

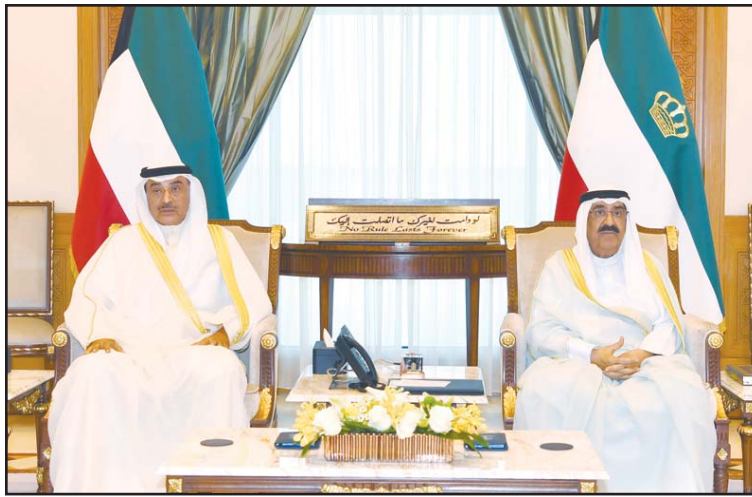


Amir receives Crown Prince, PM, minister, oil officials

KUWAIT CITY, July 14, (KUNA): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received on Sunday at Seif Palace the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah and His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah.

In another development, His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah -- in the presence of His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah -- held an official reception at Seif Palace on Sunday.

His Highness the Amir received the Minister of Finance and Minister of State for Economic and Investment Affairs, Dr. Anwar Ali Al-Mudhaf, the CEO of Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) Sheikh Nawaf Saud Al-Nasser Al-Sabah, the CEO of Kuwait Oil Company (KOC) Ahmad Al-Eidan, and the KOC Deputy CEO of Exploration and Drilling, Khaled Mohammad Al-Mulla.



Left: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah receives His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah. Right: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah receives His Excellency the Minister of Finance, Minister of State for Economic Affairs and Investment, Acting Minister of Oil, CEO of Kuwait Petroleum Corporation, CEO of Kuwait Oil Company, and Executive Vice President for Exploration and Drilling at Kuwait Oil Company.

Opinion

Foreign Minister, Kuwait is not in need of all these embassies

By Ahmed Al-Jarallah

Editor-in-Chief, the Arab Times

THE situation today has changed compared to what it was in the past. The political deals and parliamentary interests no longer control the state institutions. Therefore, if we want reform, we must acknowledge the defects and work on dealing with them.

Among these defects is the significant decline in the Kuwaiti diplomatic missions worldwide. Many of these missions have ceased to serve any purpose beyond maintaining their historical roles since the establishment of the state 62 years ago.

We understand that a large country with multiple interests has embassies and consulates in all countries of the world, but why does a small country like Kuwait have about 129 embassies, consulates and missions abroad? Many of them serve primarily protocol functions and nothing more. Furthermore, why are there resident missions in countries where Kuwait already has embassies?

In many countries, there exists the concept of an "honorary consul" who carries out certain duties on behalf of their country without the need for an embassy, an embassy building, a residence for the ambassador, and rented accommodations for the consuls and their employees.

The budget of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs amounts to about USD 900 million. Prior to last year, it was KD 235,357,000.

If representations and embassies were rationalized, such as appointing non-resident ambassadors to oversee multiple countries, a practice common in many countries that seek effective representation without straining their budgets, significant savings could be achieved for the state.

Indeed, wasteful spending is not limited to embassies and missions but extends to other ministries as well, where irresponsible expenditure is prevalent. However, when the Minister of Finance addresses longstanding deficits and forecasts future ones, it becomes imperative to scrutinize all aspects of spending and curb waste effectively.

If the state had allocated half of the budgets of ministries like Foreign Affairs, Communications, Awqaf and Islamic Affairs, as well as another ministry of "disguised employment", it could have funded projects like the metro project that would provide substantial savings for the public, similar to what has been achieved in the UAE.

