

AUDIT BUREAU RELEASES POPULATION STRUCTURE GUIDELINES

Kuwait's expatriate workforce up 21%

Opinion

Thousand solutions for housing issue, but the government is blind and deaf

By Ahmed Al-Jarallah

Editor-in-Chief, the Arab Times

"TO WHOM are you reciting your psalms, O David?" – This applies to the ongoing housing crisis that the Kuwaiti citizens have been enduring for more than forty years, a problem that persists without resolution.

Regardless of what is written, those accountable for it, starting with the Council of Ministers and all successive councils of ministers, often ignore it or resort to a series of slogans and rhetoric as smoke-screen.

Therefore, there is outcry in the desert due to the inability to comprehend the problem. Everyone is blowing their own trumpet because there is a firm conviction among all those responsible for this crisis that only their solution should be taken into consideration.

This is why we do not suggest going back to the beginning when the state built homes and distributed them to citizens. Those homes were more comfortable for their residents and were more sensitive to the social and economic traditions common in the country.

However, greed, acquisition, and trading in people's lives have led to this being replaced by the so-called "land and loan". We began to see these ugly concrete forests that have not been sensitive to the environment.

The crisis has today become a dilemma, especially with the extension of the waiting period to between 15 and 20 years.

This is why we have a housing crisis, something that the real estate dealers have exploited by raising the value of land and construction.

There is a group of citizens who were able to repay the loan to the credit bank, sell the house after its price increased several times, and seek to obtain another under the name of their children, family, and loved ones.

Earlier, we mentioned that Kuwait Credit Bank holds rights amounting to approximately three billion dinars that are fully guaranteed in every aspect. Therefore, by leveraging these assets to secure loans from local or international banks, and using the funds to construct housing cities with all specifications and environmental considerations, similar to the initiatives seen in Gulf countries and some developed countries, we can effectively resolve this long standing dilemma. Such a process will be profitable for society and will contribute to public revenue.

It is true that solving this issue comes at a cost, but it is cheaper than the crisis that citizens are experiencing. There are foreign companies that are ready to finance projects. Some of them built an integrated city in one of the countries and paid the loan in installments over a period of 15 years. Some others are ready to carry out the projects at the lowest costs, and then recover their money from soft loans, guaranteed by the state.

If the argument in the past was that parliamentarians rejected such solutions because they sought to obtain a share of any project, currently there is no National Assembly, and the matter is in the hands of the Council of Ministers, which has both executive and legislative capacities.

Continued on Page 5

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Palestine Committee meeting in the Arab Parliament convenes. Arab Parliament President Adel Al-Asoomi reaffirms commitment to Palestinian rights, independence, and Jerusalem as capital during Tuesday's meeting.

Stricter penalties proposed for residency trafficking

By Faris Al-Abdan

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, July 9: The Audit Bureau's report on the follow-up of recommendations to evaluate the efficiency and effectiveness of government procedures highlighted the rec-

ommendations made by the National Committee for Regulating the Population Structure.

These recommendations aim to address the imbalance in the population structure of Kuwait. The following are the key recommendations:

Continued on Page 5



Palm date trees cast dappled shadows under the blazing sun, as Kuwait temperatures soar on Tuesday.

Photo by Mohamad Morsi

Over 200 medicines get price cuts of up to 60%

By Marwa Al-Bahravi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, July 9: Minister of Health Dr. Ahmed Al-Awadhi issued a ministerial decision to reduce the prices of 209 medicines and pharmaceutical preparations in the private health sector within the framework of the periodic review of the prices of these items.

The list of medicines and pharmaceutical preparations with reduced prices include antibiotics, medications for blood pressure and diabetes, cholesterol-lowering medications, blood

Continued on Page 5

Day by day

WE have eagerly anticipated this period of political calm. We needed a decision-maker whose directives are fully respected and obeyed.

For many years, we were mired in chaos, hearing empty promises without action. Our leader, you are truly remarkable.

You have clearly defined your vision, which has helped us understand our true needs. What we require is a righteous will. How sweet is the wisdom in pursuing goodness and justice.

... Yet tomorrow is another day.

Zahed Matar

NewsWatch

6 expats perish in tragic Seventh Ring collision

– Details Page 2 –

KUWAIT CITY: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah sent a cable of condolences Tuesday to Saudi Arabian King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al-Saud, expressing sincere condolences for the passing of Princess Sultana bint Saud bin Abdulaziz Al-Saud.

In the cable, His Highness the Amir sent thoughts and prayers to the royal family, asking Allah Almighty to have mercy on her soul.

His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khalid Al-Hamad Al-Sabah also sent a cable of condolences Tuesday to Saudi Arabian King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al-Saud, expressing sincere condolences for the passing of Princess Sultana bint Saud bin Abdulaziz Al-Saud. (KUNA)

KUWAIT CITY: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah sent a cable of condolences on Tuesday to President of Nepal Ram Chandra Poudel, expressing sincere condolences over victims of the flooding and landslide that hit the country following incessant rains.

In the cable, His Highness the Amir wished a speedy recovery of the injured and hoped that Nepali officials would be able to overcome the effects of this natural disaster. (KUNA)

KUWAIT CITY: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah on Tuesday sent a condolence cable to President of Niger and Chairman of the National Council for the Safeguard of the Homeland Abdourahamane Tchiani, over the victims of heavy rains.

In the cable, His Highness the Amir prayed to Almighty Allah to bestow mercy upon the dead and wished speedy recovery for the injured, hoping for the friendly country to overcome the impacts of such a natural disaster. (KUNA)



Delegates gather for a group photo at the Regional Consultative Forum on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture hosted by Kuwait.

KISR photo

Kuwait zeroes in on genetic resources for food security

KUWAIT CITY, July 9, (KUNA): Dr. Mishaan Al-Otaibi, Acting Director General of the Kuwait Institute for Scientific Research (KISR), emphasized Kuwait's commitment to enhancing regional and international cooperation in sustainable genetic resource management. Speaking at the Regional Consultative Forum on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture in Kuwait, Al-Otaibi highlighted the country's dedication to sustainable agriculture, biodiversity preservation, and food security.

The forum, hosted by Kuwait and supported by the Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sciences (KFAS), the National Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture Authority (NGRFA), and the FAO's International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture, aims to bolster Kuwait's leadership in plant resource conservation and promote collaboration at local, regional, and global levels. Al-Otaibi underscored the forum's role in positioning Kuwait as a pivotal partner in responsible plant genetic resource management across the region.

Dr. Fadhila Al-Salamin, Director of the Biotechnology Program at the Environment and Life Sciences Research Center, and Head of the Forum's Organizing Committee, echoed these sentiments. She outlined the forum's objectives, including the review and revision of the Second Global Plan of Action for Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture. Al-Salamin also highlighted plans to establish a national committee for genetic resources to facilitate expertise exchange, resource utilization, and benefit sharing on local and international scales.

The ongoing regional meeting underscores Kuwait's commitment, alongside its scientific institutions, to safeguarding biodiversity, supporting food security initiatives, and enhancing the sustainable use of resources. The efforts aim to foster closer regional cooperation and conduct comprehensive assessments of plant genetic resources crucial for food and agriculture.

Ministers confer over discovery of Kuwaiti woman's remains in Saudi

By Munif Naif

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff and Agencies

KUWAIT CITY, July 9: Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Defense and the Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad Yusuf Saud Al-Sabah received, Tuesday, a phone call from Saudi Interior Minister Prince Mohammad bin Nayef Al-Saud on the discovery of the remains of a Kuwaiti female citizen in the Kingdom.

A statement by the Kuwait Ministry of Interior Tuesday revealed that Sheikh Fahad Al-Yusuf extended his gratitude to Saudi authorities for the quick response and doing what was necessary to resolve the issue.

He also praised the fruitful cooperation on the matter.

Through high-level Kuwaiti-Saudi security coordination, Saudi authorities discovered the body of a Kuwaiti woman in a

desert area north of the Jubail Governorate in Saudi Arabia.

Her Kuwaiti husband had reported leaving her in a bathroom during his return from the Kingdom of Bahrain, passing through Saudi Arabia before reaching Kuwait. Investigations are ongoing with the husband who was arrested by criminal investigation officers.

According to security sources, the suspect had arrived in Kuwait from the Kingdom of Bahrain via the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

When his son asked him about his mother, the suspect told him that he "forgot her" in one of the bathrooms during his return. The son informed the victim's family and then the Kuwaiti security authorities.

His father was immediately arrested by Ahmadi police officers. When questioned about his wife's whereabouts and the reason for returning alone from Saudi Arabia despite traveling together to Bahrain, he repeated the same explanation - he had "forgotten her" in one of the bathrooms. He stressed that he had "left her" because of some ongoing disagreements between them.

Continued on Page 5



Sheikh Fahad

Prayer Timings

Fajr	03:21	Asr	15:27
Sunrise ..	04:55	Maghrib ..	18:51
Zohr	11:53	Isha	20:22

Local

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

Weather

Expected weather for next 24 hrs:
By Day: Very hot with light variable wind to light to moderate northwesterly wind, with speeds of 06-26 km/h and some high clouds will appear.
By Night: Hot to rather hot with

light to moderate northwesterly wind to light variable wind, with speeds of 06-26 km/h and some high clouds will appear.

Station	Max Exp	Min Rec		
Kuwait City	48	37	Kuwait Airport	48
			Abdaly	48
			Jahra	49
			Salmiyah	45
			Nuwaisib	44
			Wafra	47

Report if anyone bought 'disability' certificate : authorities

CSC directs EPA to verify degrees of Kuwaiti, expat employees

KUWAIT CITY, July 9: The Environment Public Authority (EPA) has announced the formation of a team to review the academic certificates of its employees, including both citizens and residents, reports Al-Rai daily.

In a statement, the authority indicated that in response to a letter from the Civil Service Commission (CSC) regarding the examination of educational certificates, the acting Director General of the Public Environment Authority, Eng. Samira Mohammad Al-Kandari, has issued a decision to form a team.



Eng Al-Kandari

This team will sort and examine the post-secondary educational certificates of employees who have obtained their academic qualifications from January 1, 2000, to the present.

Meanwhile, the Public Authority for Persons with Disabilities has urged anyone with evidence of "purchasing a certificate" to come forward and submit it so that the necessary legal actions can be taken.

The statement further mentioned that the team will verify the authenticity of academic certificates and review them based on the principles and standards set by higher education authorities. Upon completing the review, the team will submit a detailed report on their findings and audit results to the Civil Service Commission.

'New president extends olive branch'

Iran ties with Kuwait, other GCC countries to improve, says envoy

KUWAIT CITY, July 9: The Iranian Ambassador to Kuwait Mohammad Totonji said he is optimistic about the future of Iranian-Kuwaiti and Iranian-Gulf relations under the presidency of Dr. Masoud Pezeshkian, reports Al-Qabas daily.

He highlighted the new president's commitment to extending a hand of friendship to all countries, emphasizing Iran's dedication to supporting peace and stability in the region.

