by foundations had grown for 12 consecutive years. An important reason for this consistent growth is the way that foundations give: Most foundations give 5% of their total assets each year, the minimum amount required by law. (AP)



Field visit for PR Academy trainees.

PR Academy aims to equip young talent with public relations skills

KFH launches 'PR Academy' for students & graduates

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 20: Kuwait Finance House (KFH) has launched the first edition of the PR Academy by KFH program, aiming to educate undergraduate students and fresh graduates on the fundamental aspects of the public relations and media department at KFH. This initiative is in line with the Bank's commitment to social responsibility and talent development.

In his opening address at the PR Academy, Group Chief Human Resources and Transformation Officer, Zeyad Abdullah AlOmar, emphasized that the program will provide students and fresh graduates with the opportunity to gain knowledge in public relations and media through updated and top-notch training methods, allowing them to make the most of their summer break.

He pointed out that the 4-week program consists of in-depth lectures, workshops, and seminars, along with visits to KFH's strategic partners and relevant government entities. He highlighted KFH's commitment to empowering young national talent by equipping them with the necessary skills

AlOmar: KFH is committed to empowering students and fresh graduates
Al-Ruwaieh: Comprehensive training, field visits to enhance students' learning journey

and knowledge for their professional development.

Meanwhile, KFH Deputy General Manager Public Relations and Media, Yousef Abdullah Al-Ruwaieh, expressed pride in the launch of the PR Academy program, indicating the program is significant as it contributes to fostering the professional development of students and graduates, preparing them for the job market. Al-Ruwaieh underscored the importance of public relations in driving success and exposure for institutions across various sectors, as well as enhancing communication between employees and the public, as well as among employees themselves. Additionally, he highlighted the role of public relations in supporting the strategic objectives of institutions.

Al-Ruwaieh commended the trainees for their eagerness and will-

ingness to partake in this hands-on experience to gain a comprehensive understanding of all facets of public relations and media. The trainees were chosen to participate in the PR Academy after meeting strict criteria, not to mention going through personal interviews conducted by the Human Resources team.

He stressed that KFH offers unique and comprehensive training in various aspects of public relations and media through this program. This includes sustainability, media relations, copywriting, managing communication with media outlets, organizing events, social media management, public communication strategies, planning and executing media campaigns, government relations, communication with official bodies, and creating content using mobile phones, photography, and editing.

Al-Ruwaieh said that the training program includes simulating the real-life tasks of a Public Relations and Media professionals, such as appearing on camera, communicating with the public, hosting discussion panels, utilizing social media platforms, engaging with followers, and creating media content for publication. It is worth noting that the trainee students responded positively to these hands-on experiences.

He pointed out that the PR Academy program includes field visits, which are valuable additions to the students' learning journey. Some of the field visits were to KFH Capital, KFH Auto showroom, Tam Digital Bank, Coded Academy, Al-Salam Hospital, and the Kuwait Times newspaper, as well as a photography session with the renowned photographer Abdullah Al-Shaiji. He further explained that these visits play a significant role in enhancing the students' experiences and understanding of how these institutions operate. "These visits contribute to making the program more practical, comprehensive, and diverse", Al-Ruwaieh concluded.

Best account offering highest monthly expected returns

KIB announces winners of Al Dirwaza account's weekly draw

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 20: 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 third 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 Ali Abdullah Saleh Alabboud, Bashaer Ali Abbas Alali, Ahmad Mohammad Shawqi Abu Alqomsan, Talal Mubarak Saud Alhajraf, Bibi Ebrahim Esmael Abdullah, whilst the KD 500 prize was awarded to Abdullah Nabil Shafik Abdeldayem, Sajer Mekhled Motlaq Alotaihi, Abdulaziz Hasan Yaseen Alamir, Ali Fares Mohammad Alajmi, Khashif Majeed Abdulmajeed, Retaj Abdullateef Abdullah Alshuaib, Abdulrahman Khlaif Ghunaim Alenezi.

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



Al Dirwaza account

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 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.

About KIB

Kuwait International Bank (KIB) is a bank that operates according to the Islamic Shari'ah, based in the State of Kuwait. Incorporated in 1973, and originally known as Kuwait Real Estate Bank, KIB made the transition to its current Islamic operating model in 2007. In 2018, KIB embarked on a new phase of its journey full of innovation and development. As part of its new strategic direction, the Bank focuses on offering a next-level customer experience under the slogan: "Bank for Life".

Through a network of branches spread across the State of Kuwait, KIB offers a broad range of banking products and services, as well as innovative digital banking solutions in line with international best standards. As part of its duty towards the community, the Bank also encompasses a leading social responsibility program that aims at positively impacting all members of the community through a wide range of impactful initiatives and activities.

Today, KIB has taken concrete steps in implementing its new strategic objectives. The Bank has cemented its role as a key player in the local banking industry and has continued to maintain its strong financial performance; enabling it to be globally recognized for its strong credit rating and financial position.

Auto login, account linking and many features

NBK refines mobile banking app with new features and services

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 20: National Bank of Kuwait (NBK) continues to elevate its Mobile Banking App by introducing successive batches of new services and enhancements to ensure delivering a richer digital banking experience enabling customers to manage their accounts and make transactions in a convenient and secure manner, anytime, anywhere, without the hassle of visiting branches.

In this context, continuing its unwavering commitment to provide products and services aligned to market trends and customers' needs and suggestions, NBK has introduced a new batch of services as well as enhancements to existing ones on the app for even more secure payments, which included the following:

Prepaid Gift Card

NBK Mobile Banking App users can conveniently issue virtual cards as e-gift cards and be able to gift it to their loved ones easily. This service is perfect to be used for different occasions and e-cards can be given in an easy, quick, and trendy way to add to digital wallet and use instantly locally, internationally or online.

In-App Payment:

This service is an authenticated method that provides an additional layer of security to protect against fraudulent when making transactions using cards. In this release we are providing this service for prepaid and debit cards, offering users an even more secure experience when using their cards to make transactions through the app.

e-Dividend Payments:

Using NBK Mobile Banking App, customers can register to dividend electronic transfer service allowing registered shareholders to receive dividend payments digitally in their accounts with Kuwait Clearing Company (KCC).

The service aims to facilitate the process for its customers and encourage them to use one of their accounts with NBK to subscribe to the dividend distribution service, especially as only one bank account can subscribe to dividend payments through KCC.

Auto Login

Customers can enjoy the quickest, simplest way to log in to NBK Mobile Banking App after enabling FaceID on their mobile device. Once enabled, users won't need to type in their password or tap on the FaceID button, but just open the app and it will let them login automatically.

Linking Accounts

Customers can link their minors' accounts to their profile easily through NBK Mobile Banking App, whereby they can manage their accounts easily in addition to creating standing orders after the linkage.

What's New Section

The latest release of the app allows users to learn about the latest products and services available through the app and their features in detail, in addition to how to use and benefit from them, which allows them to know everything they want to know about the new products before applying for and using the services.

IBAN+

Under the new enhancements, the apps user of can now speed up their transfers by typing the IBAN to find the customer's name, thus making transfers easier and faster.

Exclusive rewards for the holders of the revamped NBK UEFA Champions League Platinum Mastercard Prepaid Card

The revamped card is available to all family members with starting age as low as 7 years old, and is the first prepaid cashback card for youngsters in Kuwait. Cardholder earns 3 points for every KD 1 spent locally as well as internationally and 3 points for every KD 1 loaded into the card. Youngsters can redeem their earned points with cashback direct to the card, or with e-vouchers/gift cards redeemable at more than 185 merchants locally and globally in all shopping categories related to the youngsters' segment such as PlayStation, Xbox, etc.

The First Mobile App in GCC to Receive Google MASA Security Certification

NBK Mobile Banking has received the MASA Security Certificate on Google Play which verifies the security and safety of NBK Mobile Banking App. NBK is committed to providing the most secure and safest digital financial services and strives to maintain the best-in-class digital security standards.

Other Enhancements

In addition to the services released in this update, there are also some enhancements made on the app to improve the banking experience when making transactions. These enhance-



Mohammed Al Dakheel

Al-Dakheel: Increased customer satisfaction encourages us to continue adding more services and enhanced features to the app

- Issuing and offering prepaid eGift card and electronic payment of dividends
- Enabling secure in app payments for debit and prepaid cards

ments are on transfers where customers can view the currency exchange when making a transfer across currencies within his own accounts, enhancements made on sending and receiving money locally using the mobile number with WAMD service, the ability to view the prepaid card on the dashboard without pressing on view, and much more enhancements the bank makes to offer a pleasant customer experience for its customers to make managing their account convenient anytime, anywhere. In addition to the services released, NBK Mobile Banking App is the ultimate travel companion when it comes to smart, fast, and convenient. The app is designed to meet the customers' peace of mind and allows them to manage their accounts and transact from the comfort of their home, office, or even abroad. The users can make a variety of transactions that save them the trip to the branch or even calling the Contact Center in few taps only. These services are managing their cards where they can select the cards they will be using while being abroad to avoid any blockage, report lost or stolen cards, temporarily block or unblock cards instantly, add cards to the device wallet, apply for NBK products, make the necessary payments, speak with NBK Contact Center agents by calling one of the toll-free numbers, and much more.

Digital Excellence

Commenting on the new batch of services and enhancements, Mohammed Al-Dakheel, Head of Mobile Banking, Consumer Banking Group at National Bank of Kuwait said, "At NBK, we always seek to strengthen our digital excellence through the services provided on the NBK Mobile Banking App, especially with customers' increased reliance on it for their banking transactions. Therefore, we are keen to introduce more new services and enhancements to the app to deliver a superior digital banking experience that not only meets customers' needs, but exceeds their expectations."

"With every new batch of services added to the app, we notice growth in transactions made using it, which reflects increased customer satisfaction with our service level. This, in turn, encourages us to continue adding more distinguished services and enhancements to the app, in response to market trends on one hand, and to meet customers' needs and ensure providing them with cutting-edge banking services on the other hand," he added.

Through the NBK Mobile Banking App, NBK aims to offer customers a secure platform to conveniently manage their finances at any given moment. This service facilitates a wide range of banking activities, including opening new accounts, monitoring transactions on accounts and credit cards, accessing accumulated NBK Miles and NBK Rewards Program points, settling credit card dues, making payments for electronic bills, locating NBK Branches, ATMs, and CDMs across Kuwait, updating personal information... etc.

Customers can easily download the NBK Mobile Banking App, which is currently available on various platforms including the Apple App Store, Google Play, and Huawei AppGallery.