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Kuwait Amir condemns attempt on Trump's life



Republican presidential candidate former President Donald Trump shouts in defiance as he is led off the stage after the shooting. (AP)



Republican presidential candidate former President Donald Trump is helped off the stage by U.S. Secret Service agents after the shooting incident. (AP)

World leaders denounce violence

KUWAIT CITY, July 14, (Agencies): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah sent on Sunday a cable to former US President and Republican candidate Donald Trump, voicing his relief over the safety of the official who survived a heinous assassination attempt during a campaign rally in the State of Pennsylvania.

His Highness the Amir strongly condemned the criminal act that went against human principles and values, wishing Trump a swift recovery and good health.

His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah also sent on Sunday a cable to former US President and Republican candidate Donald Trump, expressing relief over the official surviving an assassination attempt during a campaign rally in the State of Pennsylvania.

His Highness the Crown Prince strongly condemned his heinous act against the official, wishing him a swift recovery and good health.

His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah sent a cable on Sunday to former US President and Republican candidate Donald Trump, voicing his relief over the safety of the official who overcame an assassination attempt during a campaign rally in the State of Pennsylvania.

Continued on Page 5

Kuwait launches financial revamp

— Details Page 5 —



KUNA photo Undersecretary of the Ministry of Interior Lt. Gen. Sheikh Salem Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, during an inspection tour of Hussainiyas in the Governorates of Jahra and Hawalli on Saturday, urged the security services to ensure the safety of the visitors, and remove any obstacles or difficulties that might face them. Sheikh Salem also met with several field leaders to review the Ministry's field security plan for securing places of Hussainiyas during these days. (KUNA) - See Page 4

Kuwait enacts law to enhance tax transparency, compliance

KUWAIT CITY, July 14: The Council of Ministers has issued Decree-Law No. 6 of 2024 concerning the exchange of information for tax purposes, which introduces significant provisions aimed at enhancing transparency and compliance with international tax agreements, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The following are the key points of the decree-law: Information Exchange - All entities and individuals in Kuwait are mandated to provide the competent authority with necessary information as per the law, its executive regulations, and international tax agreements.

Continued on Page 5

CITRA mandates telecom firms to interconnect SMS services

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

KUWAIT CITY, July 14: Acting Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Communications and Information Technology Regulatory Authority (CITRA), Abdullah Al-Ajmi, has issued a decision mandating mobile telecommunications companies to interconnect their bulk SMS services.

According to the decision, a copy of which was obtained by Al-Seyassah, mobile telecommunications companies are

Continued on Page 5



Palestinians evacuate from a site hit by an Israeli bombardment on Khan Younis, southern Gaza Strip, Saturday, July 13, 2024. (AP)

90 dead in Hamas leader hit

Kuwait strongly slams Israeli killings of Palestinian people

KUWAIT CITY, July 14, (Agencies): Kuwait has denounced, in the strongest terms, the massacres committed by Israeli occupation forces against the Palestinian people, along with deliberate attacks on relief teams, the last of which was airstrikes on a refugee camp in Khan Yunis in southern Gaza Strip.

In a press release, the Kuwaiti Foreign Ministry underlined that the State of Kuwait considers that the clear-cut criminal aggressions by Israeli occupation forces bespeak unquestionably that these forces are committing war crimes in disrespect of international efforts to reach a ceasefire and arrive at an agreement that could end the nine-month aggression.

The ministry echoed Kuwait's earlier calls on the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) to provide

Continued on Page 5

Newswatch

KUWAIT CITY: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah sent on Sunday a cable to French President Emmanuel Macron, congratulating him on the country's national day.

His Highness the Amir wished President Macron good health, the French Republic and its people further progress and prosperity, and the special relations between the two nations more development and growth. (KUNA)

KUWAIT CITY: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah sent a cable of condolences Sunday to Indian President Droupadi Murmu, expressing sincere condolences for the victims of the floods caused by heavy rains in several Indian states, which led to numerous fatalities and injuries, along with the destruction of public facilities and properties.