Totonji emphasized Iran's ongoing efforts to strengthen political relations, particularly with neighboring countries, which he described as a priority under Iran's foreign policy, consistent with the approach during the late President Dr. Ibrahim Raisi's tenure.

Looking ahead, Totonji anticipated en-

hanced ties with Kuwait and other neighboring states, emphasizing the foundational role of these relationships in Iran's diplomatic strategy.

He acknowledged the positive reactions and congratulatory messages extended by regional leaders and heads of state to President Pezeshkian, highlighting the significance of the messages from Kuwait's leadership.

Regarding the recent Iranian presidential elections, Totonji noted a significant participation rate among the Iranian community in Kuwait, with approximately 50% turnout, which increased in the second round of voting compared to the first.

Regarding the presidential inauguration, Totonji indicated that the specific date for the oath-taking ceremony would be announced later, in accordance with Iran's constitutional procedures.

He suggested that it is expected to occur in the first week of August, following the current summer break of the Iranian parliament.



Totonji

Focus on delivery drivers problems

KUWAIT CITY, July 9: With the cooperation of the Ministry of Interior and the National Diwan for Human Rights, the Talabat company organized a workshop regarding the safety of delivery drivers with the aim of improving their work circumstances, reports Al-Rai daily.

The workshop started with a lecture presented by a representative of the National Diwan for Human Rights who highlighted the humanitarian rights of delivery workers in line with the relevant laws of Kuwait.

The discussion focused on the day-to-day troubles the delivery workers faces and ways to deal with them.

Meanwhile, Head of the Department of Communication and Public Affairs in Talabat Company Abdullah Al-Mansour

affirmed the keenness of the company to organize such workshops in coordination with the relevant public institutions with the aim of raising the awareness of the delivery workers about traffic accidents and traffic violations so that they can avoid them.

He said, "Even though Talabat's delivery workers already receive comprehensive logistical support, the company considers it a fundamental responsibility to prioritize their care and well-being".

Meanwhile, Traffic officers seized a total of 120 motorcycles used by delivery workers due to violations, the majority of which are for delivering orders on motorcycles during the ban period imposed to protect them from the direct summer sun, reports Al-Shahed daily.

'Jawahir' raids target violations

394 wanted persons held in week

KUWAIT CITY, July 9: The Rescue Police General Department at the Interior Ministry arrested 394 persons wanted by law within a week - from June 30 to July 6, reports Al-Rai daily.

Within the above-mentioned period, the department launched security and traffic campaigns in many areas. Besides the arrest of persons wanted by law for involvement in different cases; these campaigns also resulted in the issuance of 12,404 citations for various violations, impounding 74 judicially wanted vehicles to the competent authorities, resolving 15 quarrels and arresting an infiltrator into the country.

The department added that the number of security operations carried out throughout the week totaled 1,587.

Meanwhile, Director General of the Public Authority for Agriculture Affairs and Fish

Resources (PAAAFR) Asma Al-Otaibi, along with specialists and judicial officers from the livestock sector, recently inspected Jawakhir Kabad to ensure strict compliance with the authority's regulations and to uncover violations, reports Al-Rai daily.

Al-Otaibi told the daily that the visit was aimed at verifying complaints and reports about violations, indicating warnings were issued to breeders who committed violations. She explained this will be followed by monitoring; and then legal measures will be taken if the violations are not rectified.

She affirmed the continuation of such visits in order to enforce the law. He also urged the horse owners to change the conditions of the horses to avoid legal problems.

According to PAAAFR, such visits will guarantee that the areas are utilized for the permitted purpose - livestock breeding.



The Minister of Social Affairs, Family and Childhood Affairs, Minister of State for Youth Affairs Dr. Mathal Al-Huwaila and Minister of Health Dr. Ahmad Al-Awadhi in joint meeting.

Means sought to better protect families, children

KUWAIT CITY, July 9, (KUNA): Three Kuwaiti ministers held a meeting on Monday to bolster cooperation for serving families and children.

The meeting was attended by Minister of Social Affairs, Family

and Childhood Affairs and Minister of State for Youth Affairs Dr. Mathal Al-Huwaila, Minister of Health Dr. Ahmad Al-Awadhi, and Minister of Justice, Endowments and Islamic Affairs Dr. Mohammad Al-Wasmi, according to a statement issued

by the Ministry of Social Affairs. The meeting focused on exploring means and tools to better serve and protect families and children, the statement added.

The ministers also mulled forming a joint team to study aspects

of cooperation to achieve this goal and boost social stability and security. The move is part of the social and humanitarian role of state institutions and their efforts to achieve public interests, it concluded.

CSC pledges to provide jobs for Kuwaitis, serve country

New titles created to accommodate graduates: Dr Al-Hazaa

KUWAIT CITY, July 9, (KUNA): The Civil Service Commission (CSC) affirmed on Tuesday its keenness and continuous endeavor to provide job opportunities for national cadres, aiming to ensure maximum benefit from human resources and serve the homeland.

Director of the Service Development and Work Methods Department and Director of the Human Resources Development Center at the CSC, Badour Al-Enezi, said in her speech during a workshop organized by the CSC entitled "New Mechanism for CSC Nominations for Engineering Titles" that the workshop announces the new engineering titles (Project Engineer, Safety Engineer, Environmental Engineer, Contract Engineer, and Industrial Engineer) in addition to the media titles (Editor).

Al-Enezi added that, in view of recent administrative developments and to keep pace with the latest developments in job titles and frameworks, especially in the engineering and media fields, the CSC, in cooperation with Kuwait University, has updated and developed job titles in line with professional developments in various fields to achieve development, improve job performance, and raise the level of services provided.

She explained that the workshop clarifies the tasks and duties and the relationship of these jobs with other jobs to raise work efficiency and ensure maximum benefit from human resources, stressing the keenness of the Bureau to develop jobs and titles for engineering specializations and to re-study their job descriptions in accordance with recent developments and the approval of the Civil Service Commission, given their importance in developing tasks and work in government agencies.

Strategic

She stated that the Commission sets strategic plans based on the real needs of the state to improve government performance and development through a careful study of the needs of various agencies, ensuring the provision of qualified cadres capable of meeting work requirements with high efficiency.

Al-Enezi stressed the Bureau's endeavor and exertion of strenuous efforts to analyze challenges to develop policies in line with development goals and enhance the capabilities of government agencies, ensuring readiness to face future challenges and achieve the best results for the benefit of the country.

Assistant Undersecretary for Administrative Development Affairs at the CSC, Muhammad Al-Ahmad, told Kuwait News Agency (KUNA) that the workshop aims to clarify the developments in the job descriptions for roles held by employees or recent graduates in engineering and media specializations, and to clarify the tasks, duties, and relationships of these jobs with other roles to raise work efficiency and ensure benefit from national human resources.

Al-Ahmad added that the CSC has made great efforts to create new titles that serve all government agencies, indicating that the titles came after careful study with Kuwait University.

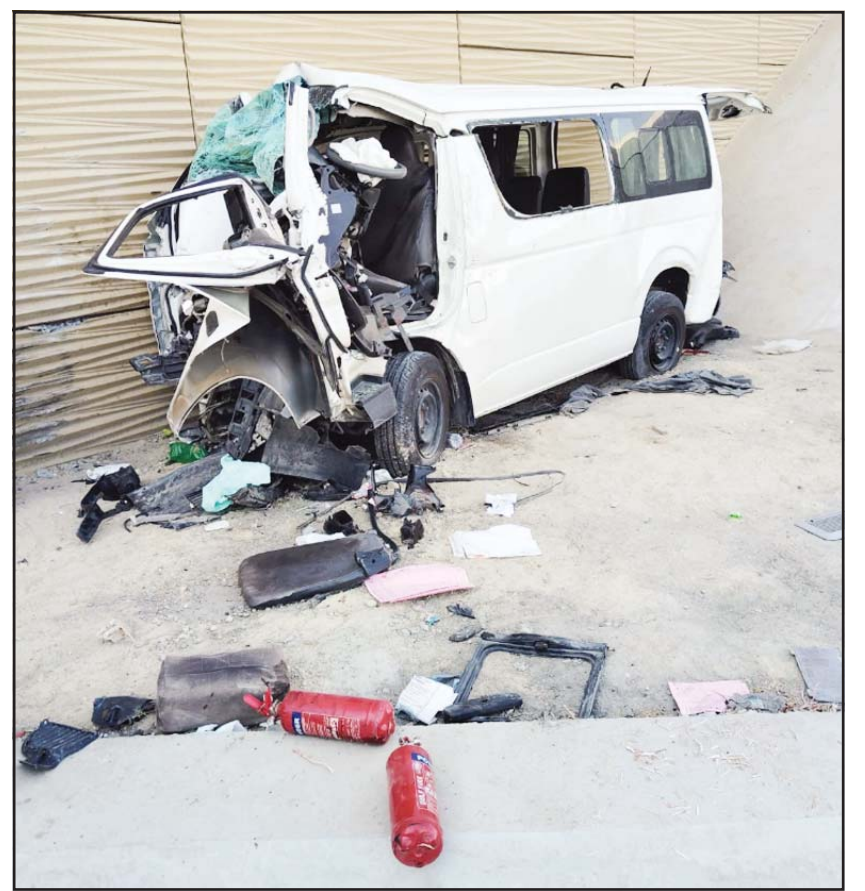
He stated that the new titles create additional opportunities for engineers and appoint them according to their qualifications in various departments to serve the country, indicating that the Commission, in addition to providing job opportunities, is keen on the integrity of nominations and the application of equal opportunities and justice in employment.

Acting Dean of the College of Engineering and Petroleum, Dr. Khaled Al-Hazaa, told KUNA that with the development of the country and the increase in the number of graduates in engineering and media professions, the need arose to create new titles, and accordingly, coordination and cooperation took place between the two sides.

Al-Hazaa added that Kuwait University seeks to qualify engineers and prepare them to serve employers in the country, and is keen to keep pace with the labor market and its developments, indicating that participation in the workshop demonstrates the importance of these jobs and specializations for the benefit of the country.



Dr. Al-Hazaa



The mini-bus is a total wreck after the collision.

6 Asian workers perish, 4 injured in accident on Seventh Ring Road

By Munaif Naif

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, July 9: A tragic collision occurred on the Seventh Ring Road, opposite the Jaber Al Ali area, resulting in the deaths of six people and injuries to four others. Among the deceased were four individuals of Indian nationality and two of Bangladeshi nationality. The four injured are all Indian nationals and were taken to the hospital for treatment.

According to a security source, the Ministry of Interior's operations room received a report about the accident, which involved a bus carrying workers and another vehicle. Emergency responders, including security personnel, ambulance teams, and general fire force personnel, rushed to the scene. Upon arrival, they confirmed the fatalities and transported the bodies to forensic medicine. The four injured were promptly taken to the hospital. An investigation into the accident has been initiated.