Exclusive deals on laptops, tablets and printers for students at LuLu

LuLu Hypermarket launches 'Back to School Savers' campaign

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 20: LuLu Hypermarket, the region's leading retailer, launched its 'Back to School Savers' campaign that enables students to kickstart the new academic year with confidence and style.

The campaign, which began on 14 August across all LuLu Hypermarket outlets in Kuwait, offered an unparalleled selection of essential school supplies, uniforms, electronics, and footwear at unbeatable prices.

In order to ensure students are well-equipped for the digital age, LuLu Hypermarket presented an impressive range of laptops, tablets, and printers at exclusive discounts. Parents could find the perfect tech tools to support their children's learning journey at very affordable prices.

The wide range of school uniforms offered during the campaign also ensured that every student could look sharp and smart as they began



LuLu's Back to School Savers campaign

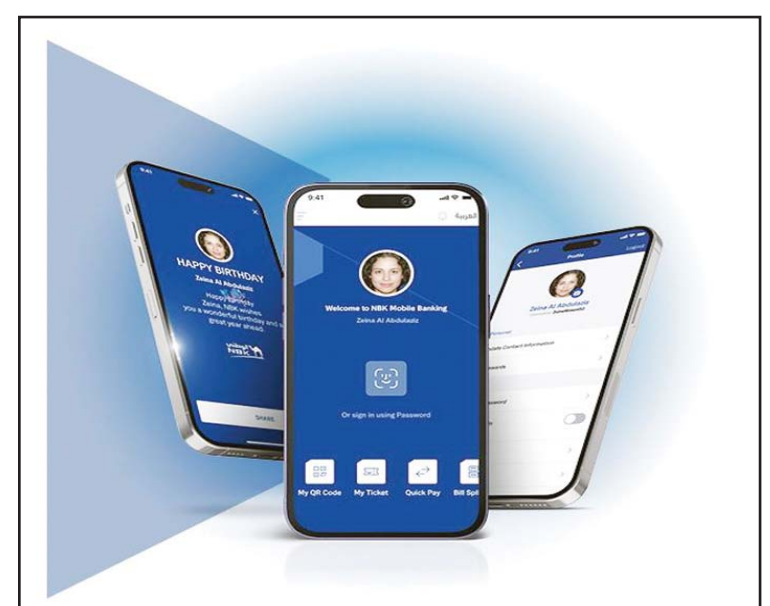
their new academic year.

In addition, to complement the back-to-school essentials, LuLu Hypermarket offered a variety of comfortable and stylish school shoes, including renowned brands like Skechers.

By providing a comprehensive range of products at competitive prices, LuLu Hypermarket helped parents prepare for the new academic year with confidence.

And, with every need covered under one roof, parents could also complete their children's back-to-school shopping list with ease.

LuLu Hypermarket remains committed to supporting the community and providing exceptional value to its customers. The 'Back to School Savers' campaign serves as a reminder of the retailer's dedication in meeting the needs of its customers throughout the year.



NBK's mobile application.

Two 18-year-olds charged with murder of actor Wactor

LOS ANGELES, Aug. 20. (AP) Two 18-year-old men have been charged with murder in the killing of former "General Hospital" actor Johnny Wactor.

Robert Barceleanu and Sergio Estrada were each charged Monday in Los Angeles County Superior Court, District Attorney George Gasón said at a news conference.

"The loss of this talented young actor, who was in the prime of his life and had so much to offer the world, is deeply felt by all of us," Gascón said.

The men and two co-defendants, all of whom were arrested Thursday, were set to be arraigned on Monday afternoon. It is not clear whether any have yet retained lawyers. An email to the county public defender's office seeking comment on the case was not immediately answered.

Wactor was shot and killed when he interrupted three thieves stealing the catalytic converter from his car on May 25. Police said the 37-year-old had left work at a downtown LA rooftop bar with a co-worker when he saw three men who had hoisted his car. Police said one of them fired at him without provocation and killed him.

Barceleanu and Estrada were also both charged with grand theft and attempted robbery.

Barceleanu's charges include special circumstances, including murder during an attempted robbery and personal use of a firearm, that

after a conviction could lead to a life sentence without possibility of parole. Estrada's charges have a maximum sentence of life in prison.

A third man who authorities allege were with them, Leonel Gutierrez, was charged with grand theft and attempted robbery. A fourth, Frank Olano, was charged with being an accessory after the fact.

Wactor's death has become a rallying point for some in the city pushing for a more hardline approach to fighting crime.

A group consisting of family and friends calling itself "Justice for Johnny" held a rally last week calling for more urgency in the investigation, and another Monday morning calling for aggressive prosecution.

Police and public officials said that is exactly what is happening.

LAPD Interim Chief Dominic Choi said at Monday's news conference that the investigation has been an "ongoing and relentless pursuit" in a "very difficult case."

Mayor Karen Bass said in a statement that "We must continue to take aggressive action to make our city safer."

Barceleanu was being held without bail, and Estrada on just over \$1 million bail.

Harvey Weinstein will remain in custody in New York while awaiting retrial on rape and sexual assault charges in Manhattan, prosecutors

confirmed Monday as the former movie mogul made a brief court appearance related to California's request to extradite him there.

But after the New York case is complete, he will return to California to serve his pending 16-year sentence for a separate rape conviction there first, Queens District Attorney Melinda Katz said in a statement.

"Today, defendant Harvey Weinstein was formally arraigned on a governor's warrant issued by Governor Kathy Hochul, who exercised her authority for him to remain in New York State until his case in New York County is adjudicated," Katz said. "He will serve the California sentence first, as it is now his primary sentence."

Weinstein, who has denied that he raped or sexually assaulted anyone, was convicted in Los Angeles in 2022 while already serving a 23-year sentence in New York. His 2020 conviction in Manhattan was thrown out this spring by the state's top court, which ruled that the judge in the original trial unfairly allowed testimony against Weinstein based on allegations that weren't part of the case.

The retrial in Manhattan is tentatively scheduled for November. The 72-year-old Weinstein, with one hand cuffed to his wheelchair and another grasping a book and a magazine, appeared in Queens criminal court for less than five minutes Monday as his lawyers agreed that he will remain at the nearby Rikers Island jail complex. Weinstein has returned there after being hospitalized last month for health problems including COVID-19 and pneumonia in both lungs.

People

Variety



Lainey Wilson performs during CMA Fest on Saturday, June 8, 2024, in Nashville, Tenn. Next month, Wilson will drop her fifth album, 'Whirlwind,' a decade after her debut. (AP)

Music

Singer explores her life and love on new album

Wilson's career felt like a 'Whirlwind'

NEW YORK, Aug. 20. (AP) It's late July. Lainey Wilson is somewhere in Iowa, holding a real road dog - her French bulldog named Hippie - close to her chest. She's on her tour bus, zipping across the Midwest, just another day in her jet set lifestyle. Next month, she'll release her fifth studio album, the aptly named "Whirlwind," a full decade after her debut record. Today, like every day, she's just trying to enjoy the ride.

"It's been a journey," she reflects on her career. "I've been in Nashville for 13 years and I tell people I'm like, it feels like I got there yesterday, but I also feel like I've been there my whole life."

Wilson is a fast talker and a slow success story. She grew up on a farm in rural Baskin, Louisiana. As a teenager, she worked as a Hannah Montana impersonator; when she got to Nashville in early adulthood, she lived in a camper trailer and hit countless open mic nights, trying to make it in Music City. It paid off, but it took time, really launching with the release of her 2020 single, "Things a Man Oughta Know," and her last album, 2022's "Bell Bottom Country" - a rollicking country-rock record that encompasses Wilson's unique "country with a flare" attitude.

"I had always heard that Nashville was a 10-year town. And I believe 'Things a Man Oughta Know' went No. 1, like, 10 years and a day after being there," she recalls. "I should have had moments where I should have packed it up and went home. I should have went back to Louisiana. But I never had those feelings. I think there's something really beautiful about being naive. And, since I was a little girl, I've always had stars in my eyes."

These days, she's a Grammy winner, the first woman to win entertainer of the year at the CMAs since Taylor Swift in 2011 (she took home the same award from the Academy of Country Mu-

sic), she's acted in the hit television show "Yellowstone" and in June, she was inducted into the Grand Ole Opry.

"I was 9 years old when I went to the Opry for the first time. I remember who was playing. It was Little Jimmy Dickens, Bill Anderson, Crystal Gayle, Phil Vassar, and I remember where I was sitting. I remember looking at the circle on stage and being like, 'Man, I'm going to, I'm going to play there. I'm gonna do this,'" she recalls.

Becoming a member is the stuff dreams are made of, and naturally, it connects back to the album.

"The word that I could use to describe the last couple of years is whirlwind," she says. "I feel like my life has changed a whole lot. But I still feel like the same old girl trying to keep one foot on the ground."

Collaboration

"And so, I think it's just about grasping on to those things that truly make me, me and the artist where I can tell stories to relate to folks."

If Wilson's life looks different now than it did a decade ago, those years of hard work have created an ability to translate the madness of her life and career to that of everyone else's: Like on "Good Horses," the sole collaboration on "Whirlwind." It features Miranda Lambert, and was written on Lambert's farm, an uplifting track about both chasing dreams and coming home. Or "Hang Tight Honey," an ode to those who work hard for the ones they love.

Wilson has leveled up on this record, bringing writers out on the road with her as she continued to tour endlessly. That's evident on the sonic experiment of "Ring Finger," a funky country-rock number with electro-spoken word.

Or "Country's Cool Again," a joyous treatise on the genre and Western wear's current dominance in the cultural zeitgeist.

"I think country music brings you home," she says of its popularity. "And everybody wants to feel at home."

Here on the back of the bus, Wilson is far from home - as she often is. But it is always on the mind, the place that acts as a refuge on "Whirlwind." And that's something everyone can relate to.

"I hope it brings a little bit of peace to just everyday chaos, because we all deal with it," she says of the album. "Everybody looks different, but we all put our britches on the same one leg at a time, you know?"

Also:

LOS ANGELES: For many, Sabrina Carpenter is a newcomer in pop music, having entered like a wrecking ball with her 2024 song of the summer, "Espresso," and the dreamy, twangy, Jack Antonoff-produced follow-up single, "Please, Please, Please." But when "Short N' Sweet," her latest full-length project, releases on Friday, Aug. 23, it will mark her sixth album. Sometimes it takes nearly a decade to become an overnight success. Her last album, 2022's "Emails I Can't Send" was her first since leaving Disney's Hollywood Records, a matured take on the pop she's long had a penchant for; it also served as an introduction to her brand of cheeky, R-rated humor, like in the R&B swagger of "Nonsense." Nowadays the pressure, of course, is on for Carpenter, but if "Short N' Sweet" has any of the charm of her monolithic singles, it will no doubt be one of the year's best.