In the cable, His Highness the Amir wished the injured a swift and full recovery, hoping that the officials in the country would be able to overcome the effects of this natural disaster. (KUNA)

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Sunrise ..	04:58	Maghrib ..	18:50
Zohr	11:54	Isha	20:20

Local

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

Expected weather for next 24 hrs:
By Day: Very hot with light to moderate northwesterly wind to light variable wind, with speeds of 08-32 km/h.

Weather

By Night: Hot to rather hot with light to moderate northwesterly wind, with speeds of 12-35 km/h.

Station	Max Exp	Min Rec
Kuwait City	46	37

Kuwait Airport	47	32
Abdaly	49	31
Jahra	49	33
Salmiyah	44	36
Nuwaisib	50	31
Wafra	47	31

Ambassadors share fond memories of Kuwait

Dr. Zubaidov commends outgoing envoy contributions to Kuwait ties

By Fares Al-Abdan

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, July 14: The Dean of the Diplomatic Corps and Ambassador of Tajikistan Dr. Zubaidullah Zubaidov praised the efforts exerted by the outgoing ambassadors in Kuwait, affirming that they contributed to developing relations between their countries and Kuwait.

He said this in a press statement issued on the sidelines of a farewell ceremony held by the Deanship of the Diplomatic Corps on Friday evening at the St. Regis Hotel on the occasion of the end of service of the ambassadors of Spain, Poland, France, Argentina, Austria, Somalia, Lesotho and Pakistan. The ceremony was held in the presence of a representative from the Protocol Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Ambassador Zubaidov said, "This is the first time the Deanship of the Diplomatic Corps is holding a farewell ceremony for eight ambassadors from Europe, Asia and Africa."

He highlighted the large and remarkable presence of heads and members of diplomatic missions accredited to the country.

Ambassador Zubaidov described these moments as some of the most challenging for a diplomat, when he leaves a hospitable country that offers excellent facilities to the countries where he is accredited.

He said, "Kuwait stands out for its exceptional relationships with countries worldwide, maintaining good and balanced relations. There is special attention and care extended to the diplomatic community accredited to Kuwait, led by His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, the Minister of Foreign Affairs Abdullah Al-Yahya, his deputy Sheikh Jarrah Al-Jaber, and all officials of the ministry."

Visions

Ambassador Zubaidov indicated that His Highness the Amir has a keen vision, great wisdom, and great respect from world leaders for the humanitarian aid Kuwait provides, and for its balanced policy and support for all just causes.

He praised the wisdom of His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled, whom he described as "a capable and humble diplomat."

Ambassador Zubaidov affirmed His Highness has a vision that contributed to strengthening Kuwait's relations with friendly and brotherly countries of Kuwait.

He explained that Kuwait is one of the few countries in the region that does not have specific agendas. It instead always seeks to unite and work to stabilize and secure the region. Its goal is to establish security, maintain international peace, and implement and respect international conventions and laws.

Ambassador Zubaidov said, "We held a different kind of celebration this time because we are bidding farewell to eight friends. They will leave us for their countries and assume new tasks. We hope we will meet them in other places."

Meanwhile, the French Ambassador to Kuwait Claire Le Flecher said, "I have many mixed feelings as we bid farewell to a country that we loved and welcomed as part of our close family. It is in fact a difficult stage that we are going through. Ku-

wait will remain in my heart with beautiful memories that I will never forget, as well as friendships that I have made that will not be erased by time. This is what is most important to me."

She expressed appreciation and gratitude to all Kuwaitis - both officials and people - for the distinguished and special reception she received during her presence in Kuwait for the past three years.

Furthermore, the Spanish Ambassador to Kuwait Miguel Moro Aguilar thanked the Kuwaiti media representatives for their great support towards all of the embassy's activities during his four-year period of work in the country.