Sale money seized

Expatriate held with drugs

KUWAIT CITY, July 9: Security personnel in the Jahra Governorate have arrested an expatriate for possessing narcotic pills, money believed to be proceeds from sale of drugs, and a sharp tool, reports Al-Anba daily.

Prior to being handed over to the General Administration for Narcotics Control, the detainee faced charges related to evading security patrols and resisting arrest.

According to a security source, the incident unfolded during routine patrols by rescue teams across various areas of Jahra Governorate, particularly in the Al-Naseem area.

Upon suspicion, the driver of the vehicle when ordered to pull over, initially refused but was chased and forced to pull over.



KUNA photo

Kuwait's Chief of General Staff Bandar Al-Muzayan receives Head of Intelligence and Security at the Peninsula's Shield Force, Jaber Al-Marri.

Al-Marri, team visit Kuwait

Kuwait's Chief of General Staff Bandar Al-Muzayan received Head of Intelligence and Security at the Peninsula's

Shield Force, Jaber Al-Marri, and his accompanying delegation on occasion of his official visit to the country. (KUNA)

Municipal Council 'approves' measures to address warehouse shortage, infrastructure developments

Al-Saffarin Market plan advances, MoH's request denied

By Inaas Awadh

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, July 9: In swift response to a recent report by Al-Seyassah daily on food security concerns due to warehouse shortages, the Municipal Council has approved a study to provide sufficient storage land to meet rising demand, prompted by the escalating prices of warehouses. This decision was made during the second regular main session of the third session, chaired by Abdullah Al-Bahri.

The key decisions and approvals include:

Study on Storage Land -- The Council agreed to study and provide adequate storage land to address the shortage and rising warehouse prices.

East Sabah Al-Ahmad Project -- Approval to link this residential project to surrounding roads.

Fiber Optics Site: Allocation of a site in Subiya for a major fiber optics project.

Entertainment City Project -- Transfer of site allocation from the Amiri Diwan to the Public Investment Authority.

Commercial Activities in Investment Buildings -- Allowing the use of ground floors for licensed commercial activities and permitting basements for storage under necessary conditions, including the "food truck" vehicles.

The Municipal Council added, this is in addition to reallocating the Shagaya Renewable Energy Complex land from the Kuwait Institute for Scientific Research to the Ministry of Electricity, Water, and Renewable Energy; reallocation of the Zoo site in Al-Omariya to the Ministry of Finance for in-kind payment towards the Public Institution for Social Security's actuarial deficit, with conditions for resubmission if there are changes in usage or allocation.

Also included on the list are the development of Salmiya Boulevard Park by the Public Authority for Agriculture Affairs and Fish Resources; transfer of the Civil Defense site from Al-Dajeej to Jleeb Al-Shuyoukh and reallocation of project sites for the General Department of Emergency Patrols and the General Department of Information Systems in Al-Zahraa.

These measures aim to enhance infrastructure, address storage issues, and support various developmental projects across Kuwait.

The Municipal Council approved the request from the Kuwait Lawyers Association to extend the suspension of licenses for law offices in residential areas for one year, starting from June 30, to allow for adjustments.

They also approved the proposal from Al-Bahri to amend Article 10 of Ministerial Resolution No. 322/2023 regarding the zoning and subdivision of land for construction.

Under new business, the Council agreed to rename the diplomatic area in West Mishref, Block 7, to Diplomatic Enclave.

Additionally, the Council approved the Kuwaiti Insurance Federation's request to add new activities to the list of general and health-disturbing businesses, including traditional insurance, Takaful insurance, and all types of insurance.

The Council approved the proposal by Deputy Council President Khaled Al-Mutairi to add a clause to the building regulations, issued

by ministerial decision, regarding the specifications and standards for investment buildings within and outside Kuwait City.

This includes adding a new clause allowing existing buildings, according to Municipal Decree No. 30 of 1985 on building regulations, to continue utilizing the ground floor for licensed commercial activities until the building is demolished, based on four considerations, one of which permits property owners to use the first floor for allowed activities under this system.

Existing commercial licenses for the ground floor will be canceled if the owner wishes to use the first and second floors for permitted commercial activities.

The three requests approved under new business activity include providing sufficient storage land to meet demand, considering the rise in warehouse prices due to scarcity; licensing basements designated for storage in investment buildings with necessary conditions and addressing issues with unorganized food trucks affecting residential areas.

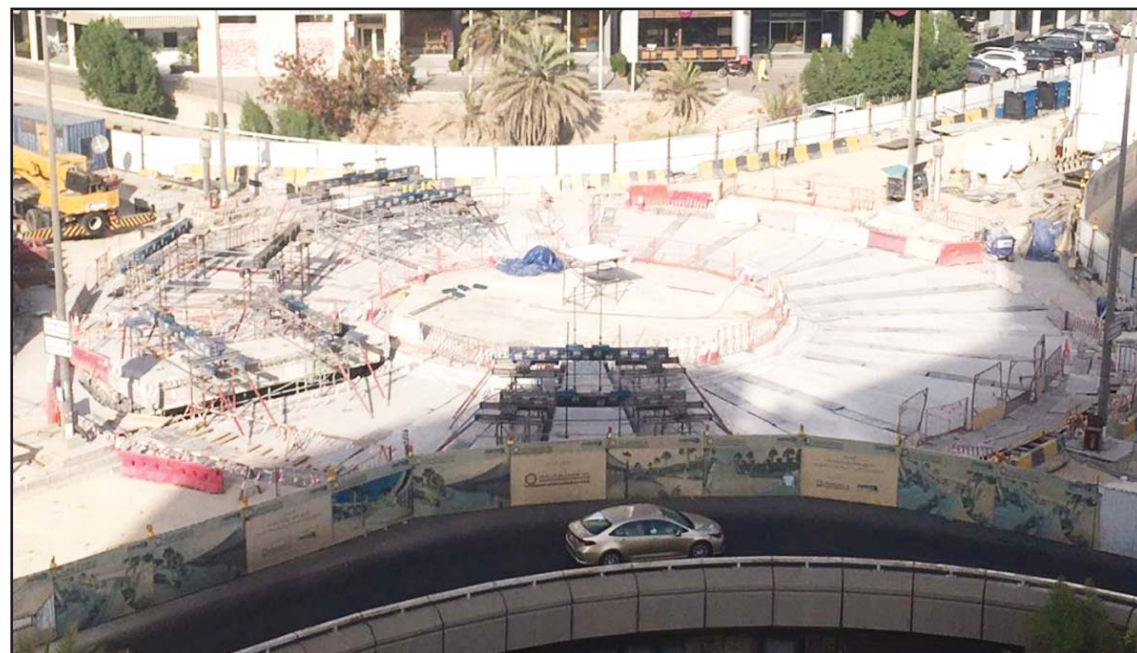
The Council also approved two proposals by member Rashifa Al-Shalfan, one for adopting an aerobic composting project (compost) and another for preserving the marine environment.

The key conditions include a joint timeline for regularly cleaning the sea of municipal solid waste such as plastics, fishing nets, wood, and other debris, identifying collection points for waste before transporting it to treatment or landfill sites by the Kuwait Municipality, increasing awareness signs, and coordinating with the Environmental Public Authority to enforce waste disposal regulations in the sea.

The Council did not approve the Ministry of Health's request to allocate land in Hawalli Governorate for establishing a specialized dental center.

The Municipal Council referred to the Executive Authority a proposal submitted by member Fahd Al-Abdul Jader to cancel the its previous decision that allowed comprehensive and specialized sports clubs, sports federations, and the Olympic Committee to invest in areas within their locations.

The matter will undergo further study, including consideration of recommendations from the Legal and Financial Committee.



Work in progress on Darwaza Al-Abdul Razzaq.

Darwaza Al-Abdul Razzaq project on schedule

The Ministry of Public Works has confirmed that maintenance work on the Darwaza Al-Abdul Razzaq project is progressing as planned and according to the established schedules, reports Al-Jarida daily.

Currently, the focus is on the lower part of the gate, where the project contractor is raising the roof and conducting necessary maintenance activities in accordance with the Ministry's specifications.

It is anticipated that sections of the gate will be opened soon, with the entire project slated for completion after all maintenance tasks are finished.

The Ministry emphasized that there is rigorous oversight from Dr. Noura Al-Mashaan, Minister of Public Works and Municipality, to ensure the timely completion of the project according to schedule.

The efforts of those involved in the maintenance of the Darwaza Abdul Al-Razzaq were commended, highlighting ongoing activities such as maintenance of the lower part, followed by roof installation and asphalt covering, culminating in the restoration of the gatehouse for public access.

Of the Al-Saffarin Market in Shuwaikh, the Council referred the letter from Minister Dr. Noura Al-Mashaan to the technical committee proposing its modification to a complex for productive crafts and small industries for the benefit of the National Fund for Small and Medium Enterprises.

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The matter will undergo further study, including consideration of recommendations from the Legal and Financial Committee.

Authority finds remaining period insufficient

KIA extends Abdali project timeline to 2026 amid committee meeting delays

KUWAIT CITY, July 9: The Kuwait Investment Authority (KIA) is moving forward with the General Warehouses and Northern Border Ports Company (Abdali) project, extending the preparatory phase by one year until March 31, 2026, due to delays in the founding committee meetings, reports Al-Qabas daily.

The project, long part of Kuwait's development plans, including the 2024-2025 fiscal year, aims to establish public warehouses and border crossings in Abdali, northern Kuwait.

Initially planned for completion by March 31, 2025, the extension was deemed necessary as the Authority found the remaining period insufficient for full preparation to commence implementation. The project's initial capital is expected to amount to 154 million dinars.

The establishment of the General Warehouses and Border Ports Company (Abdali) is mandated under Law No. 5 of 2008, focusing on developing warehouses and border crossings to serve both the local Kuwaiti market and as a gateway to Iraq. This initiative aims to meet growing demands for logistics services and support manufacturing industries.

By 2036, the Abdali project is projected to cover an area of 12.7 km², including 10 km² for light and medium industries, 3 km² for logistics tenants, and 1.4 km² for infrastructure and roads.

Authority to review distribution of plots

KUWAIT CITY, July 9: The Public Authority for Housing Welfare has announced that its Board of Directors will convene next week to review the process for distributing residential plots within the South Saad Al-Abdullah project, reports Al-Qabas daily.

The aim is to align this distribution with the interests of citizens who have pending housing applications.

The authority stated that details of the new distribution mechanism will be made public following the Board of Directors' meeting.

This information will be made public through various media channels and the official social media platforms of the authority.

Moreover, the PAHW will continue to accept allocation requests for project plots via the Sahel government application, prioritizing applicants based on their historical housing application status.

This move underscores the institution's commitment to addressing housing needs in accordance with established priorities and ensuring transparency in the allocation process.

Additional spaces will be allocated for workers' housing, offices, hotels, parking, and other necessary facilities.