Meanwhile, the twice Grammy-nominated Lupa Infante, known for her mariachi, norteño, and ranchera music, released a new five-track covers EP, "Puras De Mi Abuelo Vol 1," on Friday, Aug. 16 - the first of a two-part series. It is a celebration and ode to her grandfather, the beloved Mexican ranchera singer Pedro Infante. Prepare the tissues.

ATHENS, Ala.: Country singer Keith Urban gave just a few hours' notice before performing a free concert Friday night in the parking lot of a large convenience store and gas station in north Alabama.

About 5,500 people turned out for the show in Athens, about 100 miles (161 kilometers) south of Nashville, said Athens Police Department Capt. Brett Constable. The concert was outside a Buc-ee's, a chain of roadside stores known for barbecue.

"I came down to this Buc-ee's about a month ago. And when I left, I went, 'It'd be kind of fun to do a show there,'" Urban told the crowd during the concert, according to an Instagram video posted by WAFF-TV in Huntsville, Alabama.

Urban said his "cave man brain" told him it would be fun to set up a little stage for a small audience.

"I swear to you, I thought maybe 100, 200 people," Urban said as a video showed a larger crowd.

People started gathering hours before the show, news outlets reported.

"I was at work and we heard it on the radio that there was going to be a surprise concert at Buc-ee's in Athens," Cindy Wilson told FOX 54 WZDX-TV in Huntsville. "And I was like, 'Oh my God, it's on my way home.' And it's 15 minutes from my house. So I couldn't believe it."

While he was at the store, Urban also worked behind a food counter. A video showed him wearing a Buc-ee's T-shirt and apron as he poured barbecue sauce on some brisket and chopped the meat into smaller pieces. (AP)

BEIJING: China's 2024 summer box office to date has fallen short of industry expectations, reporting a 44 percent decline from 2023 figures.

This downturn has sent ripples through the world's second-largest film market, prompting introspection and analysis from industry insiders.

However, beneath the surface of disappointing numbers lies a drive for innovation and resilience that may shape the future of Chinese cinema.

By early Sunday morning, the summer box office period - June 1 to Aug. 31 - had amassed 10 billion yuan (1.40 billion US dollars), with

cinema admissions totaling 243 million, according to data from ticketing platform Maoyan. This performance has failed to match the same period last year, when revenue came in at approximately 18 billion yuan and cinema attendance totaled 440 million, according to Lai Li, a market analyst at Maoyan.

Season frontrunner "Successor,"



Jia



Urban

a comedic offering, has grossed over 3.13 billion yuan to secure its place as the year's third-highest earner. Crime thriller "A Place Called Silence" follows with a respectable 1.34 billion yuan, ranking sixth in the yearly box office charts.

Chen Jin, an analyst at movie data platform Beacon, notes that the 2024 summer season has seen

the release or scheduling of around 140 films, matching last summer's total. This data suggests that the issue is not the quantity of releases but their reception.

Despite the overall decline, the summer slate has showcased a rich tapestry of genres, including comedy, crime, thriller, sci-fi, fantasy, animation, romance and

drama. Comedies have performed exceptionally well, raking in over 4 billion yuan to date.

This success extends a winning streak for Chinese comedies, following the triumphs of Jia Ling's weight-loss hit "YOLO," Han Han's racing comedy sequel "Pegasus 2" and Zhang Yimou's "Article 20" earlier this year. (Xinhua)

Features

ARABIC TIMES

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 21, 2024

People & Places

Gaming

Compensation sought

Video game actors seek 'AI rights' for their work

LOS ANGELES, Aug 20, (AP): For hours, motion capture sensors tacked onto Noshir Dalal's body tracked his movements as he unleashed aerial strikes, overhead blows and single-handed attacks that would later show up in a video game. He eventually swung the sledgehammer gripped in his hand so many times that he tore a tendon in his forearm. By the end of the day, he couldn't pull the handle of his car door open.

The physical strain this type of motion work entails, and the hours put into it, are part of the reason why he believes all video-game performers should be protected equally from the use of unregulated artificial intelligence.



Dalal

Video game performers say they fear AI could reduce or eliminate job opportunities because the technology could be used to replicate one performance into a number of other movements without their consent. That's a concern that led the Screen Actors Guild-American Federation of Television and Radio Artists to go on strike in late July.

"If motion-capture actors, video-game actors in general, only make whatever money they make that day ... that can be a really slippery slope," said Dalal, who portrayed Bode Akuna in "Star Wars Jedi: Survivor." "Instead of being like, 'Hey, we're going to bring you back' ... they're just not going to bring me back at all and not tell me at all that they're doing this. That's why transparency and compensation are so important to us in AI protections."

Hollywood's video game performers announced a work stoppage - their second in a decade - after more than 18 months of negotiations over a new interactive media agreement with game industry giants broke down over artificial intelligence protections. Members of the union have said they are not anti-AI. The performers are worried, however, the technology could provide studios with a means to displace them.

Contract

Dalal said he took it personally when he heard that the video game companies negotiating with SAG-AFTRA over a new contract wanted to consider some movement work "data" and not performance.

If gamers were to tally up the cut scenes they watch in a game and compare them with the hours they spend controlling characters and interacting with non-player characters, they would see that they interact with "movers" and stunt performers' work "way more than you interact with my work," Dalal said.

"They are the ones selling the world these games live in, when you're doing combos and pulling off crazy, super cool moves using Force powers, or you're playing Master Chief, or you're Spider-Man swinging through the city," he said.

Some actors argue that AI could strip less-experienced actors of the chance to land smaller background roles, such as non-player characters, where they typically cut their teeth before landing larger jobs.

Performers

The unchecked use of AI, performers say, could also lead to ethical issues if their voices or likenesses are used to create content that they do not morally agree with. That type of ethical dilemma has recently surfaced with game "mods," in which fans alter and create new game content. Last year, voice actors spoke out against such mods in the role-playing game "Skyrim," which used AI to generate actors' performances and cloned their voices for pornographic content.

In video game motion capture, actors wear special Lycra or neoprene suits with markers on them. In addition to more involved interactions, actors perform basic movements like walking, running or holding an object. Animators grab from those motion capture recordings and chain them together to respond to what someone playing the game is doing.

"What AI is allowing game developers to do, or game studios to do, is generate a lot of those animations automatically from past recordings," said Brian Smith, an assistant professor at Columbia University's Department of Computer Science. "No longer do studios need to gather new recordings for every single game and every type of animation that they would like to create. They can also draw on their archive of past animation."

"With generative AI, you can generate new data based on that pattern of prior data," he said.

A spokesperson for the video game producers, Audrey Cooling, said the studios offered "meaningful" AI protections, but SAG-AFTRA's negotiating committee said that the studios' definition of who constitutes a "performer" is key to understanding the issue of who would be protected.

"We have worked hard to deliver proposals with reasonable terms that protect the rights of performers while ensuring we can continue to use the most advanced technology to create a great gaming experience for fans," Cooling said. "We have proposed terms that provide consent and fair compensation for anyone employed under the (contract) if an AI reproduction or digital replica of their performance is used in games."



Phil Donahue hosts his television show in New York on Jan. 27, 1993. Donahue, whose pioneering daytime talk show launched an indelible television genre, has died. He was 88. (AP)

People

From solo host to cultural icon

Donahue left a lasting imprint

LOS ANGELES, Aug 20, (AP): For nearly two decades, Phil Donahue was virtually the only TV talk show host to roam his audience with microphone and make them an essential part of his show.

His huge cultural influence - especially with the women who tended to watch television during the day in his era - finally led to a flood of cultural imitators in the 1980s, including one who would eventually knock him off his perch.

"For a long time I wondered why it took so long for someone to copy us," Donahue told the Archive of American Television in 2001. "Then along came Oprah Winfrey. It is not possible to overstate the enormity of her impact on the daytime television game."

Donahue died Sunday at age 88 after a long illness.

"I lost my sweetheart last night," Donahue's wife, the actor Marlo Thomas, wrote on Instagram Monday, saying she would be stepping away from social media "to take care of myself and the many people who took care of Phil, and held him close to their hearts."

Winfrey, among those paying him tribute after his death, was always first to acknowledge his importance.

"There wouldn't have been an Oprah Show without Phil Donahue being the first to prove that daytime talk and women watching should be taken seriously," she posted on Instagram on Monday along with a photo of the two embracing. "He was a pioneer. I'm glad I got to thank him for it. Rest in peace Phil."

By the time "Donahue" went off the air in 1996 after 29 years, nearly 7,000 episodes and 20 Emmy Awards, the daytime television landscape was littered with lookalikes.

Winfrey, based in Chicago like Donahue, premiered in 1985 and overtook him for good in the ratings starting in the 1986-87 season, though Donahue often pointed out that she "raised all boats," lifting his ratings even while passing him.

Later the floodgates truly opened to imitators, most of them far trashier, including "The Jerry Springer Show" "Geraldo" and "Jenny Jones."

It was enough to make Donahue feel like he no longer belonged.

"The daytime arena changed, the ground moved under my feet," Donahue told The Associated Press in 2002, "and I was glad to leave."

Both before-and-after Oprah, the prematurely gray and always animated Donahue (Phil Hartman sent up his dramatic body language in a recurring "Saturday Night Live" impression.) wielded enormous clout, making daytime at once more serious, more newsy and more salacious as he emerged in the late 1960s amid a sea of game shows, soap operas, and more frivolous talk shows.

He demonstrated that daytime viewers, long before cable news, cared about world leaders, cultural figures and the debates of the day. He gave many Americans their first real exposure to issues like sexual harassment and abuse, gay marriage and AIDS.

Audience

"We're very, very proud of the way in which our program has reflected our culture since 1967," Donahue said at the taping of his final show in 1996. "In 1967, we never thought we would lose a war. In 1967, AIDS was a verb, or a plural noun. In 1967, you could harass your secretary and there was nothing she could do about it."

When "The Phil Donahue Show" debuted on WLWD-TV in Dayton, Ohio, it was not supposed to have an audience at all, but a crowd appeared expecting to see the variety show he was replacing, and producers decided to let them stay. During commercials, he opened the floor up to questions for his first guest, the activist Madalyn Murray O'Hair, and soon decided the audience's questions were better than his.

"Sometime during that first week, I jumped off my chair and ran into the audience," he told The AP in 1996.

The program moved to Chicago in 1974, shortened its name to "Donahue" and was syndicated across the United States.

He took chances and welcomed controversy. He aired a birth in his first week. He televised an abortion in a later episode. He

hosted a show on sexual abuse and Catholic priests decades before the topic rocked the church worldwide. He broadcast one episode from inside New York's Attica State Prison, and later fought in court to air an execution, but was denied by the US Supreme Court.