He also expressed gratitude for the many friendships he was able to establish with the Kuwaiti people and his fellow heads of diplomatic missions.

Ambassador Aguilar stressed that he worked to build a bridge that combines diplomacy and lasting friendship, revealing that he will be returning to Madrid after spending 10 years abroad.

He affirmed that Ambassador Manuel Gamayo, who will succeed him in the position, will arrive in Kuwait on July 28 from the Spanish Embassy in Riyadh where he worked as Deputy Head of Mission, adding that he is a veteran diplomat with a long history in diplomatic work.

Also, the Austrian Ambassador to Kuwait Maria Warba revealed that this is his second farewell during the eight years he spent in the country, as he served as his country's ambassador in Kuwait twice.

Sadness

He expressed his sadness that he will leave the country that he loves so much and its hospitable people who will miss him.

Ambassador Warba said, "It was an honor for me to serve as Austria's Ambassador here on two occasions, the first from 2008 to 2012 and again from 2020 to 2024. In general, I spent eight wonderful years in Kuwait, and I cherish every moment. Kuwait has truly become my second home."

He revealed that he will leave Kuwait at the end of August, and the new ambassador Olive Frank, who worked in Kuwait as ambassador from 2012 to 2016, will arrive on September 1.

In addition, the Somali Ambassador to Kuwait Dr. Abdullahi Mohammed Odu said, "As I end my duties, I reflect on the amazing privilege I had to represent my country in Kuwait. When I arrived in Kuwait in January 2019 to serve as Ambassador, I had set several priorities. The first step was to bring about a major transformation in the Somali Embassy in Kuwait, both in appearance and processes, in order to enhance service delivery. After five years of dedicated teamwork, I am extremely proud to announce that the embassy now stands as a shining example of a public body providing excellent services to its community and other visitors."

Another priority was to contribute to improving the historical relationship between my country and Kuwait. During my tenure, we made great progress in that aspect. Several high-level delegations from the ministries of Foreign Affairs, National Planning, Education and Finance visited Kuwait and participated in fruitful discussions with their Kuwaiti counterparts. This paved the way for more fruitful cooperation in the future."

Ambassador Dr. Odu added that one of the most prominent events during his tenure was the re-negotiation and signing of the debt relief agreement between Somalia and the Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development on April 26, 2022.

Govt intensifies its crackdown on forged and dual citizenship

'Kuwaiti citizenship of 30 women revoked'

KUWAIT CITY, July 14: After issuing a new decree to withdraw citizenship from 30 individuals, potentially including those who acquired it through dependency, as published in today's issue of the official gazette Kuwait Al-Yawm, a government source disclosed to the Al-Qabas daily that there are currently 409 files under review by the Supreme Committee for Nationality Investigation, reports Al-Qabas daily.

The source indicated that this review process is a preliminary step before submitting names of individuals found guilty of fraud and forgery to the Council of Ministers for decisions on citizenship withdrawal.

Since mid-March, the Ministry of Interior's Nationality Investigations Department has received approximately 719 reports via a hotline regarding Kuwaiti nationals suspected of possessing forged or dual citizenship.

Highlighting the seriousness with which the government is treating this issue, the source, under the guidance of First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defense Sheikh Fahd Al-Yousef, emphasized that strict measures will be taken against all responsible parties, regardless of the reasons behind the forgery.

Withdrawals

The government is preparing to issue new decisions soon regarding citizenship withdrawals, underscoring the meticulous examination and multiple reviews of each case by the Supreme Committee.

This effort is a top priority for the government, and is aimed at cracking down on forgery and improper acquisition of nationality through misinformation.

The efforts are being intensified to ensure accountability and uphold the integrity of Kuwaiti citizenship.

Meanwhile, as part of the government's efforts to audit Kuwaiti nationality acquisitions, the official gazette recently published decree No. 118/2024 for the withdrawal of the Kuwaiti nationality of 30 women, reports Al-Rai daily.

According to the decision, acquired citizenship has also been revoked.