PAFN inaugurates Ardiya office for issuing 'food truck' licenses

KUWAIT CITY, July 9: Public Authority for Food and Nutrition (PAFN) inaugurated an office in Ardiya for the issuance of licenses for food trucks. The office is located in the building of vehicles technical check in the Ministry of Interior, reports Al-Rai daily.

According to the Director of Farwaniya Inspection Department in PAFN Nawaf Al-Anzi, the launch of the office is part of the procedures adopted by PAFN to upgrade the performance and ease the completion of transactions for citizens and residents.

PAFN is coordinating with the Ministry of Interior to add the owners of water tankers and restaurant delivery vehicles to the list of beneficiaries of the offices.

The office is supplied with all the needs of the owners of food trucks who are seeking to obtain licenses.

Al-Anzi revealed that PAFN has addressed the administration of Grand Avenues to open an office there to serve the owners of commercial shops and facilitate their transactions.

He added that there are five vacancies at PAFN including head of departments in Jleeb Al-Shuyoukh, Al-Rai, Khaitan, and Firdous as well as head of samples department.



Workers under hot sun.

60 companies cited for 'noon work violations'

KUWAIT CITY, July 9: The Manpower Authority has released the results of their afternoon work team inspections conducted from June 1 to 30. According to the Authority, 60 sites were inspected, with a total of 68 workers found at sites violating the noon work ban, reports Al-Rai daily.

The report highlights that 60 companies were found to be in violation for the first time. Additionally, the Authority received 40 reports regarding the employment of workers during the prohibited noon hours.

Upon re-inspection, 50 companies were found to have met the necessary requirements and conditions, with no further violations recorded at these sites.



JULY

Room Promotion






Weekdays (Saturday - Wednesday)	
Queen Cabana (2 persons inclusive of breakfast) per night.	2 Bedroom Chalet (4 persons inclusive of breakfast) per night.
NOW	NOW
BHD 60.984 net	BHD 136.198 net
Weekends (Thursday & Friday)	
Queen Cabana (2 persons inclusive of breakfast) per night.	2 Bedroom Chalet (4 persons inclusive of breakfast) per night.
NOW	NOW
BHD 76.230 net	BHD 170.247 net

Promo period from 23rd June to 31st July 2024 Terms & conditions apply*

What's On

Bank detects new wave of fraud

KIB alerts public to rising online scams

KUWAIT CITY, July 9: Kuwait International Bank (KIB) has announced the detection of a new wave of online financial scam operations that rely on various digital communication platforms and target all user categories. The Bank reiterated its warning to customers to avoid falling victim to such schemes that expose their financial and personal data to theft. This step is part of KIB's ongoing support for the "Let's Be Aware" (Diraya) financial awareness campaign, launched by the Central Bank of Kuwait (CBK) and the Kuwait Banking Association (KBA) in cooperation with local banks. Additionally, the warning comes as part of KIB's comprehensive awareness program aimed at spreading financial and banking literacy among all segments of society.

In this regard, Mohammed Al-Sarraf, Assistant Manager – Anti-Fraud Unit at KIB, said: "At KIB, we continue to uncover various and increasingly diverse types of financial scam tactics, compelling us to intensify efforts to educate our customers and community members about various scam risks, proactive prevention, and counteractive measures." He added: "Throughout the year, we detect different scam tactics where perpetrators deliberately create new ways to access individuals' financial and personal data, targeting both customers and non-customers and stealing their money through suspicious and unauthorized means. Recently, two new methods were discovered, prompting us to develop and distribute specific awareness materials and content, including a series of tips for customers to protect them from falling victim to such scams, particularly through digital communication platforms, whose usage is increasing day by day."

Al-Sarraf called on all KIB customers to ignore unknown individuals who offer money in exchange for sharing personal payment links. He pointed out that the first scam tactic involves scammers claiming to be human resources (HR) recruiters on social media platforms like TikTok, Instagram, YouTube, and others, who deceive individuals with promises of easy and quick job opportunities with lucrative pay. These scammers request the victim's account details and send them payment links, entangling the victim in fraud schemes and enabling the scam-



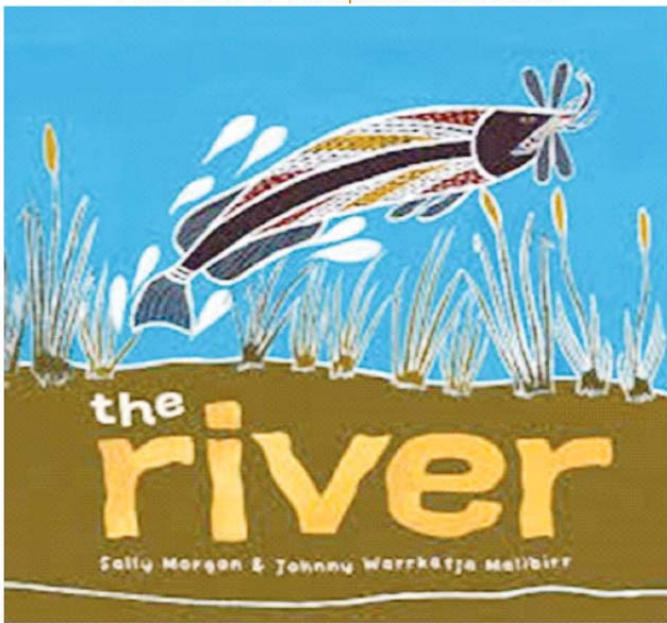
Mohammed Al-Sarraf

mers to steal their money.

The second tactic involves scammers asking customers to carry out simple tasks on their mobile phones, such as liking certain photos and writing comments, in exchange for small amounts of money or rewards valued at KD 3 or 4. They then ask the customer to share payment links worth up to KD 150 from their personal account to receive a reward ranging between KD 10 and 20, which is used for fraudulent financial collection operations. Additionally, scammers may ask customers to purchase illegal cryptocurrencies like Binance and KuCoin in exchange for a profit margin of up to 95%, transferring the cryptocurrency to them while keeping a 5-10% share, which leads to the customer becoming legally liable, he said.

It is worth noting that KIB spares no effort in raising awareness among customers and community members about the importance of maintaining their financial security by safeguarding their sensitive banking and confidential information at all times. To this end, the Bank continues to publish awareness content on all its social media pages, participate in relevant events and activities, and support financial awareness campaigns, especially the "Let's Be Aware" campaign. This reflects KIB's commitment to its comprehensive social responsibility that stems from its main slogan, "Bank for Life".

This week Australia is celebrating NAIDOC week, which shines a spotlight on the history, culture and traditions of its Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples – the oldest continual culture on the planet! That includes this special book about



Please join Ambassador Melissa Kelly for DAI Storytime at Amricani Saturday, 13 July at 3:30 DAI Children's Library Amricani Cultural Centre

No registration is required; just come and have fun.

DAI July poster

Company sailed to Alhala islet to raise awareness

Zain promotes marine environment protection

KUWAIT CITY, July 9: Zain, in collaboration with the Scientific Center, has organized a unique awareness event to promote marine environment protection.

The company sailed to Alhala islet in southern Kuwait to emphasize the importance of preserving the marine environment and raising awareness of sustainability goals.

During the event, teams from Zain and the Scientific Center engaged with seagoers on boats and jet skis, reminding them to avoid littering and disposing of harmful waste, especially near coral reefs.

This initiative also aimed to promote sustainability goals to mitigate the impacts of climate change.

Alhala is a small islet-like area in southern Kuwait that appears during low tide and submerges during high tide. It is a popular summer destination for the local seafaring community. Zain actively engaged with visitors at Alhala, distributing gifts and ice cream to help them cope with the hot weather and make the most out of the experience.

Environmental sustainability is a top priority for Zain. The company's social initiatives aim to foster a culture of sustainability within the community by promoting practices such as reducing energy consumption, recycling, using renewable energy sources, and preserving the marine environment.

Zain continues to support various



Zain shared summer vibes with seagoers.

environmental preservation efforts by partnering with organizations that share its vision, including the Scientific Center, part of the Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sciences

(KFAS).

The company also maintains strategic partnerships with volunteer groups like the Kuwait Dive Team, to which it has donated a fully equipped boat to

support marine protection operations in Kuwait. This partnership has resulted in the removal of thousands of tons of harmful waste and the protection of tens of thousands of sea creatures.

Bank promotes sustainable agriculture and youth empowerment

NBK supports Permaculture Training in Portugal with LOYAC

KUWAIT CITY, July 9: National Bank of Kuwait (NBK) reaffirms its commitment to sustainable agriculture and community development through its support of LOYAC's Permaculture Training Program in Portugal.

This initiative underscores NBK's strategic partnership with LOYAC aimed at promoting environmental sustainability and youth empowerment.

The Permaculture Training Program in Portugal offered participants a comprehensive understanding of permaculture principles and practices.

Permaculture, known for its integration of ecological principles and regenerative agriculture, equips participants with skills to design sustainable ecosystems that support biodiversity and enhance environmental health.

Throughout the 7-day course, which took place from 24th June to 2nd July, 10 volunteers engaged in theoretical sessions, hands-on workshops, and practical demonstrations.

They explored essential permaculture concepts such as observation, design principles, soil health, water management, and plant diversity.

The program culminated in a day of cultural exploration and sightseeing, enriching the participants' learning experience.

The Permaculture Training Program aligns with NBK's commitment to sustainable development and youth empowerment.

This initiative is part of NBK's broader efforts to support educational and environmental initiatives that empower Kuwaiti youth and foster sustainable practices.

NBK always strives to empower Kuwaiti youth to realize their potentials, build their personalities and motivates their ambition.

These agricultural trips with LOYAC comes in line with our



Green adventure group picture.

strategy to invest in our society.

Throughout the program, Loyacers had practical training in agriculture with the aim of achieving advanced skills in the field that will allow the trainee to find job

opportunities in existing and expected agricultural initiatives and projects.

LOYAC is a nonprofit organization that runs several programs for the youth to de-

velop their professional skills, enhance their personal growth and help them find their sense of purpose by extending themselves to others.

Hinge CEO advocates for workplace friendship and connection

Importance of workplace friendships for employee happiness

Twice each month, executives at the dating app company Hinge gather for a team meeting. But rather than dive into discussions about metrics or revenue, they begin by simply talking.

For the first 30 minutes of the two-hour meeting, these coworkers reveal hopes and anxieties - what they worry about, what they're grateful for, what they're feeling. Even at a company focused on connecting people, forging real relationships in the workplace takes effort, Hinge CEO Justin McLeod told an audience at the South by Southwest conference earlier this year. He was co-presenting at the event with Ann Shoket, whose initiative to combat workplace loneliness is called "10 Minutes to Togetherness."

As America navigates what Surgeon General Vivek Murthy described last year as a loneliness epidemic, employers and employees across the country are trying to address what for many people is a lack of real friendships at work.

The problem of loneliness has been bubbling for decades; Robert D. Putnam documented it in his groundbreaking book "Bowling Alone" nearly a quarter-century ago. Remote work has only intensified the problem, for extroverts and introverts alike, says leadership expert Michael Bungay Stanier, author of "How to Work with (Almost) Anyone."