Memorable "Donahue" guests included feminist activist Gloria Steinem, leftist provocateur Jerry Ruben of the Chicago Seven, Muhammad Ali and Ryan White, the boy who contracted AIDS at age 13 in 1984 and became one of the faces of the disease due in large part to his appearances on "Donahue."

The shows weren't always highbrow, though. He had episodes devoted to male strippers and female wrestlers when both were rare. Phillip John Donahue was born on Dec. 21, 1935 in Cleveland, the son of an Irish Catholic furniture seller who said he had a Norman Rockwell youth of front lawns, baseball and church dances.

He had an entirely Catholic education through his 1957 graduation from the University of Notre Dame.

He married Margaret Cooney in 1958 and had five kids - Michael, Kevin, Daniel, Mary Rose and James - before they divorced in 1975. He met actor Marlo Thomas, the "That Girl" star of the 1960s who was a household name at the time and would later become a regular on "Friends," when she appeared on his show in 1977.

He later said it was love at first sight, and they did a poor job of hiding it on the air.

"You are really fascinating," Donahue told Thomas, grasping her hand. "You are wonderful," Thomas said back. "You are loving and generous, and you like women and it's a pleasure, and whoever the woman in your life is, is very lucky."

They married in 1980.

After years of lying low, he returned to television to be among the first hosts on MSNBC, who traded heavily on his name in its early promotion. His show premiered in July 2002 and lasted just seven months.

The network had yet to become the liberal counterpart to Fox News' conservatism, and the left-leaning Donahue never felt supported.

Variety

MADRID: Maria Branyas, an American-born Spaniard considered the world's oldest person at 117 years old, has died, her family said on Tuesday.

In a post on Branyas' X account, her family wrote in Catalan: "Maria Branyas has left us. She has gone the way she wanted: in her sleep, at peace, and without pain."

The Gerontology Research Group, which validates details of people thought to be 110 or older, listed Branyas as the oldest known person in the world after the death of French nun Lucile Randon last year.

Branyas was born in San Francisco on March 4, 1907, before her family returned to Spain when she was young. At the time of her death she was living in a nursing home in Catalan town of Olot.

Her X account is called "Super Catalan Grandma" and bears the description: "I am old, very old, but not an idiot."

The next oldest person listed by the Gerontology Research Group is Japan's Tomiko Itooka, who is 116 years old. (AP)

SYRACUSE, N.Y.: Ruth Johnson Colvin, who founded Literacy Volunteers of America, was inducted into the National Women's Hall of Fame and received the nation's highest civilian award, the Presidential Medal of Freedom, has died. She was 107 years old.

Colvin died on Sunday in Syracuse, New York, according to ProLiteracy, the nonprofit organization created by the merger of Literacy Volunteers and Laubach Literacy in 2002. She served on the organization's board of directors until her death.

"We owe not only ProLiteracy's existence to Ruth and her founding of Literacy Volunteers of America, but we are guided by her innate understanding that literacy is a right," an online tribute said. "We are humbled to have been able to learn from her for so long. Ruth willingly shared her wisdom with ProLiteracy staff, always encouraging us to continue our fight to improve adult literacy."

Colvin, herself an avid reader, launched

Literacy Volunteers in 1962 to speak out against illiteracy and teach people to read after seeing 1960 census data that showed 11,000 illiterate people were living in the Syracuse area where she lived.

"In the 1950s, America was unaware it had an illiteracy problem. We thought illiteracy was in India, Africa, China. Not in America," she told The Associated Press before receiving the Medal of Freedom from President George W. Bush in 2006. (AP)

ANKARA: The Turkish Statistical Institute (TurkStat) released its happiness rankings for Türkiye's cities on Monday, with Sinop in the Black Sea region topping the list at 77.66 percent among the country's 81 major cities.

Sinop is followed by Afyonkarahisar of the western Aegean region, with a happiness rate of 76.43 percent, according to TurkStat.

Eastern Anatolia city Bayburt ranks third with 75.91 percent, while Kirikkale in central Anatolia comes in fourth with a happiness rate of 75.48 percent.

Kutahya city in the Aegean region has a happiness rate of 73.76 percent, while Cankiri in central Anatolia records a rate of 73.5 percent. The Black Sea city Duzce shows a happiness rate of 72.77 percent, while Usak in the Aegean region follows closely with 72.34 percent. (Xinhua)

NEW YORK: A group of authors is suing artificial intelligence startup Anthropic, alleging it com-

mitted "large-scale theft" in training its popular chatbot Claude on pirated copies of copyrighted books.

While similar lawsuits have piled up for more than a year against competitor OpenAI, maker of ChatGPT, this is the first from writers to target Anthropic and its Claude chatbot.

The smaller San Francisco-based company - founded by ex-OpenAI leaders - has marketed itself as the more responsible and safety-focused developer of generative AI models that can compose emails, summarize documents and interact with people in a natural way.

But the lawsuit filed Monday in a federal court in San Francisco alleges that Anthropic's actions "have made a mockery of its lofty goals" by tapping into repositories of pirated writings to build its AI product.

"It is no exaggeration to say that Anthropic's model seeks to profit from strip-mining the human expression and ingenuity behind each one of those works," the lawsuit says.

Anthropic didn't immediately respond to a request for comment Monday.

The lawsuit was brought by a trio of writers - Andrea Bartz, Charles Graeber and Kirk Wallace Johnson - who are seeking to represent a class of similarly situated authors of fiction and nonfiction. While it's the first case against Anthropic from book authors, the company is also fighting a lawsuit by major music publishers alleging that Claude regurgitates the lyrics of copyrighted songs.

The authors' case joins a growing number of lawsuits filed against developers of AI large language models in San Francisco and New York.

OpenAI and its business partner Microsoft are already battling a group of copyright infringement cases led by household names like John Grisham, Jodi Picoult and "Game of Thrones" novelist George R. R. Martin; and another set of lawsuits from media outlets such as The New York Times, Chicago Tribune and Mother Jones.

What links all the cases is the claim that tech companies ingested huge troves of human writings to train AI chatbots to produce human-like passages of text, without getting permission or compensating the people who wrote the original works. (AP)



Colvin



Branyas

MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY



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Netherlands on alert for new mpox variant

Congo set to receive first mpox vaccines next week

KINSHASA, Congo, Aug 20, (Agencies): Congo will receive the first vaccine doses to address its mpox outbreak next week from the United States, the country's health minister said, days after the World Health Organization declared mpox outbreaks in Africa a global emergency.

Mpox cases have been confirmed among children and adults in more than a dozen African countries, and a new form of the virus is spreading. Few vaccine doses are available on the continent.

Congo has the vast majority of the mpox cases and currently needs 3 million vaccine doses. The US and Japan have offered to donate vaccines, Health Minister Roger Kamba told journalists. He did not say how many doses would be sent or when the ones from Japan would arrive.

The WHO has reported over 17,000 mpox cases and over 570 deaths worldwide this year. More than 96% of all cases and deaths have been in Congo, whose health system has long struggled to contain disease outbreaks over the country's vast area and poor infrastructure. Children under 15 account for more than 70% of the cases and 85% of deaths in Congo.

Transmitted

Scientists are also concerned by a new version of mpox in Congo that might be more easily transmitted. Last week, Sweden reported its first case of the new version. Officials said the risk to the general public was considered "very low" and that they expected sporadic imported cases to continue.

Unlike in previous mpox outbreaks, where lesions were mostly seen on the chest, hands and feet, the new form causes milder symptoms and lesions on the genitals. That makes it harder to detect, meaning people might sicken others without knowing they're infected. Mpox is not airborne and typically requires close, skin-to-skin contact to spread.

The WHO has said mpox was recently identified for the first time in four East African countries: Burundi, Kenya, Rwanda and Uganda. All of those outbreaks were linked to the epidemic in Congo.

The Dutch public health authority, RIVM, said on Monday that healthcare providers are on high alert for potential infections from a new variant of the mpox virus.

"If a case is detected, the Municipal Health Service will conduct source and contact tracing and provide guidance to prevent further transmission," the RIVM said. "Vaccination is available for close contacts. The Netherlands has sufficient vaccines in stock."

RIVM virologist Chantal Reusken told local media that it is probably only a matter of time before a new variant of mpox appears in the Netherlands. But the risk is low and the disease is manageable due to the country's robust healthcare system, said Reusken.

Norway's health system is well-prepared to manage any potential mpox outbreak, following a recent case reported in neighboring Sweden, the Ministry of Health announced in a statement on Monday.

"The risk of mpox infection in the Norwegian population is low, according to the Institute of Public Health," Health Minister Jan Christian Vestre said in the statement.

The ministry emphasized its ongoing collaboration with the World Health Organization, the European Union and Norway's own health agencies, as well as regional health organizations, to monitor and respond to any developments.

Indonesia's health authorities are stepping up its health screening scheme for foreign arrivals, including foreigners coming as state guests, as part of efforts to prevent the spread of mpox virus.

"We increase our vigilance especially at checkpoint entrances. We share

80pct show no symptoms

West Nile virus returns: Here's how to stay safe

By Daniel Pastula
University of Colorado Anschutz
Medical Campus

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

West Nile virus is the most common mosquito-borne illness in the continental US, with an average of 2,464 reported cases per year. Every August, West Nile season ramps up, primarily in parts of the Southern and Western United States.

The Conversation US asked neurologist and medical epidemiologist Daniel Pastula to explain what researchers know about West Nile and how to protect yourself from contracting the disease.

West Nile is a virus that was first identified in the West Nile region of Uganda in 1937 and subsequently caused outbreaks throughout Africa, the Mediterranean region and parts of Europe.

It arrived in the New York City area in late 1999, probably from an infected bird or mosquito. The virus has since spread and become endemic throughout the continental United States and other parts of North America.

West Nile virus is primarily transmitted to humans by mosquito bites. West Nile virus exists in a transmission cycle between various birds such as crows, robins and blue jays and primarily several Culex species of mosquitoes, which are very common across the US.

The mosquitoes become infected by feeding on infected birds with high levels of virus. Then the infected mosquitoes pass the virus to other birds by feeding on them.

Sometimes, an infected mosquito will bite a human, horse or other mammal, transmitting the virus to them. However, these animals do not develop a high enough viral level in their blood to keep the cycle going. In other words, they are "dead-end" hosts.

Rarely, West Nile virus is transmitted in other ways, including through accidental laboratory exposures, blood transfusion or organ transplantation. Very rarely, it may be transmitted during pregnancy, delivery or through breastfeeding.