Decree No. 118/2024, issued on July 8, 2024, cited constitutional provisions and the Amiri decree of May 10, 2024, along with Amiri Decree No. 15/1959 on Kuwaiti citizenship law and its amendments as the basis for the withdrawal of these citizenships. This decision was presented by the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defense and Interior Sheikh Fahd Yousef Al-Sabah and approved by the Council of Ministers.

In the meantime, the Civil Services Commission (CSC) provided one of the ministries with a list containing the names of individuals subject to investigation by the higher committee tasked with examining citizenship issues.

CSC revealed that there are five employees who are still in office even though their Kuwaiti citizenship has been revoked. These employees were born in 1968, 1965, 1992, 1995, and 1979, and were hired in the years 2011, 2017, and 2019. It stressed the need to initiate legal procedures to enforce the committee's decision.

PAM opens A-20 transfer window

KUWAIT CITY, July 14: The Public Authority for Manpower (PAM) Sunday started receiving requests from domestic workers to transfer their residences from Article 20 to Article 18, reports Al-Shahed daily.

This move is based on a decision issued by PAM to allow domestic workers to transfer their residency under Article 20 to private sector work residency under Article 18 during a period of two months starting from Sunday, July 14.

The decision set three conditions for the approval of the transaction - the attendance of the employer in person, the approval of Ministry of Interior's General Department for Residency Affairs after verifying that the sponsor of the domestic worker has agreed to transfer the residency, and presentation of documents to prove that the applicant stayed in Kuwait for at least one year.



Some of the participants at the event.

Tanzania & Kenya missions mark Swahili Language Day

The Embassy of the United Republic of Tanzania, in collaboration with the Embassy of the Republic of Kenya in Kuwait, marked International Swahili Language Day at Talk Cultural Hub, attended by approximately 200 participants.

Swahili, an indigenous African language, ranks among the ten most widely spoken languages globally. Its roots trace back to interactions between East African coastal communities and Arab and Middle Eastern traders. It serves as the official language of the East African community and holds significant cultural and linguistic importance.

Recognizing this, UNESCO designated July 7 as

World Swahili Language Day during its forty-first session in 2021, with the inaugural celebration taking place in 2022.

This year's theme, 'Teaching the Culture of Peace in Swahili', underscores Swahili's role in education, fostering relationships, and promoting peace.

With approximately 200 million speakers across various ethnic groups, Swahili functions both as a native tongue and a lingua franca, facilitating communication across diverse communities.

Its influence extends beyond Africa, reaching regions such as the Americas, Europe, and the Far East, where it is taught in universities and utilized in advertising and publishing.

Kuwaiti Economic Society calls for subsidy reform to boost efficiency

By Fares Al-Abdan

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, July 14: The government support provided by the State of Kuwait plays a crucial role in its social policy, aiming to enhance citizens' quality of life and alleviate financial burdens.

However, there are ongoing discussions about improving the efficiency of this support to ensure it reaches those who truly need it.

Proposals include transforming this support into a social safety net, akin to systems in other Gulf countries, which primarily involve direct cash transfers to citizens, ensuring targeted delivery to deserving recipients.

Muhammad Al-Jouan, Vice President of the Kuwaiti Economic Society, emphasized that accurately directing and discussing the costs of subsidies is fundamental. He stressed that focusing on expenditure size and halting excessive budgetary waste are primary priorities for comprehensive reform.

Al-Jouan highlighted that any meaningful reform must begin by addressing the economic realities faced by citizens, who often bear the brunt of financial pressures before these issues become politically significant.

In an interview with Al-Seyassah newspaper, Al-Jouan proposed establishing a specialized body for social security, parallel to the Zakat House, with investment rights.

He suggested funding this safety net sustainably through corporate taxes. Al-Jouan disclosed that subsidies in the 2024-2025 budget are projected to cost 600 million dinars, with expectations that this figure could rise to 900 million dinars.