"People have this desire to be seen and be heard," Bungay Stanier says, but on video calls, the group gets right to the business at hand rather than having the natural, informal interactions of a real room. It reduces people to "little heads in squares."

It's not easy to talk about this lack of friendship at work "because it feels like a shameful confession," Bungay Stanier says. But his clients are beginning to bring up the subject.

Awkward as it may be, these are conversations worth having, according to psychology professor Laurie Santos, creator of Yale University's well-

known class "The Science of Well Being."

In her own presentation at South by Southwest earlier this year, Santos cited research that showed workplace friendships and a sense of belonging are vital to employees' happiness -- and companies' success.

We assume that friendships at work are "a nice-to-have, not a need-to-have," she said.

But "maybe one of the reasons we're all so disengaged at work, maybe one of the reasons 'quiet quitting' seems so appealing, is that we're actively not investing in the thing that might matter the most for our happiness at work, which is our connection with other people," Santos said.

Some large companies began paying more attention to employee health long before the pandemic, often focusing on the physical: adding a gym to the office building or serving healthier food in the cafeteria.

Today, more employers "are not just checking boxes, but actually looking at ways to really enhance people's health and well-being," says Suzanne Heidelberger, who has led teams managing real-estate properties for global companies including American Express and Fidelity Investments. She focuses on bringing a hospitality mindset to corporate spaces.

For example, employers might:

- Rethink physical spaces with relationships in mind, she says. Some companies are adding staircases, both to help people get more steps and to encourage the "casual collisions" that can lead to good relationships. Some are trying to transform green rooftops - created to be environmentally friendly - into gathering spaces.

- Create groups and events to help employees find friends who share their interests. "It could even be something goofy, like an ice cream social for dog lovers, where we're going to teach you how to make healthy ice cream for your dog," Heidelberger says.

- Offer online gatherings as well. During the pandemic, American Express offered online cooking classes that helped employees feel connected and introduced them to coworkers.

Employees are also seeking answers on their own, notes executive coach Daniel Boscaljon, founder of the Healthy Relationship Academy, which helps organizations build better workplaces.

It's not always easy: As much as people crave relationships, he says, many lack strong interpersonal skills.

"When you meet somebody with good relationship skills, a lot of times it's like magic," Boscaljon says. "People open up, they'll start to talk, they'll feel comfortable. Then, sometimes, they'll have kind of a 'vulnerability hangover,' where they're like, 'I was too open there. What just happened?' ... People are so unused to it."

One key, he says, is to work on one's own well-being. "You can't have a work personality and a home personality," he says. "Who you are as a whole person shows up in every place that you're in."

Another strategy, according to Bungay Stanier, is to communicate with coworkers about how you can best work together before you dive into a project.

"We've all got our small little habits and preferences," he says. "And we assume what's normal for us is normal for everyone."

Raising issues beforehand helps you "avoid making small rips in the fabric of a relationship" that keep people from becoming friends, Bungay Stanier says.

Those inevitable rips are also worth discussing. "The relationships that thrive are ones that get repaired," he says.

More than anything, remember the importance of everyday greetings at work - even if they make you a bit uncomfortable. A simple hello, Bungay Stanier says, could be the beginning of the end of loneliness. (AP)

Paramount and Skydance merger ends family reign

Entertainment

NEW YORK, July 9, (AP): The entertainment giant Paramount will merge with Skydance, closing out a decades-long run by the Redstone family in Hollywood and injecting desperately needed cash into a legacy studio that has struggled to adapt to a shifting entertainment landscape.

It also signals the rise of a new power player, David Ellison, the founder of Skydance and son of billionaire Larry Ellison, the founder of the software company Oracle.

Shari Redstone's National Amusements has owned more than three-quarters of Paramount's Class A voting shares through the estate of her late father, Sumner Redstone. She had battled to maintain control of the company that owns CBS, which is behind blockbuster films such as "Top Gun" and "The Godfather."

Just weeks after turning down a similar agreement with Skydance, however, Redstone agreed to a deal on terms that had not changed much.

"Given the changes in the industry, we want to fortify Paramount for the future while ensuring that content remains king," said Redstone, who is chair of Paramount Global.

The new combined company is valued at around \$28 billion. In connection with the proposed transaction, which is expected to close in September 2025 pending regulatory approval, a consortium led by the Ellison family and RedBird Capital will be investing \$8 billion.

Skydance, based in Santa Monica, California, has helped produce some major Paramount hits in recent years, including Tom Cruise films like "Top Gun: Maverick" and installments of the "Mission Impos-

sible" series.

Skydance was founded in 2010 by David Ellison and it quickly formed a production partnership with Paramount that same year. If the deal is approved, Ellison will become chairman and chief executive officer of what's being called New Paramount.

Ellison outlined the vision for New Paramount on a conference call about the transaction Monday. In addition to doubling down on core competencies, notably with a "creative first" approach, he stressed that the company needs to transition into a "tech hybrid" to stay competitive in today's evolving media landscape.

Technology

"You've watched some incredibly powerful technology companies move into the ... media space and do so very successfully," Ellison said. He added that it was "essential" for New Paramount to chart a similar course going forward.

That includes plans to "rebuild" the Paramount+ streaming service, Ellison noted - pointing to wider goals to expand direct-to-consumer business, such as increasing engagement time on the platform and reducing user churn. He also said that the company aims to transition to more cloud-based production and continue the use of generative artificial intelligence to boost efficiency.

Executives also outlined further restructuring plans for New Paramount on Monday's conference call, with chairman of RedBird Sports and Media Jeff Shell noting that they had identified some \$2 billion in cost efficiencies and synergies that they'll "attempt to deliver pretty

rapidly."

Shell and others addressed the declining growth of linear TV. Flagship linear brands will continue to represent a big chunk of the company's operations, but learning how to run this portion of business differently will be key, he said.

The on-again, off-again merger arrives at tumultuous time for Paramount, which has struggled to find its footing for years and its cable business has been hemorrhaging. In an annual shareholder meeting in early June, the company also laid out a restructuring plan that included major cost cuts.

Leadership at Paramount was also volatile earlier this year after its CEO Bob Bakish, following a number of disputes with Redstone, was replaced with an "office of the C.E.O." run by three executives. Four company directors were also replaced.

Paramount is one of Hollywood's oldest studios, dating back its founding in 1914 as a distributor. Throughout its rich history, Paramount has had a hand in releasing films - from "Sunset Boulevard" and "The Godfather," to "Raiders of the Lost Ark" and "Titanic."

The studio also distributed several early Marvel Cinematic Universe films, including "Iron Man" and "Thor," before the Disney acquisition. In addition to "Mission: Impossible" and "Top Gun," Paramount's current franchises include "Transformers," "Star Trek" and "Jackass."

While Paramount has not topped the annual domestic box office charts for over a decade, the wild box office success of "Top Gun: Maverick" in 2022 (nearly \$1.5 billion worldwide) was an important boon to both movie theaters and the industry's pandemic recovery.

Variety



This image released by Sony Pictures shows Will Smith in 'Bad Boys: Ride or Die.' 'Bad Boys: Ride or Die' is currently showing in Kuwaiti cinemas. (AP)

Music

'Ultimate Collection' a must-have for fans

Is Lennon's new 'Mind Games' too much?

LOS ANGELES, July 9, (AP): The new remixed and expanded "Mind Games: The Ultimate Collection" is for those John Lennon fans who really, really love his inconsistent 1973 record of the same name.

The problem is, many Lennon fans would rank the original "Mind Games" fourth or fifth among his most beloved records. Not that the fourth-best John Lennon album is bad or anything, it's just that "Mind Games" has to have a special place in your heart to make the new "Ultimate Collection" worth it, which is available in two or six-disc editions.

Most Lennon fans will be more-than satisfied with the two-disc version that offers the original album remastered plus a disc of outtakes.

And for those rare few who may pick "Mind Games" over, say, "Imagine" or "Plastic Ono Band" as their favorite Lennon album, there's the "Super Deluxe Edition" that was limited to just 1,100 copies for a cool \$1,350. It includes extras such as a hologram-engraved EP and bespoke I-Ching coins.

Thinking about buying that one? Too late, it's long sold out.

But for the rest of us, there are the more economical six- or two-disc collections. The six-disc version has all of the music included on the two-disc version, with additional CDs offering listeners multiple ways to experience "Mind Games," including an audio documentary and an expansive book that goes deep into the songs and what was happening in Lennon's life and the world at this time.

There's the original recording remixed "from the ground up" by Lennon's son, Sean Ono Lennon dubbed "The Ultimate Mixes." "The Elemental Mixes" presents the songs stripped down from post-production enhancements, but with Lennon's voice at the forefront.

The best disc of the bunch is the "Raw Studio Mixes" which delivers "Mind Games" as it was recorded in the studio before overdubs and other post-production effects. This one, more than any of the others, really puts the listener on the studio floor with Lennon and the other musicians.

Disc three, titled "The Elements Mixes," not to be

confused with "The Elemental Mixes," goes in the opposite direction and removes Lennon's vocals all together. That's a bold move, to put it kindly, that will likely become the least played one in this set for most.

"The Evolution Documentary" delivers just what it promises - mini-audio documentaries showing how each song evolved. That's kind of cool, especially for those who like to hear how the songs changed during recording without listening to every single take. The studio banter from Lennon and Yoko Ono is a fun bonus.

Release

Rounding out the set on disc six, or disc two of the slimmed down release, are, of course, the outtakes. Whew.

All of it may have the more casual fan throwing their hands in the air and shouting the Lennon lyric, "Gimme some truth!"

It's unlikely that anyone listening to all five-plus hours of "The Ultimate Collection" will be shouting "Gimme more 'Mind Games'!"

Swizz Beatz and Timbaland are bringing the "Verzuz" series back with a new major platform for viewers to watch musicians face off in a song-against-song battle.

The legendary producers announced Wednesday that Verzuz cemented an exclusive partnership for independent distribution with the social media site X.

Swizz Beatz said he's looking forward to the new chapter for Verzuz, which became popular during the coronavirus pandemic.

"Not only are we excited to have Verzuz on X, we're excited to help X build the biggest entertainment company in the world," he said in statement before he thanked several X executives including owner Elon Musk for believing in their vision. "We can't wait to get back to work."

Both companies agreed on a "mutually beneficial alliance" where Swizz Beatz and Timbaland maintain full ownership and creative control, while X receives exclusive distribution rights.

Timbaland said he's thrilled to expand their viewership through X, which has more than 300 millions monthly active users. Viewers will be able to watch "Verzuz" for free.

"Our goal has always been to bring Verzuz to the world which we can now do bigger than ever," he said.

"Verzuz" came to life in 2020 after a friendly competition between Swizz Beatz and Timbaland on social media started off to entertain homebound fans during the pandemic. But their platform eventually evolved into a place where some of music's biggest stars competed against each other in the same fashion.