Approximately 80% of people infected with West Nile virus have no symptoms or very mild ones.

questionnaires to foreigners for them to fill, including invited guests from other countries. They need to declare their disease history, contact activities and the last travel destination," Health Ministry's acting Director General of Disease Prevention and Control, Yudhi

Pramono, said in a statement on Monday.

By screening the data history, Pramono said, the authorities would map out the guests' countries of origins and advise them not to continue traveling if they were sick and showed symptoms of mpox infections.

Uzbekistan is taking measures to prevent the spread of mpox, local media reported on Monday, citing the country's Committee for Sanitary-Epidemiological Welfare and Public Health.

To prevent the disease from entering Uzbekistan, the country is creating a reserve of medical supplies and necessary medications for hospitalization in infectious disease hospitals, as well as organizing medical monitoring of those who have had contact with infected individuals for 21 days, said the report.

But about 20% of the time, people infected with West Nile virus can develop a sudden flu-like illness with symptoms such as high fever, headache, muscle and joint aches, stomach problems such as nausea, vomiting and diarrhea, rash and fatigue within two to 14 days after being bitten by a West Nile-carrying mosquito.

Most people recover from this "West Nile fever," but the fatigue may last weeks to months.

In about 1% of cases, however, the virus can invade the covering of the brain, causing what is called meningitis; the brain itself, resulting in encephalitis; or the spinal cord, causing a polio-like syndrome. When the virus invades the nervous system like this, it is called "West Nile neuroinvasive disease."

Disability

Approximately 10% of West Nile neuroinvasive disease cases are fatal, particularly in cases where the brain and spinal cord are directly infected. Many survivors are left with permanent neurological disability such as weakness, movement disorders or cognitive issues to varying degrees.

The risk of West Nile neuroinvasive disease is higher in people who are 60 or older, those who are immunocompromised and those with conditions such as cancer, diabetes or kidney failure.

While a variety of treatments have been investigated, there are currently no proven antiviral treatments for West Nile virus disease. Treatment remains largely focused on addressing symptoms.

Some patients may require over-the-counter medications for fever and headaches, fluids for dehydration, anti-nausea medications for nausea or vomiting, and rest. Some may require hospitalization and treatment for severe dehydration, organ dysfunction, seizures or brain swelling.

There are currently no West Nile vaccines licensed for use in humans, though some vaccine candidates and ideas are being studied.

Generally speaking, if you prevent mosquito bites, you prevent West Nile virus infection. There are several things you can do to prevent mosquito bites:

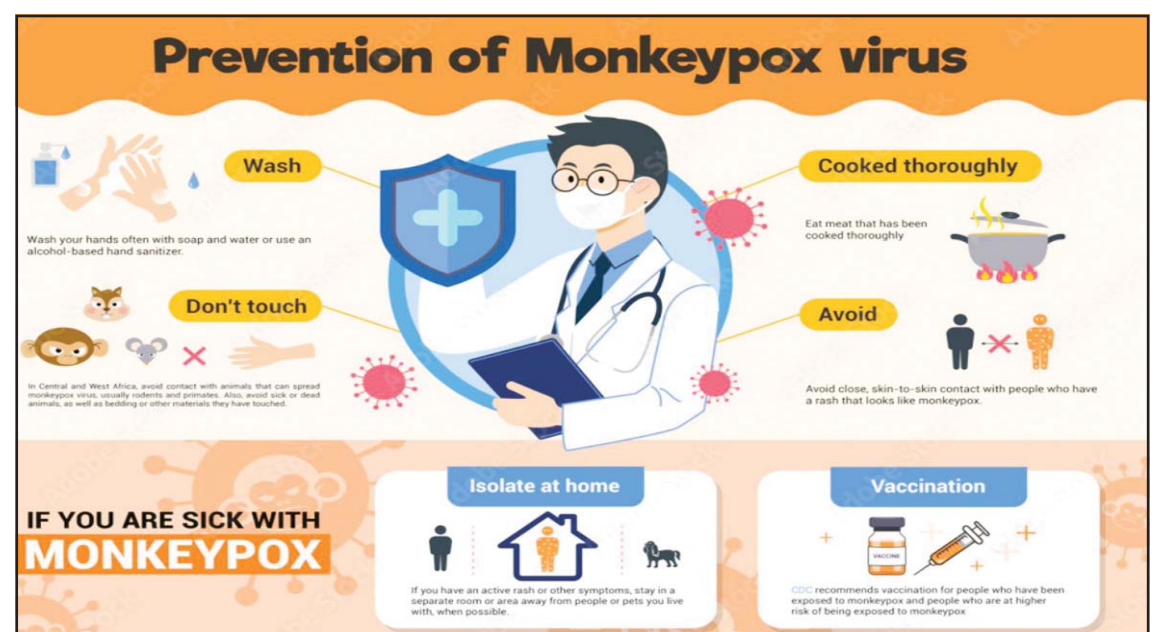
First of all, use an Environmental Protection Agency-registered insect repellent on exposed skin when you are outside in an area with mosquitoes. These are safe and effective when used as directed. (AP)

Pramono, said in a statement on Monday.

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A flyer shows how people can prevent getting infected by monkeypox virus.

Most fatalities are under 15 years old

Dr. Rajan highlights potential risks of monkeypox outbreak

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 20: In an exclusive interview with Dr. Rajesh Rajan, a senior cardiologist, insightful directions were shared regarding mpox. Dr. Rajan highlighted the potential risks associated with these mpox outbreaks as indicated by the published scientific data in the journal The Lancet.

On Aug 13, 2024, the Africa Centre for Disease Control and Prevention (Africa CDC) made a significant announcement by classifying mpox (formerly known as monkeypox) as a public health emergency of continental security. The World Health Organization (WHO) promptly echoed this sentiment, labeling it a public health emergency of international concern. These actions highlight the critical need for swift intervention as mpox cases rise across Africa and other regions.

At present, confirmed mpox cases have been identified in over 122 African countries, with a particularly alarming increase among children. The first reported case of the clade 1 variant outside Africa occurred in Sweden, indicating that the risk transcends the continent. The ongoing outbreak in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DR Congo) is especially concerning, with more than 15,000 reported cases and over 500 deaths in 2024 alone. Notably, a troubling proportion of these cases involves children, with over 68% of suspected cases and 85% of fatalities in DR Congo affecting individuals under 15 years old.

As the global health community confronts this escalating challenge, a just and proactive response is crucial. It is imperative for governments and health organizations to take swift measures rather than waiting for the

situation to worsen in affluent nations. Collaborative efforts are essential to mitigate the outbreak, particularly in the regions most affected.

While the WHO's guidance is vital, regional organizations such as the Africa CDC and the African Union also have important roles to play. Recently, the African Union pledged \$10 million to support the Africa CDC's efforts against mpox, which will be instrumental in improving surveillance, data collection, case management, and community outreach in the affected areas.

Gavi, the vaccine alliance, is actively addressing this pressing health issue by identifying priority regions for a coordinated mpox response. A key focus is securing vaccine doses, as the current vaccines recommended by the WHO require financial support. Gavi's First Response Fund aims to provide resources swiftly for vaccination campaigns. Additionally, Gavi is working on developing a long-term stockpile of mpox vaccines to ensure sustained availability.

Vaccine

Recognizing the urgency of the crisis, Gavi has classified the mpox situation as a regional emergency, allowing for the reallocation of existing funds to facilitate a rapid response. They are also investing in data generation to enhance vaccine distribution strategies and ensure effective

long-term public health initiatives.

In collaboration with the Government of DR Congo and other partners, Gavi is finalizing a national mpox vaccination strategy. Although challenges such as securing vaccine supplies and funding remain, preparations are underway for a comprehensive vaccination rollout.

As we face this serious health crisis, it is vital for the international community to come together and provide timely and effective assistance to those affected. The time to act is now; failure to do so could have dire consequences for public health in Africa and worldwide. It is crucial for everyone to remain informed, support vaccination efforts, and advocate for measures that protect our communities against this growing threat.

Dr. Rajesh Rajan is a renowned Indian Cardiologist at Amiri Hospital in Kuwait and holds prestigious positions as the current President of the Association of MD Physicians, Chairman BOG Indian Association of Clinical Cardiologists and the Managing Editor of the esteemed Annals of Clinical Cardiology Journal by Wolters Kluwer. His contributions to the medical community are highly regarded, and he has been honored with Fellowships from esteemed institutions such as the Royal College of London, Edinburgh, Ireland, and Glasgow. Dr. Rajan's expertise and commitment to cardiovascular health are evident through his groundbreaking research and recognition as a Fellow of the American College of Cardiology, the European Society of Cardiology, the American Society of Echocardiography, and the American Heart Association.

Experts warn of mosquito-borne diseases surge

Romania faces 60 ovine rinderpest outbreaks

BUCHAREST, Aug 20, (Xinhua): Romania is grappling with a surge in ovine rinderpest, or sheep and goat plague, with 60 active outbreaks reported across the country, according to the National Animal Health and Food Safety Authority (ANSVSA) on Monday.

Most of the outbreaks have been re-

ported on farms, and the affected settlements are home to 232,927 registered animals, ANSVSA said in a press release.

Tulcea County has been the hardest hit, reporting 49 outbreaks across 10 settlements, affecting 212,973 animals. The outbreaks have also impacted Constanta County in the southeast, Timis County in the west, and Ialomita

County in the southeast.

Meanwhile, the African continent is facing a rise in mosquito-borne infections, including malaria and dengue fever, which is placing immense pressure on public health systems, scientists warned Monday during a virtual forum held ahead of World Mosquito Day.

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SPORTS

Lawrence to open the batting

Potts to start for England against Sri Lanka in Stokes' absence

MANCHESTER, England, Aug 20, (AP): Durham seamer Matthew Potts has been included in England's team for the first test against Sri Lanka, starting at Old Trafford on Wednesday.

Potts is replacing the injured Ben Stokes, who tore his ham-

string playing in the Hundred domestic competition. After a

CRICKET

breakout summer in 2022, Potts played just one test last year, but

the bowler gets the opportunity to make his case after being chosen ahead of Olly Stone.

In the one other change to the England side that completed a 3-0 series sweep over West Indies last month, Dan Lawrence will open the batting, nearly 2 1/2 years since he won the

last of his 11 caps. Zak Crawley's fractured finger has opened up a vacancy at the top of the order as Ben Duckett's new partner.

Lawrence started out as an opener in his early days with Essex, and scored a half-century for Surrey in April in a rare return to the top, but

has made his name as a free-flowing middle-order strokemaker.

Ollie Pope captains the team in Stokes' absence, with Harry Brook promoted to vice captain.