Regarding the fairness of the current support system, Kuwait has a longstanding tradition of social solidarity dating back to the 1960s. However, as demographic changes and economic challenges evolve globally, there is a growing need to update and modify these systems to better serve current realities and ensure equitable distribution of support.

The cost of subsidies in the 2024-2025 budget is estimated at 600 million dinars, assuming an oil barrel price of \$70.

This figure could rise to 900 million dinars based on expenditures outlined in the 2023-2024 fiscal year. This potential increase, if approved, would not

Other Voices

Shia Kuwait and the Ashura

By Ahmad alsarraf

Since the Englishman Dr. Edward Jenner, the pioneer of immunology, discovered the smallpox vaccine in 1796, a significant percentage of people, even today, oppose taking vaccines.

This resistance has prompted conscious governments to impose vaccinations by force, much like compulsory education, under penalty of punishment.

Such government interventions are beneficial to society. A recent example is the authorities' intervention to limit certain "foreign" aspects of the month of Muharram, which many Shiite jurists, preachers, and ayatollahs have acknowledged as having become a concerning security and social issue over time.

It's important to note that the rituals of Ashura have evolved significantly from what they once were. New and strange elements have been introduced, often from neighboring countries, and have suddenly been deemed "holy," making them untouchable despite their recent origins.

The absence of these new rituals would not diminish the dignity of the occasion or its significance to believers, who cherish it beyond religious and sectarian trading, and in the spirit of reason and logic. This extreme exaggeration in performing rituals has become an excuse for the extremism of others. Therefore, the authorities had to intervene to curb the extremism from all sides.

It is not permissible for anyone to publicly accuse others of blasphemy, ridicule their behavior, or prohibit their food or rituals through various media outlets

without accountability.

Exaggeration often stems from a lack of security. The more secure a person feels, the less noise they make, the fewer locks and keys they have in their life, and the less suspicious they are of others. One of the authorities' tasks is to spread reassurance and security in people's hearts.

We reiterate that the recent actions taken by the Interior Ministry, despite not agreeing with all its decisions, were necessary. Extremism leads to more extremism, exaggeration begets further exaggeration, and tolerating today's transgressions will encourage greater transgressions tomorrow.

Wise Shiites and Sunnis alike are calling for a return to the "Ashura" they knew and cherished, characterized by dignity and simplicity, free from intrusive banners, exaggerated additions, competitive meal offerings, and expanded public displays.

They long for an Ashura rooted in sincere feelings and self-esteem, avoiding the excesses of various practices. The true message of Ashura lies in remembering the greatness of the occasion and the majesty of the sacrifice; learning from it, and following its example with rationality and logic, rather than spreading hatred and threats, which only breed more enmity and animosity.

We must learn from the experiences of other societies, recognizing how some have exploited the naivety of the common people, transforming this solemn and sacred occasion into a series of extremist manifestations that produce no meaningful outcomes.

These manifestations sometimes last for forty days without interruption, turning what was once unknown and undesired into "sacred rituals" that are deemed untouchable.

□ □ □
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Photo taken during the inspection tour.

KFSD photo

DGFD ensures safety of Husseiniyas

Major General Khaled Fahd conducted a thorough inspection of the fire stations assigned to secure the Husseiniyas, reports Al-Seyassah daily quoting Public Relations and Media Department of the Directorate-General of Fire Department (DGFD).

His review focuses on ensuring preparations were adequate for safety and fire prevention measures, highlighting the coordination between firefighters, government agencies, and volunteer groups to maintain a safe environment for worshippers.

This kind of proactive approach is crucial in safeguarding public spaces

during religious gatherings.

Major General Khalid Abdullah Fahad visited 16 Husseiniyas where ceremonies for the month of Muharram are being held, reports Al-Shahed daily.

Major General Khalid Fahad ensured that the Husseiniyas have appropriate level of security, and that the assigned teams have enforced all safety requirements to deal with fire incidents.

He praised the efforts exerted by the KFSD teams, with the cooperation of the other concerned authorities and volunteering bodies, to secure the Husseiniyas and provide the safe environment for the worshippers.