The series had grown from a novel event to bridging music's past and present. It began on Instagram Live to having in-person battles in front of an audience.

Some of the most epic battles have included John Legend vs. Alicia Keys, Erykah Badu vs. Jill Scott, Gladys Knight vs. Patti LaBelle, Gucci Mane vs. Jeezy, Brandy vs. Monica and Snoop Dogg vs. DMX. An April battle between Babyface vs. Teddy Riley ended abruptly due to audio issues but was completed another night.

The series was acquired by Triller in 2021, but Swizz Beatz and Timbaland sued the social video platform company for breach of contract. The producers settled with Triller in 2022.

"Our platform stands at the forefront of innovation, and Verzuz defines the essence of an innovative content experience," said X CEO Linda Yaccarino. "As we continue to work with the most exciting voices to bring premium content to X, there is no better fit than this series."

Also:

LOS ANGELES: Last year, country musician Megan Moroney's debut album, "Lucky," was named one of AP's top albums for 2023, for its sharp writing and congenial delivery - a Gen Z songwriter I previously described as possessing Taylor Swift-level acuity. Her pen continues to be her weapon on "Am I Okay?" a heartbreak-filled rollercoaster ride of a sophomore album, filled with quotable kiss-offs and evolved compositions. It releases Friday.

LOS ANGELES: Jason Momoa and Lisa Bonet are officially divorced.

A Los Angeles County judge's dissolution of the marriage of the two actors, who had already been separated for years, took effect Tuesday.

Bonet and Momoa were married for more than seven years and were a couple for 12 years before they wed.

Bonet, whose legal name is Lilakoi Moon, filed for divorce in January. The documents listed the couple's separation date as October 7, 2020, more than three years earlier. They made their separation public in 2002.

The divorce went as quickly legally possible and came without dispute. Neither person will get financial support, they have agreed on how to split their assets, and they will have joint custody of their 16-year-old daughter and 15-year-old son.

Momoa, 44, is best known for his roles in the "Aquaman" movies and on "Game of Thrones." Bonet, 56, was a star of "The Cosby Show," its spinoff "A Different World," and the films "High Fidelity" and "Enemy of the State."

It was the first marriage for Momoa, who has revealed on social media that he is dating "Hit Man" and "Father of the Bride" actor Adria Arjona. (AP)

MILAN: The Brera Modern will be inaugurated in the fall 52 years and 39 Italian governments after it was first envisioned, officials announced Monday.

The new museum just a few doors from Milan's Brera Painting Gallery will house more than 100 contemporary art works that belong to Brera's collection that have mostly been relegated to storage.

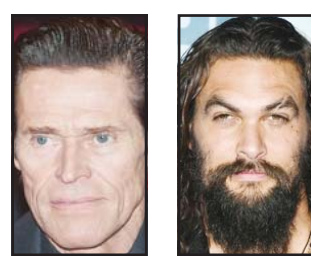
The project has been plagued by numerous delays, most recently the discovery of asbestos and problems with the conditioning system.

The new museum is set to officially open on Dec. 7, when the eyes of the European cultural elite are already on Milan for the annual gala premiere of La Scala's opera season.

The honor falls to the new Brera director, Angelo Crespi, who took over in February as part of moves by the far-right-led government to put Italians at the head of key

cultural institutions. His predecessor, British Canadian historian James Bradburne who had pushed to finish the Modern, had completed two four-year terms and was ineligible to continue.

The Brera, established in 1809, contains masterpieces by Canova, Caravaggio, Raphael and Hayez. The new museum in the nearby



Dafoe

Momoa

Palazzo Citterio has already drawn 30,000 visitors over three weeks for a temporary exhibition. Concerts are planned in the outdoor garden this summer.

The Brera, with the addition of the Modern, is expected to reach 500,000 visitors this year, up from 466,709 last year and in continual increase from pre-pandemic highs

of around 410,000. (AP)

ROME: Actor Willem Dafoe, a frequent red-carpet visitor to the Venice Film Festival, was named artistic director Monday of the Venice Biennale's theater department.

Dafoe, who lives near Rome with his Italian wife, said the ap-

pointment came as a surprise but that he was "born in the theater" and trained initially as a stage actor.

In a statement released by the Biennale, he said the program of his two-year 2025-2026 term would follow his own development, "a sort of exploration of the essence of the body." (AP)

Features

ARABIC TIMES

WEDNESDAY, JULY 10, 2024

People & Places

People

Daughter reveals

Sexual abuse claims rock Munro's legacy

TORONTO, July 9, (AP): The daughter of the late Nobel laureate Alice Munro, wrote in an essay published in the Toronto Star that her mother remained with him because she "loved him too much" to leave.

Munro, who died in May at age 92, was one of the world's most celebrated and beloved writers and a source of ongoing pride for her native Canada, where a reckoning with the author's legacy is now concentrated.

Andrea Robin Skinner, Munro's daughter with her first husband, James Munro, wrote in an essay published in the Toronto Star that Fremlin sexually assaulted her in the mid-1970s - when she was 9 - and continued to harass and abuse her until she became a teenager. Skinner, whose essay ran Sunday, wrote that in her 20s she told the author about Fremlin's abuse. Munro left her husband for a time, but eventually returned and was still with him when he died, in 2013.

"She reacted exactly as I had feared she would, as if she had learned of an infidelity," Skinner wrote. "She said that she had been 'told too late,' she loved him too much, and that our misogynistic culture was to blame if I expected her to deny her own needs, sacrifice for her children and make up for the failings of men. She was adamant that whatever had happened was between me and my stepfather. It had nothing to do with her."

Munro

Skinner wrote that she became estranged from her mother and siblings as a result. Shortly after The New York Times magazine published a 2004 story in which Munro gushed about Fremlin, Skinner decided to contact Ontario Provincial Police and provided them letters in which Fremlin had admitted abusing her, the Toronto Star reported in a companion news story also published Sunday. At 80, he pleaded guilty to one count of indecent assault and received a suspended sentence - one that was not widely reported for nearly two decades.

The news stunned and grieved the literary world, although some readers - and Skinner herself - cited parallels in the author's work, for which she was awarded the Nobel in 2013 and dubbed a "master of the contemporary short story" by the judges. Author Margaret Atwood, a fellow Canadian and longtime friend of Munro's, told the Star that she didn't know about Skinner's story until after Fremlin had died and Munro was struggling with dementia.

"The kids probably wondered why she stayed with him," Atwood said. "All I can add is that she wasn't very adept at real (practical) life. She wasn't very interested in cooking or gardening or any of that. She found it an interruption, I expect, rather than a therapy, as some do."

The owners of Munro's Books, a prominent independent store in Victoria, British Columbia, issued a statement Monday expressing support for Skinner and calling her account "heartbreaking." The author co-founded the store in 1963 with first husband and Skinner's father, James Munro, who continued to run the store after their 1971 divorce. Two years before his 2016 death, he turned the store over to four staff members.

"Along with so many readers and writers, we will need time to absorb this news and the impact it may have on the legacy of Alice Munro, whose work and ties to the store we have previously celebrated," the store said in a statement issued Monday.

In Skinner's account, she wrote that she had told her father - with whom she lived for most of the year - of the initial assault, but he told her not to tell her mother and continued to send her to Munro and Fremlin for summers.

"The current store owners have become part of our family's healing, and are modelling a truly positive response to disclosures like Andrea's," reads a statement from Skinner and other family members posted on the store's website. "We wholly support the owners and staff of Munro's Books as they chart a new future."

Although Skinner spent many years estranged from her siblings, they have since reconciled and her family spoke with the Toronto Star in support of Skinner. While they felt the world needed to know of the coverup and that sexual violence must be talked about, the Star reported, Munro's children believe her acclaimed literary reputation is deserved.

Imagination

"I still feel she's such a great writer - she deserved the Nobel," daughter Sheila Munro told the Star. "She devoted her life to it, and she manifested this amazing talent and imagination. And that's all, really, she wanted to do in her life. Get those stories down and get them out."

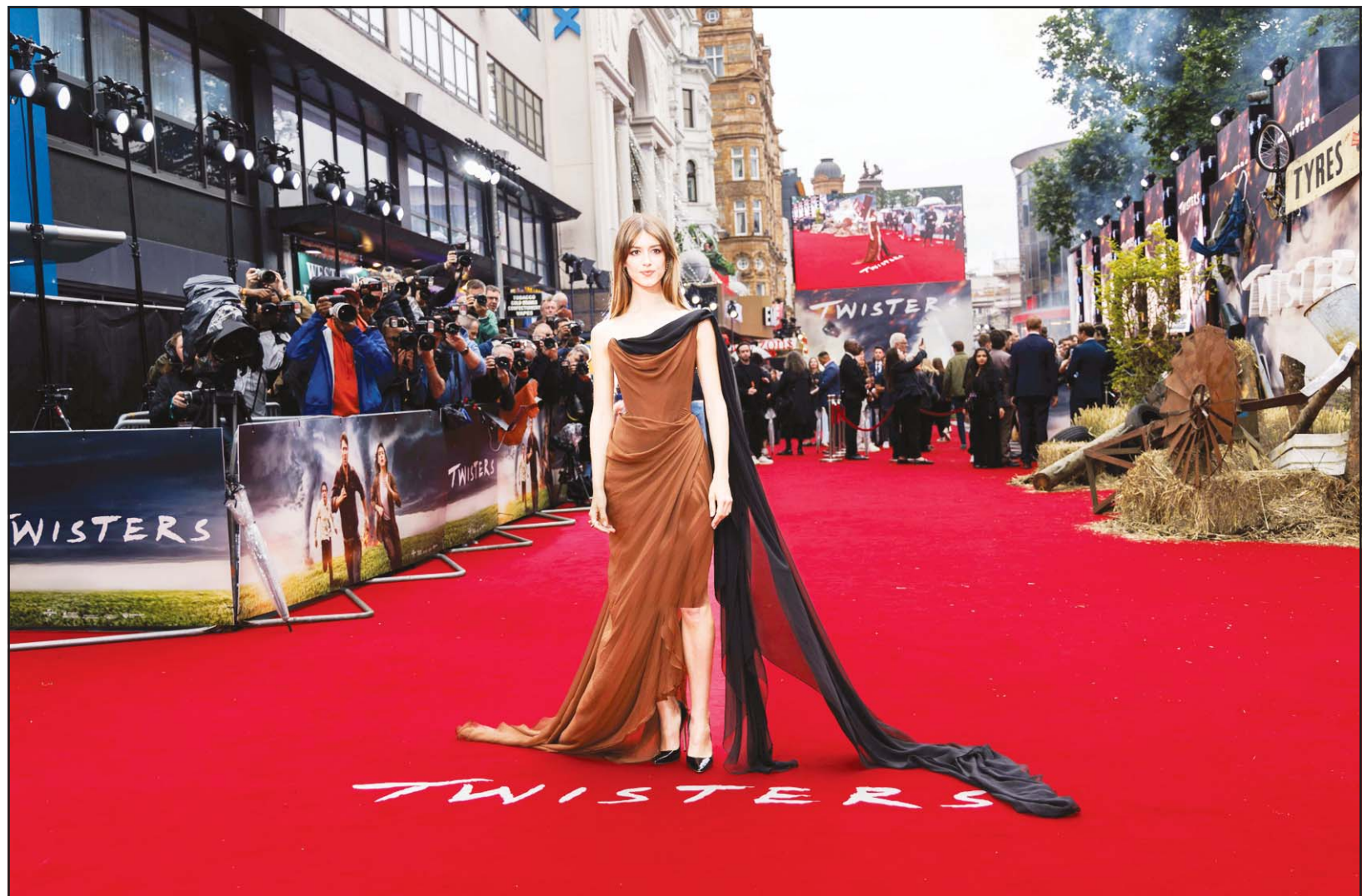
Sheila Munro, also an author, wrote of her mother in the 2002 book "Lives of Mothers & Daughters: Growing Up With Alice Munro," a project suggested by Alice Munro. Sheila makes no reference to the abuse of Skinner, but does observe that her mother often drew upon her private life and that she struggled to separate Munro's fiction "from the reality of what actually happened."