Stokes was with the team as they reported for duty in Manchester and is expected to be part of the dress-

ing room throughout the three-match test series.

England Squad: Dan Lawrence, Ben Duckett, Ollie Pope (captain), Joe Root, Harry Brook, Jamie Smith, Chris Woakes, Gus Atkinson, Matthew Potts, Mark Wood, Shoaib Bashir.

Visitors take on pace-heavy Pak

Bangladesh look to Shakib to 'do something special'

RAWALPINDI, Pakistan, Aug 20, (AP): Bangladesh are pinning their hopes on all-rounder and former lawmaker Shakib Al Hasan to "do something special" against pace-heavy Pakistan in the opening test of the two-match series, starting Wednesday.

"(Shakib) played this game for so long, so he knows his role," Bangladesh captain Najmul Hossain Shanto said on the eve of the first test match at Rawalpindi Cricket Stadium.

"He knows how to prepare himself, so I am not thinking about his political career and I hope he will do something special in this series. He's a professional cricketer and we all treat him as a cricketer, to be very honest."

Bangladesh's most accomplished all-rounder, spin great Shakib was playing in the T20 league in Canada during political turmoil in his country back home.

CRICKET

The unrest hampered preparations and Bangladesh flew to Pakistan four days ahead of schedule to get an additional three days of training in Lahore.

Rawalpindi will host both the test matches. The series is part of the World Test Championship in which Pakistan are languishing at No. 6 spot while Bangladesh are at No. 8, above last-place West Indies.

Pakistan have an impressive test record against Bangladesh, winning all but one of the 13 matches. The teams drew at Khulna in Bangladesh in 2015.

Shanto said it won't be easy for Bangladesh against a four-pronged pace Pakistan pace attack, led by Shaheen Shah Afridi and Naseem Shah. And Pakistan pacers have happy memories of Rawalpindi. Four years ago, a hat trick from Shah helped Pakistan to inflict a crushing innings and 44 runs defeat on Bangladesh.

Shanto, who was among Shah's hat-trick wickets in that 2020 test, said "it's not going to be easy," but remained hopeful.



Pakistan test cricket team's skipper Shan Masood, right, and his Bangladesh's counterpart Najmul Hossain Shanto pose with test series trophy at a hilltop city view point Daman-e-Koh, in Islamabad, Pakistan. (AP)

"We have a very good balanced side and we believe we can do some special things this time," he said Tuesday.

The series will be the first test for Pakistan's new red-ball head coach Jason Gillespie of Australia. Pakistan were swept 3-0 by Australia in the last test series they played eight months ago. That was also Shan Masood's debut test series as Pakistan captain.

"There were some mistakes that we made that cost us probably the Melbourne and Sydney test matches," Masood said. "But as a team, we were heading in the right direction, so that's something that we'll take with us."

Masood said results in the domestic matches at Rawalpindi have encouraged him to go with all-out pace attack that also features fast bowlers Khurram Shahzad and Mohammad Ali in the playing XI. "You have to be very flexible and you have to adapt and adopt different conditions," Masood said. "I feel in Rawalpindi ... the conditions have favored the seamers and the batters, spin bowling hasn't been such a big threat."

Sinner and Sabalenka win titles in Cincinnati

'I would say that I'm really playing great tennis'

MASON, Ohio, Aug 20, (AP): Top-ranked Jannik Sinner and women's No. 2 Aryna Sabalenka earned straight-set victories in the finals of the Cincinnati Open, the first titles at the tournament for both players.

Sabalenka defeated Jessica Pegula 6-3, 7-5 for her first title since the Australian Open in January.

Sinner, who turned 23 on Friday, beat American Frances Tiafoe 7-6 (4), 6-2 to become the youngest Cincinnati champion since 21-year-old Andy Murray won in 2008.

"I'm very happy to be in the position where I am," Sinner said. "I'm just trying to keep going this way mentally. It's important to recover to be ready for New York. That's the most important thing."

The U.S. Open begins on Aug. 26 in New York.

Sinner and Tiafoe were both playing in their first Cincinnati finals with their previous best results being the third round.

Tiafoe forced a tiebreak in the first set, but three straight



Jannik Sinner of Italy plays a shot to Andrey Rublev of Russia during their quarterfinal match at the National Bank Open tennis tournament in Montreal. (AP)

TENNIS

errors led to a 7-6 defeat.

Sinner had a 5-1 lead in the second before Tiafoe saved three match points to make it 5-2 before Sinner was able to serve out for the win.

Tiafoe had a less conventional path to the final. He won the first set in the quarterfinals on Saturday before Hubert Hurkacz retired with a calf injury then saved two match points to defeat Holger Rune in three sets in the semis.

An American man hasn't won the title in Cincinnati since Andy Roddick in 2006.

Sabalenka moved up a spot to No. 2 in the rankings before the match, then didn't lose a set en route to her 15th WTA title. She had never gotten past the semifinals at Cincinnati, losing three times in that round.

The 26-year-old Sabalenka can now be considered a favorite at the U.S. Open. The Belarusian missed Wimbledon with a shoulder injury, then returned to the tour at Washington two weeks ago.

"I would say that I'm really playing great tennis," Sabalenka said. "Probably not the best tennis I can play but I'm definitely getting there. Hopefully at the U.S. Open I can reach

Flamengo eye move for Sandro

BUENOS AIRES, Aug 20, (Xinhua): Union Santa Fe kept their title aspirations intact with a 3-0 home victory over Argentinos Juniors in Argentina's Primera Division.

Simon Rivero and Adrian Balboa struck first-half goals at Estadio 15 de Abril before Nicolas Orsini put the result beyond doubt with a second-half penalty.

The result leaves Union second in the 28-team standings with 22 points from 11 games, a point behind leaders Huracan. Argentinos Juniors are 20th, nine points further back.

In Mendoza, Godoy Cruz continued their resurgent form with a 4-1 home victory over Deportivo Riestra.

Daniel Octavio netted twice while Salomon Rodriguez and

Facundo Alejandro were also on target for the hosts. Brian Sanchez scored a late consolation goal for the visitors.

After a poor start to the season, Godoy Cruz have now won four of their past five league fixtures

SOCCER

to rise to 14th, ahead of 16th-placed Deportivo Riestra on goal difference.

□ □ □

Flamengo are preparing a bid to sign former Juventus full-back Alex Sandro on a free transfer, according to media reports in Brazil.

Sandro, who ended his nine-year spell with Juventus in June,

is currently training alone in Portugal as he considers offers from several clubs, Globo Esporte reported on Monday.

It added that the 33-year-old is enthusiastic about the prospect of reuniting with Flamengo boss Tite, whom he played under with Brazil's national team.

The report said Sandro had also attracted interest from Flamengo's Brazilian top-flight rivals Sao Paulo and clubs in Saudi Arabia.

The left-back became a priority for Flamengo after Uruguayan Matias Vina was ruled out for the rest of the season with a fractured tibia and a torn anterior cruciate ligament in his right knee.

even higher levels."

Against Pegula, Sabalenka took 17 minutes to build a 4-1 lead in the first set. Pegula, who double-faulted five times, broke serve for the first time to tie the second set at 5-all, but Sabalenka won the next two games to finish off the 1-hour, 14-minute match.

"She was playing at a high level and never really came down," Pegula said. "When

she's serving really well, it's tough, especially on these fast courts."

The sixth-ranked Pegula had a challenging road to the final. After defending her title at Toronto, the American played two matches on Friday because of weather-related postponements and had three matches go three sets. Her time on the court exceeded Sabalenka's by more than two hours entering the

final.

"I'm proving to myself that I can play a lot of matches and overcome a lot of challenges," Pegula said. "I'm looking forward to not doing anything for a few days."

Sabalenka joined top-ranked Iga Swiatek as the only players with 10 or more WTA titles since 2020. She beat Swiatek in the Cincinnati semis.

Aces coach again disputes Hamby's claims of mistreatment

LAS VEGAS, Aug 20, (AP): Las Vegas coach Becky Hammon again disputed former Aces player Dearica Hamby's claim the Aces mistreated her and traded her because of her pregnancy.

Hamby, traded to Los

Angeles in January 2023, played for the organization from 2015-22, beginning when the Aces were based in San Antonio. She was named the league Sixth Player of the Year in 2019 and 2020.

Hamby, who went

public with her accusations last year, sued the WNBA and her former team in federal court last Monday.

"I've been in either the WNBA or the NBA for now 25 years," Hammon said Sunday after the Aces beat Hamby and the Sparks 87-71. "I've never had an HR complaint. Never, not once. I still didn't, actually, because Dearica didn't file any. She didn't file with the players' union, she didn't file with the WNBA. Those are facts."

"It's also factual that nobody made a call about trading her until Atlanta called us in January (2023). That's a fact. So ... it just didn't happen."

Hammon previously refuted the allegations, saying 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.

"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."

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 Op-

portunity 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."

Change of Name

I, Ali Asgar, holder of Indian Passport No. Z-5642566 residing at Salmiya, Block 10, Kuwait, have changed my name to Ali Asgar Shabbir Husain Warda and henceforth I will be known as Ali Asgar Shabbir Husain Warda for all purposes.

Change of Name

I, Yasmee Fakhruddin Bhabhrana, holder of Indian Passport No. Z-5642486 residing at Salmiya, Block 10, Kuwait have changed my name to Tasneem Ali Asgar Warda and henceforth I will be known as Tasneem Ali Asgar Warda for all purposes.

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Kuwait Club eye third straight league win

Al-Arabi and Al-Qadisiya set for high-stakes derby

By Hassan Musa

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 20: Amidst the hot and humid conditions, the third round of the Zain Premier League kicks off today with a highly anticipated match between traditional rivals

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Al-Arabi and Al-Qadisiya at Sabah Al-Salem Stadium set to begin at 8:15 pm.

The round continues on Thursday with two matches with Al-Salmiya facing Al-Tadamon at Thamer Stadium, and Al-Nasr hosting Kazma.



A file photo of Al-Qadisiya and Al-Arabi players in action.

Kuwait Club take on Khaitan at Al-Sadaka Wal Salam Stadium and Al-Yarmouk lock horns with Al-Fahaheel on Friday.

Currently, Kuwait Club leads the standings with 6 points after 3-0 victory over Al-Fahaheel, edging out Al-Arabi on goal difference. Al-Salmiya, Al-Fahaheel, Al-Qadisiya, Kazma, and Khaitan are all tied with 3 points each, while Al-Tadamon and Al-Yarmouk have 1 point, and Al-Nasr remains without points.

The league to pause after this round, following Kuwait two crucial World Cup qualifiers against Jordan.

The last five encounters between Al-Arabi and Al-Qadisiya ended in draws.

Al-Arabi's last victory over Al-

Qadisiya was in April 2023, with a 2-0 win, while Al-Qadisiya's most recent win came in March 2023 with a 2-1 victory.

Al-Arabi started their league campaign strongly with a 2-0 win over Kazma and a hard-fought 3-2 victory against Al-Tadamon. Al-Qadisiyah, however, began with a 0-1 defeat to Kuwait Club but bounced back against Al-Yarmouk.

Despite the absence of key Al-Arabi players, including Moroccan Hamza Khaba, Sultan Al-Enezi, and Hassan Hamdan, and Al-Qadisiya's recent underwhelming performances, the derby remains crucial as both teams are eager to demonstrate their prowess and pursue the title that has eluded them for years.



Abdel-Rahman Khaled

Juventus and Atalanta make blistering starts

Debutants star

LECCE, Italy, Aug 20, (AP): It was a good day for debutants in Italy's Serie A as new faces at Juventus and Atalanta gave their teams a winning start to the league season.

New Juventus coach Thiago Motta surprised fans by handing a debut to youth academy graduate Samuel Mbangula and the 20-year-old winger responded by scoring the opening goal in a 3-0 win over Como.

Mbangula cut in from the left in the 23rd minute and slotted a low drive into the far corner to give Juventus the lead.

U.S. international Timothy Weah scored the second for the Turin club when he smashed a shot in off the underside of the bar just before halftime. It was the American's first league goal for the club.

Andrea Cambiaso added a third in injury time to pad the scoreline in Cesc Fàbregas' first league game in charge of Como since taking over as head coach this offseason.

New signings Mateo Retegui and Marco Brescianini both scored twice as Atalanta routed Lecce 4-0 in a blistering start to their campaign.

Brescianini joined last season's Europa League winners from Frosinone just three days ago and Retegui was signed last week from Genoa.

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Brescianini got the opener when the midfielder pounced on a parried save by goalkeeper Wladimir Falcone after 35 minutes and then Retegui doubled Atalanta's lead with a powerful header on the stroke of halftime.

Retegui got the third from the penalty spot 12 minutes into the second period and then Brescianini took advantage of gaping holes in the Lecce defence to make it four after 65 minutes.

The result means the Bergamo club sits top of the Serie A table on goal difference after one round.

Antonio Conte became Napoli's fifth coach in little more than a year when he was hired in June and on Sunday he saw his new team crumble 3-0 at Hellas Verona in his first match back in Serie A.

"We melted like snow in the sun after the first goal," Conte said. "We should apologize to the Neapolitan people, who follow us with passion. I am the coach and it is right that I take full responsibility. In the second half there was an unacceptable performance."

"We should be ashamed, and I have to be ashamed as I am coach. Those who know me know that today my heart is bleeding, and I hope that some of the players are also bleeding so that would mean that at least we are on the right path."



Rennes' Henrik Meister celebrates scoring his side's 3rd goal during the French League One soccer match between Rennes and Lyon at the Roazhon Park stadium in Rennes, France. (AP)



In this file photo, France's head coach Thierry Henry waves to fans as he celebrates his team's victory over Egypt at the end of the men's semifinal soccer match at Lyon Stadium, during the 2024 Summer Olympics, Monday, Aug. 5, 2024, in Decines, France. Henry resigned after winning silver. (AP)

'Khaled signed with another club without informing Al-Arabi'

By Hassan Musa

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 20: Al-Arabi and Egyptian player Abdel-Rahman Khaled, known as "Jebna," have clarified their positions regarding their recent "disengagement" following a brief association. Jebna had played a short stint as a substitute for Al-Arabi in their match against

Al-Tadamon last Friday before the contract was terminated.

Mamdouh Abdel, a board member of Al-Arabi, explained that the decision to terminate Jebna's contract was due to him signing with an Egyptian club without informing Al-Arabi's management. Abdel emphasized, "Our position on this matter and the contract's termination is legally justified."

On the other hand, Jebna, formerly of Al-Mokawloon Al-Arab, alleged that a well-known player agent was behind Al-Arabi's decision to withdraw from his signing just 12 days after the contract was finalized. He shared, "I had a negative experience with this agent before. Although I followed my coach's advice and agreed to a monthly salary arrange-

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ment with the agent due to overdue payments from my previous club, the agent exploited the situation."

Jebna recounted that after receiving an offer from Al-Arabi and completing the deal, the agent threatened the intermediary who facilitated the contract, claiming he would end Jebna's football career. Jebna stated, "The agent falsely informed Al-Arabi that I had signed with a fourth-division team in Egypt. This misinformation was used to manipulate the situation."

He concluded, "The claim that I signed with a lower division team is illogical, especially since my name has been linked to prominent clubs like Zamalek and Pyramids."

Best of the Rest

Munich lose Stanišić: Bayern Munich and Croatia defender Josip Stanišić will miss the start of the Bundesliga season because of a knee injury, the club said Tuesday.

Stanišić tore a ligament in his right knee during a practice session Monday and will be "sidelined for several weeks," Bayern said.

Bayern starts its Bundesliga campaign on Sunday at Wolfsburg and is seeking to reclaim the title from Bayer Leverkusen, where Stanišić spent last season on loan.

Stanišić is likely to miss two Croatia games in the UEFA Nations League, at Portugal on Sept. 5 and home to Poland three days later.

Bayern also plays the first two rounds of the expanded Champions League opening league phase scheduled from Sept. 17-19 and Oct. 1-2. The draw for each team's eight games will be made next week in Monaco. (AP)

Monaco sign Teze: Monaco signed Netherlands defender Jordan Teze on Tuesday, adding Champions League experience to the team ahead of its return to the competition.

Teze signed a five-year contract, Monaco said, in a deal for the right back that will reportedly pay PSV Eindhoven 12 million euros (\$13.3 million).

The 24-year-old Teze played eight games in the Champions League last season when PSV was eliminated in the round of 16 by Borussia Dortmund.

Monaco was runner-up to Paris Saint-Germain in the French league last season and qualified directly into the Champions League for the first time in six years.

Monaco reached the Champions League semifinals in 2017 with a teenage Kylian Mbappé in its attack. Mbappé then joined PSG.

The principality hosts the draw next week for the new and bigger Champions League format that has abolished the traditional group stage. Now 36 teams will each play eight games against eight different opponents in a single league standings. (AP)

Namibia hosts workshop: Namibia's football governing body, the Namibia Football Association (NFA) on Tuesday hosted its first-ever stadium safety and security workshop in Windhoek.

The two-day workshop, led by Confederation of African Football (CAF) Safety and Security Instructor, Humphrey Mandu from Uganda, and CAF Safety Security Officer, Xolile Vilakati from Eswatini, is designed to provide clubs with essential tools for managing stadium safety and security.

Namibia becomes the fifth African country to implement this CAF initiative, following Eswatini, Zimbabwe, Madagascar, and Rwanda.

Furthermore, the program aims to enhance the management of safety measures at sports venues across the country.

According to NFA President, Robert Shimooshili, while the initial focus is on the top-tier leagues, he assured that the NFA is committed to extending the safety and security program to all levels of football, including regional leagues, youth competitions, and even the NFA headquarters. (Xinhua)

Valladolid make winning return

New-look Atletico draw with Villarreal

MADRID, Aug 20, (AP): Villarreal and Atletico Madrid combined for four goals in an action-packed first half but neither side could find a winner in the second as they settled for a 2-2 draw in their Spanish league opener.

A new-look Atletico team was without Stefan Savic, Mario Hermoso, Memphis Depay and Álvaro Morata and went behind after 18 minutes when Amaut Danjuma scored a solo goal from a tight angle.

Marcos Llorente leveled the scores for Atletico two minutes later with a fierce strike only for Villarreal to get back in front nine minutes before halftime thanks to a goalkeeping mistake by Jan Oblak.

Oblak flapped at a cross and the ball hit the unsuspecting Koke and bounced into the net for an own goal.

Alexander Sorloth, who joined from Villarreal this month, equalized in first-half stoppage time for Atletico. The visitors tried to shake things up in the second half by sending on four Argentine players,

including new signing Julian Alvarez from Manchester City, but they couldn't make a decisive impact.

Joao Felix was not in the Atletico squad amid reports that he is on the verge of joining Chelsea.

Earlier, newly promoted Real Valladolid marked their return to the Spanish first division with a 1-0 win over visitors Espanyol.

Raúl Moro got the only goal of the game midway through the first half.

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The 21-year-old winger cut in from the left and was lucky to see his shot take a deflection and wrongfoot the Espanyol goalkeeper.

Both clubs spent last season in Spain's second tier but Valladolid, whose majority owner is former Brazil striker Ronaldo, were one of only four La Liga teams to win their reopening match. It was the first time Valladolid have won their home opener in La Liga since 1989.

Injured Messi ruled out of Argentina WCup qualifiers

BUENOS AIRES, Aug 20, (Xinhua): Argentina captain Lionel Messi will miss his team's World Cup qualifiers against Chile and Colombia next month due to injury.

The 37-year-old was a glaring omission from the Albiceleste's 28-man squad named on Monday as he continues to recover from an ankle ligament injury sustained during Argentina's victory over Colombia in the Copa America final in July.

Veteran River Plate goalkeeper Franco Armani was also left out, as was Roma forward Paulo Dybala.

Midfielder Ezequiel Fernandez and striker Valentin Castel-

lanos were called up for the first time while young talents Alejandro Garnacho, Valentin Carboni, Valentin Barco and Matias Soule were also included.

Argentina will meet Chile in Buenos Aires on September 5 and Colombia in Barranquilla five days later.

The Albiceleste are currently top of the 10-team South American qualifying group with 15 points from six games so far.

Argentina squad:

Goalkeepers: Walter Benitez (PSV Eindhoven), Geronimo Rulli (Olympique de Marseille), Juan Musso (Atalanta), Emiliano Martinez (Aston Villa).

Defenders: Gonzalo Montiel (Sevilla), Nahuel Molina (Atletico Madrid), Cristian Romero (Tottenham Hotspur), German Pezzella (River Plate), Leonardo Balerdi (Olympique Marseille), Nicolas Otamendi (Benfica), Lisandro Martinez (Manchester United), Nicolas Tagliafico (Olympique Lyonnais), Valentin Barco (Brighton & Hove Albion).

Midfielders: Guido Rodriguez (West Ham United), Alexis Mac Allister (Liverpool), Enzo Fernandez (Chelsea), Giovanni Lo Celso (Tottenham Hotspur), Ezequiel Fernandez (Al Qadisiyah), Rodrigo De Paul (Atletico Madrid), Nicolas Gonzalez (Fiorentina), Leandro Paredes (AS Roma).