Munro biographer Robert Thacker noted to The Associated Press that such Munro stories as "Silence" and "Runaway" center on estranged children. In "Vandals," a woman grieves over the loss of a former boyfriend, Ladner, an unstable war veteran who we learn assaulted his young neighbor, Liza.

"When Ladner grabbed Liza and squashed himself against her, she had a sense of deep danger inside him, a mechanical sputtering," Munro wrote, "as if he would exhaust himself in one jab of light, and nothing would be left of but black smoke and burnt smells and frizzled wires."

Thacker, whose "Alice Munro: Writing Her Lives" came out in 2005 - the same year Fremlin was convicted - told the AP that he had long known of Fremlin's abuse but omitted it from his book because it was "scholarly analysis of her career."

"I expected there to be repercussions one day," said Thacker, who added that he even spoke to the author about it. "I don't want to get into details but it wrecked the family. It was devastating in lots of ways. And it was something that she spoke deeply on."



Daisy Edgar-Jones poses for photographers upon arrival at the premiere of the film 'Twisters' in London on Monday, July 8. (AP)

People

Actor could face 18 months prison

Jury selection begins in Baldwin trial

SANTA FE, N.M., July 9, (AP): Alec Baldwin's trial in the shooting of a cinematographer is set to begin Tuesday with the selection of jurors who will be tasked with deciding whether the actor is guilty of involuntary manslaughter.

Getting chosen to serve in a trial of such a major star accused of such a major crime would be unusual even in Los Angeles or Baldwin's hometown of New York. But it will be essentially an unheard-of experience for those who are picked as jurors in Santa Fe, New Mexico, though the state has increasingly become a hub of Hollywood production in recent years.

Baldwin, 66, could get up to 18 months in prison if jurors unanimously decide he committed the felony when a revolver he was pointing at cinematographer Halyna Hutchins went off, killing her and wounding director Joel Souza during a rehearsal for the Western film "Rust" in October 2021 at Bonanza Creek Ranch, some 18 miles (29 kilometers) from where the trial is being held.

Trigger

Baldwin has said the gun fired accidentally after he followed instructions to point it toward Hutchins, who was behind the camera. Unaware the gun contained a live round, Baldwin said he pulled back the hammer - not the trigger - and it fired.

The star of "30 Rock" and "The Hunt for Red October" made his first appearance in the courtroom on Monday, when Judge Mary Marlowe Sommer, in a significant victory for the defense, ruled at a pretrial hearing that Baldwin's role as a co-producer on "Rust" isn't relevant to the trial.

The judge has said that the special circumstances of a celebrity trial shouldn't keep jury selection from moving quickly, and that opening statements should begin Wednesday.

"I'm not worried about being able to pick a jury in one day," Marlowe Sommer said. "I think we're going to pick a jury by the afternoon." Special prosecutor Kari Morrissey, however, was dubious that Baldwin's lawyers, with whom she has clashed in the run-up to the trial, would make that possible.

"It is my guess that with this group of defense attorneys, that's not gonna happen," Morrissey said at the hearing.

Baldwin attorney Alex Spiro replied, "I've never not picked a jury in one day. I can't imagine that this would be the first time." Dozens of prospective jurors will be brought into the courtroom for questioning Tuesday morning. Cameras that will carry the rest of the proceedings will be turned off to protect their privacy. Jurors are expected to get the case after a nine-day trial.

Attorneys will be able to request they be dismissed for conflicts or other causes. The defense under state law can dismiss up to five jurors without giving a reason, the prosecution three. More challenges will be allowed when four expected alternates are chosen.

Before Marlowe Sommer's ruling Monday, prosecutors had hoped to highlight Baldwin's safety obligations

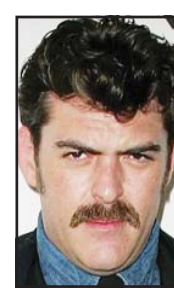
terms and was ineligible to continue. (AP)

BAGHDAD: Iraq's Ministry of Culture, Tourism, and Antiquities announced on Monday the successful repatriation of 181 smuggled artifacts from the United States and other countries.

The recovered items include a bronze figurine and eight metal boxes containing ancient skeletons, the ministry said in a statement. These artifacts were originally



Al Sudani



Johnstone

smuggled from the Nimrud archaeological site in Nineveh province to Los Angeles in the 1990s.

The ministry highlighted the role played by Iraqi Prime Minister Mohammed Shia' Al Sudani's visit to the United States in April for securing the return of these artifacts. The ministry also announced the return of many artifacts of different eras, which had been smuggled to countries such as Jordan, Norway, Germany, and Britain. (Xinhua)



Alec Baldwin listens to testimony during a pretrial hearing in Santa Fe, N.M., on Monday, July 8. Baldwin is facing a single charge of involuntary manslaughter in the death of a cinematographer. (AP)

Variety

WASHINGTON: An actor who played a street-brawling newsman in the movie "Anchorman: The Legend of Ron Burgundy" and a pizzeria owner in the television series "Bob's Burgers" pleaded guilty on Monday to interfering with police officers trying to protect the US Capitol from a mob's attack.

Jay Johnston, 55, of Los Angeles, faces a maximum sentence of five years in prison after pleading guilty to civil disorder, a felony. US District Judge Carl Nichols is scheduled to sentence Johnston on Oct. 7.

The estimated sentencing guidelines for Johnston recommend a prison term ranging from eight to 14 months, but the judge isn't bound by that term of his plea agreement with prosecutors.

Johnston's attorney, Stanley Woodward, told his client not to comment to reporters as they left the courtroom.

Johnston, who was arrested last June, is one of more than 1,400 people charged with federal crimes stemming from the Jan. 6, 2021, attack on the US Capitol.

Video footage captured Johnston pushing against police and helping rioters who attacked officers guarding an entrance to the Capitol in a tunnel on the Lower West Terrace, according to an FBI agent's affidavit. Johnston held a stolen police shield over his head and passed it to other rioters during the attack on Jan. 6, 2021, the affidavit says. Johnston "was close to the entrance to the tunnel, turned back and signaled for other rioters to come towards the entrance," the agent wrote.

Johnston was the voice of the character Jimmy Pesto on Fox's "Bob's Burgers." The Daily Beast reported in 2021 that Johnston was "banned" from the animated show after the Capitol attack.

Johnston appeared on "Mr. Show with Bob and David," an HBO sketch comedy series that starred Bob Odenkirk and David Cross. His credits also include small parts on the television show "Arrested Development" and in the movie "Anchorman," starring Will Ferrell. (AP)

MILAN: The Brera Modern will be inaugurated in the fall 52 years and 39 Italian governments after it was first envisioned, officials announced Monday.

The new museum just a few doors from Milan's Brera Painting Gallery will house more than 100 contemporary art works that belong to Brera's collection that have mostly been relegated to storage. The project has been plagued by numerous delays, most recently the discovery of asbestos and problems with the conditioning system.

The new museum is set to officially open on Dec. 7, when the eyes of the European cultural elite are already on Milan for the annual gala premiere of La Scala's opera season.

The honor falls to the new Brera director, Angelo Crespi, who took over in February as part of moves by the far-right government to put Italians at the head of key cultural institutions. His predecessor, British Canadian historian James Bradburne who had pushed to finish the Modern, had completed two four-year

Chinese researchers design wearable for instant health monitoring

New wristwatch analyzes sweat for real-time health insights

HEFEI, July 9, (Xinhua): Smart wearable devices have evolved with advanced features for a holistic health and fitness experience, monitoring heart rate, tracking step count, calculating calorie intake, and now notifying users when they need electrolyte drinks during exercise with just a flick of the wrist.

Scientists from the Hefei Institutes of Physical Science (HIPS) under the Chinese Academy of Sciences have designed a wristwatch that can measure essential chemicals in body sweat. Their findings were published in the journal ACS Nano.

Sweat contains electrolytes, primarily potassium, sodium and calcium. The balance of these essential minerals is crucial for supporting muscle function, nerve health and regular heart-beat, said Yang Meng, an associate professor at the institute and one of the authors of the study.

Electrolytes

Sweating leads to the loss of both water and electrolytes. "Excessive loss of potassium, for instance, can impact

Aerobic exercise alleviates aging skeletal muscle fibrosis

BEIJING, July 9, (Xinhua): Walking in parks or along sidewalks in Chinese cities, it is common to encounter runners or joggers. In addition to promoting physical fitness, they could also be alleviating aging skeletal muscle fibrosis through aerobic exercise.

According to a recent research article published in the Journal of Cachexia, Sarcopenia and Muscle, Chinese researchers have disclosed that aerobic exercise effectively reverses decline in

heart function and neuromuscular activity. Similarly, the depletion of sodium ions may result in symptoms such as fatigue, dizziness and muscle cramps," Yang said, explaining the importance of maintaining a balanced electrolyte level.

The wristwatch designed by Yang's

endurance capacity and mitigates muscle atrophy in aged mice.

Aging negatively impacts tissue repair, particularly in skeletal muscle, where the regenerative capacity of muscle stem cells (MuSCs) diminishes with age. Although aerobic exercise is known to attenuate skeletal muscle atrophy, its specific impact on the regenerative and repair capacity of MuSCs remained unclear.

The researchers from the South Chi-

na Normal University exposed mice to moderate-intensity continuous training (MICT) from either nine months to 25 months or 20 months to 25 months, and evaluated the effects of aerobic exercise on MuSCs function and muscle regeneration.

The results showed that the MICT initiated at both nine and 20 months led to a marked increase in running duration and distance, according to the study. Additionally, the MICT resulted

in increased skeletal muscle weight and an enhanced cross-sectional area.

Notably, the secretion of connective tissue growth factor increases in the MuSCs aging process, which not only impairs the regenerative capacity of MuSCs, but also leads to skeletal muscle fibrosis.