Forwards: Alejandro Garnacho (Manchester United), Matias Soule (AS Roma), Giuliano Simeone (Atletico Madrid), Valentin Carboni (Olympique Marseille), Julian Alvarez (Atletico Madrid), Lautaro Martinez (Inter Milan), Valentin Castellanos (Lazio).



A delegation from the Executive Committee of the Arabian Gulf Cup Federation, led by Secretary-General Jassim Al-Rumaihi, inspects Sulaibikhat Club Stadium.

Sports

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Gulf Cup delegation inspects Sulaibikhat Club stadium ahead of Gulf 26 in Kuwait

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 20: A delegation from the Executive Committee of the Arabian Gulf Cup Federation, led by Secretary-General Jassim Al-Rumaihi, inspected Sulaibikhat Club Stadium. This visit was part of the

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committee's inspection program to assess Kuwait's readiness to host the "Gulf 26" competitions, scheduled from December 21 to January 3.

The inspection was attended by Abdulaziz Al-Samhan, a member of the Board of Directors of the Kuwait Football Association and the tour-

name director; Salah Al-Qanai, Secretary-General of the KFA; Sarah Fleitah, Deputy Director of the Public Authority for Sports for Facilities, Maintenance, and Facilities Sector (on assignment); as well as other representatives from the Federation and the Public Authority for Sports. Dr. Muhammad Bou Abbas, Director of the Media and Public Relations Department at KFA also participated.

Despite earlier concerns about stadium readiness and discussions about potentially relocating the tournament, the delegation has confirmed that the event will proceed as scheduled in Kuwait.

Team eyes several medals

3 Kuwaiti athletes to participate in Paris 2024 Paralympic Games

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 20, (KUNA): Mansour Al-Sarheed, Head of the Kuwait Paralympic Committee, announced on Tuesday that Kuwait is set to compete in the Paris 2024 Paralympic Games with a delegation of three athletes.

The Kuwaiti team includes Faisal Al-Rajhi, Faisal Sorour, and Dhari Al-Butti, who will be competing in various track and field events. In a statement to KUNA, Al-Sarheed detailed that Al-Rajhi will participate in wheelchair racing in the T54 category, Sorour in Shot Put in the F42 category, and Al-Butti in Shot Put in

the F37 category.

Al-Sarheed highlighted that the committee has meticulously prepared these athletes, who qualified for the Games through outstanding performances in international and regional championships. He added that the goal is to achieve the best possible results and proudly raise Kuwait's flag at one of the largest multi-sport events in the world.

He also mentioned that Sorour and Al-Butti are currently undergoing intensive training in Turkey under the guidance of Coach Ahmad Harbi, while Al-Rajhi is training in Sharjah, UAE, under Coach Nizar Ramadan.

PARALYMPICS

Athlete Faisal Sorour expressed confidence in his and his teammates' readiness to secure top positions and reach the podium, attributing their preparedness to the excellent training camps they have attended both locally and abroad. Sorour, who earned a bronze medal at the Tokyo 2020 Paralympic Games, is determined to win another medal for Kuwait in Paris.

Nizar Ramadan, Kuwait's coach for wheelchair racing, affirmed that Al-Rajhi is training intensively, with two daily sessions, showing great enthusiasm to win a Paralympic medal. Ramadan noted that Sharjah was selected for the training camp due to its excellent facilities, which have significantly enhanced Al-Rajhi's performance. He remains optimistic that the Kuwaiti team will secure several medals despite the tough competition.

Kuwait first participated in the Paralympics in 1980 and has since earned a total of 52 medals: 12 gold, 18 silver, and 22 bronze. This year, the Kuwaiti delegation hopes to add to this tally at the Paris 2024 Paralympic Games, which will take place from August 28 to September 8 and feature 23 different sports events.

The Paralympic Games, organized by the International Paralympic Committee, are held every four years following the Olympic Games in the same host city. They feature athletes with physical disabilities, including muscle weakness, limb deficiency, paralysis, leg length difference, short stature, and visual impairment.



KUNA photo
Head of the Kuwait Paralympic Committee Mansour Al-Sarheed.



Faisal Sorour getting ready to compete in the Kuwait Paralympic Committee tournament.

Brighton sign Rutter

Gallagher move to Atletico back on as Felix closes in on Chelsea move

MADRID, Aug 20, (Agencies): The deal that will see Conor Gallagher finally complete his move from Chelsea to Atletico Madrid with Joao Felix going the other way looks to be on the verge of completion.

Gallagher's transfer to Atletico seemed a done deal a week ago as he was pictured training with the club in the Metropolitan Stadium, only for it to collapse after the two

Atletico to sign Gallagher.

Joao Felix, who had a six-month loan at Chelsea two seasons ago, is set to sign a six-year contract until the end of June 2030, to end speculation about his future.

He traveled with Atletico for their opening La Liga game away to Villarreal on Monday night, but took no part in the game that ended 2-2, with Marcos Llorente and Alexander Sorloth netting Atletico's goals.

Brighton said Rutter signed a five-year deal, with the move reportedly valued at a club record 40 million pounds (\$52 million).

The 22-year-old Rutter had moved to England in January 2023 when Leeds, then in the Premier League, bought him from Hoffenheim in a deal worth up to 35 million pounds (\$45.5 million).

"Georginio is a player who has the capabilities to get fans off their seats and really showed what he can do in English football with Leeds last season," Brighton coach Fabian Hurszler said.

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clubs were unable to reach agreement over the transfer of striker Samu Omorodion to Chelsea.

The England international flew back to London but was not included in the Chelsea squad that lost 2-0 at home to Manchester City on Sunday.

The transfer now appears to be back on track with the news that Atletico and Chelsea have reached an agreement to see Joao Felix to the English club for around 45 million euros, which will allow

LEICESTER, England, Aug 20, (AP): Jamie Vardy still knows how to score in the Premier League.

The 37-year-old striker rescued a point for Leicester in their return to the Premier League by heading home a second-half equalizer in a 1-1 draw against Tottenham, which had largely dominated the first half.

Tottenham had plenty of opportunities to build a bigger lead but new signing Dominic Solanke was among those guilty of missing chances. Instead it was Spanish defender Pedro Porro who made Tottenham's early superiority count after 29 minutes when he got between two Leicester defenders to head James Maddison's cross into the net at the far post.

But Vardy, who was key to Leicester's stunning Premier League title win in 2016 and has

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remained with the club since then, was left unmarked to head home an equalizer.

A corner count of 9-0 gave some indication of Spurs' dominance in the first half but Vardy's goal changed the game completely.

Steve Cooper's team suddenly looked a lot livelier and both teams had chances to win in a busy last half hour.

"Tottenham are a really good team but we gave them too much respect, and we started getting after them and it changed the momentum," Vardy told Sky Sports.

Vardy spurned a good chance in the 70th minute when he was able to run clear on goal but his low shot was saved by Guglielmo Vicario. At the other end, Richarlison sent a header wide deep into injury time with the last chance of the match.

"It is a disappointing night for us," Tottenham manager Ange Postecoglou said. "We need to be more ruthless in front of goal. We were that dominant, we should have been well away from the opposition. To be that wasteful tonight when we had so much of the ball and territory, it is disappointing."

The game was halted for eight minutes late in the second half after Tottenham midfielder Rodrigo



Tottenham's Dejan Kulusevski, left, and Leicester's Kasey McAteer challenge for the ball during the English Premier League soccer match between Leicester and Tottenham Hotspur at King Power Stadium in Leicester, England. (AP)

Disappointing night: Postecoglou

U-18 team heads to Cairo for pre-Asian Cup training camp

Kuwait U-15 team falls to Bahrain in GBA Cup final



One of the officials leading Kuwait U-18 to Cairo.



Leicester's Abd Fatawu, left, and Tottenham's Destiny Udogie challenge for the ball during the English Premier League soccer match between Leicester and Tottenham Hotspur at King Power Stadium in Leicester, England. (AP)

Bentancur sustained a head injury. The Uruguayan received oxygen and taken off on a stretcher, but Postecoglou said he was "conscious and communicating."

Newly-promoted Leicester reached a deal with Tottenham to sign midfielder Oliver Skipp ahead of the teams' meeting in their opening Premier League game.

Leicester said the 23-year-old Skipp signed a five-year contract through the 2028-29 season. The

value of the transfer was reportedly more than 20 million pounds (\$26 million).

Skipp reunites with Leicester manager Steve Cooper, who coached him in England's youth teams.

The defensive midfielder played 24 times for the England Under-21s, including in the final of the European Championship last year when they beat Spain 1-0 to win the title.

By Khaled Al-Anzi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff and Agencies

DOHA, Aug 20, (KUNA): Kuwait's national Under-15 basketball team claimed second place in the Gulf Basketball Association (GBA) Cup after a hard-fought final against Bahrain, ending in a 58-70 defeat. The tournament took place in Doha, Qatar.

Owaid Al-Anzi, head of the Kuwaiti delegation, commended the players for their strong performance and competitiveness throughout the championship, offering words of encouragement despite the loss.

Kuwait U-18 Basketball team heads to Cairo for pre-Asian Cup training camp.

Meanwhile, the Kuwait U-18 basketball team departs today for Cairo, Egypt, to conduct an external training camp until the 31st of this month. This camp is part of its preparation for the Asian Youth Cup finals, to take place in Amman, Jordan, from September 2nd to 11th.

BASKETBALL

The delegation, led by Mishaal Mohammed, a member of the board of directors, includes Mohsen Al-Mutairi as the team administrator, Abdullah Al-Rayes as the supervisor, Salman Ramadan as the head coach, and Khaled Al-Qallaf as the assistant coach. The squad comprises 16 players: Adel Al-Saeed, Adam Asadullah, Abdulaziz Al-Qattan, Talal Fahd, Muhammad Al-Saeedi, Omar Al-Essa, Adnan Adhbiyah, Muhammad Al-Shammari, Ahmed Al-Rashid, Abdulaziz Al-Mutawa, Fahd Al-Dosari, Ahmed Al-Ubaid, Ahmed Al-Loughani, Amir Asadullah, Wael Al-Anzi, and Ali Al-Hindal.

Kuwait will play in four friendly matches against Al-Etisalat, Al-Jazeera, Al-Ahly, and the Egyptian youth team.

The Kuwait U-18 team qualified for the Asian Youth Cup finals along with the Qatar, after finishing second in the regional qualifiers held in Kuwait earlier this August. Kuwait will be competing in Group B alongside Iran, South Korea, and India. Mishaal Mohammed highlighted the intense competition expected at the Asian Championship and emphasized the federation's commitment to ensuring adequate preparations for the team.