Aerobic exercise has shown the capacity to lower this harmful effect, and thus it could be useful to promote it among the elderly.

Although they are not the first to invent sweat sensors, the Chinese researchers emphasized the wristwatch's solid interface for long-term reliability.

"It surpasses the stability of many other sensors by consistently monitoring the three ions in human sweat for over six months," said lead researcher

Huang Xingjiu, of the Institute of Solid State Physics under the HIPS.

Since endurance athletes use electrolyte drinks to counteract the loss of energy and replenish it, researchers in the study measured the sweat composition of these chemicals in athletes running long distances on a

treadmill.

The accuracy reached approximately 95 percent when compared to the standard detection method.

"When there are electrolyte abnormalities, the device will remind users to supplement them promptly," said the co-first author Cai Xin. "The aim of developing this device is to provide warnings for electrolyte loss and reduce exercise-related injury risks."

For ordinary people, the conventional electrolyte test requires samples of body fluids taken in hospitals. The new wristwatch has the potential to serve as an alternative to needles for measuring electrolytes.

In addition to offering a non-invasive test, the device allows for real-time monitoring of electrolytes, "which is undoubtedly a significant advancement in human health monitoring," said Xu Han, a physician at the Central Hospital of Bengbu, who was not involved in the study. The next goal of the research team is to design various sensitive membrane materials for monitoring more physiological information, such as glucose and chloride ions.

Work friends hard to find

Steps for combatting workplace loneliness

NEW YORK, July 9, (AP): Twice each month, executives at the dating app company Hinge gather for a team meeting. But rather than dive into discussions about metrics or revenue, they begin by simply talking.

For the first 30 minutes of the two-hour meeting, these coworkers reveal hopes and anxieties - what they worry about, what they're grateful for, what they're feeling. Even at a company focused on connecting people, forging real relationships in the workplace takes effort, Hinge CEO Justin McLeod told an audience at the South by Southwest conference earlier this year. He was co-presenting at the event with Ann Shoket, whose initiative to combat workplace loneliness is called "10 Minutes to Togetherness."

As America navigates what Surgeon General Vivek Murthy described last year as a loneliness epidemic, employers and employees across the country are trying to address what for many people is a lack of real friendships at work.

Remote

The problem of loneliness has been bubbling for decades; Robert D. Putnam documented it in his groundbreaking book "Bowling Alone" nearly a quarter-century ago. Remote work has only intensified the problem, for extroverts and introverts alike, says leadership expert Michael Bungay Stanier, author of "How to Work with (Almost) Anyone."

"People have this desire to be seen and be heard," Bungay Stanier says, but on video calls, the group gets right to the business at hand rather than having the natural, informal interactions of a real room. It reduces people to "little heads in squares."

It's not easy to talk about this lack of friendship at work "because it feels like a shameful confession," Bungay Stanier says. But his clients are beginning to bring up the subject.

Awkward as it may be, these are conversations worth having, according to psychology professor Laurie Santos, creator of Yale University's well-known class "The Science of Well-Being."

In her own presentation at South by Southwest earlier this year, Santos cited research that showed workplace friendships and a sense of belonging

are vital to employees' happiness -- and companies' success.

We assume that friendships at work are "a nice-to-have, not a need-to-have," she said.

But "maybe one of the reasons we're all so disengaged at work, maybe one of the reasons 'quiet quitting' seems so appealing, is that we're actively not investing in the thing that might matter the most for our happiness at work, which is our connection with other people," Santos said.

Attention

Some large companies began paying more attention to employee health long before the pandemic, often focusing on the physical: adding a gym to the office building or serving healthier food in the cafeteria.

Today, more employers "are not just checking boxes, but actually looking at ways to really enhance people's health and well-being," says Suzanne Heidelberg, who has led teams managing real-estate problems for global companies including American Express and Fidelity Investments. She focuses on bringing a hospitality mindset to corporate spaces.

For example, employers might:

- Rethink physical spaces with relationships in mind, she says. Some companies are adding staircases, both to help people get more steps and to encourage the "casual collisions" that can lead to good relationships. Some are trying to transform green rooftops - created to be environmentally friendly - into gathering spaces.

- Create groups and events to help employees find friends who share their interests. "It could even be something goofy, like an ice cream social for dog lovers, where we're going to teach you how to make healthy ice cream for your dog," Heidelberg says.

- Offer online gatherings as well. During the pandemic, American Express offered online cooking classes that helped employees feel connected and introduced them to coworkers.

Employees are also seeking answers on their own, notes executive coach Daniel Boscajlon, founder of the Healthy Relationship Academy, which helps organizations build better workplaces. It's not always easy: As much as people crave relationships, he says, many lack strong interpersonal skills.

team collects sweat from the skin and analyzes it in real time using a sensor chip with an ion-sensitive membrane.

When sweat enters the device, it will come into contact with the membrane that contains three tubules capable of measuring sodium, potassium and calcium levels, respectively.

A rare feat part of a pioneering study

Voice box transplant helped a cancer patient speak again

WASHINGTON, July 9, (AP): A Massachusetts man has regained his voice after surgeons removed his cancerous larynx and, in a pioneering move, replaced it with a donated one.

Transplants of the so-called voice box are extremely rare, and normally aren't an option for people with active cancer. Marty Kedian is only the third person in the US ever to undergo a total larynx transplant - the others, years ago, because of injuries - and one of a handful reported worldwide.

Surgeons at the Mayo Clinic in Arizona offered Kedian the transplant as part of a new clinical trial aimed at opening the potentially lifechanging operation to more patients, including some with cancer, the most common way to lose a larynx.

"People need to keep their voice," Kedian, 59, told The Associated Press four months after his transplant - still hoarse but able to keep up an hourlong conversation. "I want people to know this can be done."

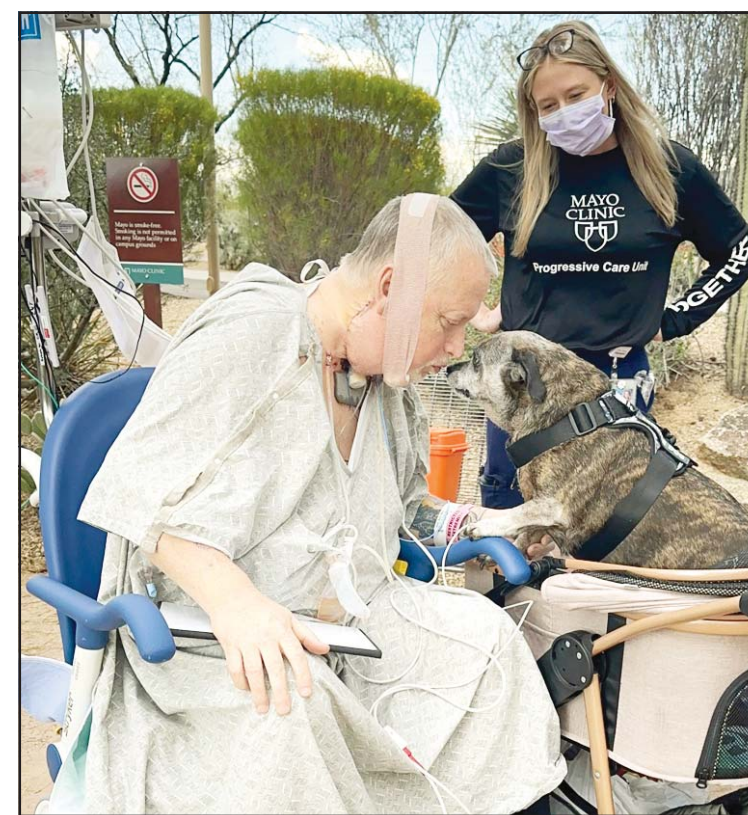
Surgery

He became emotional recalling the first time he phoned his 82-year-old mother after the surgery "and she could hear me. ... That was important to me, to talk to my mother."

The study is small - just nine more people will be enrolled. But it may teach scientists best practices for these complex transplants so that one day they could be offered to more people who can't breathe, swallow or speak on their own because of a damaged or surgically removed larynx.

"Patients become very reclusive, and very kind of walled off from the rest of the world," said Dr. David Lott, Mayo's chair of head and neck surgery in Phoenix. He started the study because "my patients tell me, 'Yeah I may be alive but I'm not really living.'"

Lott's team reported early results of the surgery Tuesday in the journal



In this photo provided by the Mayo Clinic, Marty Kedian greets his dog, Baxter, on his first trip outside the Mayo Clinic Hospital after his surgery in Phoenix, on March 16, 2024. (AP)

Mayo Clinic Proceedings.

The larynx may be best known as the voice box but it's also vital for breathing and swallowing. Muscular tissue flaps called vocal cords open to let air into the lungs, close to prevent food or drink from going the wrong way - and vibrate when air pushes past them to produce speech.

The first two US larynx transplant recipients - at the Cleveland Clinic in 1998 and the University of California, Davis, in 2010 - had lost their voices to injuries, one from a motorcycle accident and the other damaged by a hospital ventilator.

But cancer is the biggest reason. The American Cancer Society es-

timates more than 12,600 people will be diagnosed with some form of laryngeal cancer this year. While today many undergo voice-preserving treatment, thousands of people have had their larynx completely removed, breathing through what's called a tracheostomy tube in their neck and struggling to communicate.

Although the earlier US recipients achieved near normal speech, doctors haven't embraced these transplants. Partly that's because people can survive without a larynx - while antirejection drugs that suppress the immune system could spark new or recurring tumors.

"We want to be able to push those

boundaries but do it as safely and ethically as we can," Lott said.

Head-and-neck specialists say the Mayo trial is key to helping larynx transplants become a viable option.

"It isn't a 'one-off,'" but an opportunity to finally learn from one patient before operating on the next, said Dr. Marshall Strome, who led the 1998 transplant in Cleveland.

This first attempt in a cancer patient "is the next important step," he said.

Other options are being studied, noted Dr. Peter Belafsky of UC Davis, who helped perform the 2010 transplant. His patients at high risk of larynx loss record their voice in anticipation of next-generation speech devices that sound like them.

Breathe

But Belafsky said there's "still a shot" for larynx transplants to become more common while cautioning it likely will take years more research. One hurdle has been achieving enough nerve regrowth to breathe without a trach tube.

Kedian was diagnosed with a rare laryngeal cartilage cancer about a decade ago. The Haverhill, Massachusetts, man underwent more than a dozen surgeries, eventually needing a trach tube to help him breathe and swallow - and struggled even to muster a raspy whisper through it. He had to retire on disability.

Still the once gregarious Kedian, known for long conversations with strangers, wouldn't let doctors remove his entire larynx to cure the cancer. He desperately wanted to read bedtime stories to his granddaughter, with his own voice rather than what he called robotic-sounding speech devices.

Then Kedian's wife Gina tracked down the Mayo study. Lott decided he was a good candidate because his cancer wasn't fast-growing and - especially important - Kedian already was taking antirejection drugs for an earlier kidney transplant.

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