3 power suppliers go offline

New record in power consumption

KUWAIT CITY, July 14: The electric watt meter surged on Saturday, reaching a new record of 17,360 megawatts and surpassing the previous highest recorded amount by 240 megawatts, reports Al-Anba daily.

The Ministry of Electricity and Water announced that three power suppliers at the main power transformer plant in Abdullah Port went offline, resulting in a power out-

age in some parts of Ali Sabah Al-Salem.

It said the service was restored shortly afterward, thanks to the emergency teams who responded promptly to rectify the issue. According to sources from the Ministry of Electricity and Water, the recent peak in electricity usage is unprecedented, attributing it to the high temperatures reaching 50 degrees Celsius in some areas.

exceed 160 to 200 million dinars compared to the staggering waste in the budget, which amounts to around 3 billion dinars.

Regarding fuel subsidies, the primary concern lies not in the politi-

cal debate over government-declared fuel prices, but in discussing the precise costs and the importance of directing subsidies effectively. This approach is fundamental; everything else is secondary.

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A DIGEST OF PUBLIC OPINION

'Kuwait through the eyes of HE Ambassador of Austria'

"KUWAIT is home to more than 120 nationalities of various colors, races, and creeds, all living in peace, security, and harmony. Some were born and raised in Kuwait, while others arrived for work and chose to stay. They consistently agree that life in Kuwait is smooth, easy, and comfortable. Many even fear that staying too long in Kuwait might make it difficult to adapt to life in another country," columnist **Suad Fahd Al-Moajil** wrote for **Al-Qabas** daily.

"This love for Kuwait goes beyond work and livelihood, fostering a sense of belonging to this land. This is evidenced by the fact that, alongside Kuwaiti martyrs, martyrs from 13 different nationalities have fallen, demonstrating the cohesion between Kuwait's residents and citizens.



Suad Al-Moajil

"This sense of belonging is felt at the popular level, but what about the official or diplomatic level? Diplomats and employees at missions or international organizations usually stay for no more than four to eight years. To answer this, I turn to my wonderful friend, the Ambassador of Austria, Marianne Alexander Wrba, who has expressed his feelings towards Kuwait with absolute transparency.

"Ambassador Wrba served as Austria's ambassador to Kuwait from 2008 to 2012 and was so keen to repeat the experience that he returned as ambassador from 2020 to 2024.

"He describes his work period in Kuwait as excellent, citing the nature of the Kuwaiti people as a major incentive for his return.

"His friendships with many Kuwaitis were genuine and strong, free from personal interest. He attributes many of the qualities he admires in the Kuwaiti people to the open climate of freedom in Kuwait, which enhances citizens' awareness, dialogue skills, and acceptance of others. This open and free communication allowed him to get to know Kuwaiti society up close, interacting with its members with ease and simplicity, without barriers or obstacles.

"Interestingly, the Kuwaiti climate does not bother him at all because it is dry, making his enjoyment of the sea even greater, especially during his visits to the Kuwaiti islands, which are often visited by foreigners more than citizens. This might be because residents are usually less curious and explorative of their country.

"Kuwait, though small geographically, is rich economically, politically, and culturally. The human diversity that settled here has become part of its history and terrain, bringing many advantages. Art, music, theater, literature, and education have all flourished thanks to this diversity, along with the ease of adapting and integrating into society.

"A European diplomat who arrived in Kuwait during the COVID-19 pandemic remarked that he discovered an extended family, referring to the special relationship he developed with the owners of the house he rented.

"Ambassador Wrba's experience beautifully summarizes the nature and circumstances of Kuwait, its land, society, and people, reflecting the positive impact that Kuwaitis leave on every visitor.

Thank you, Ambassador, for allowing us to see Kuwait through your eyes. How beautiful it was!"

Also:

"Over the past two decades, the repeated prosecution of workers in cooperatives has tarnished the reputation of this civil society institution. The Ministry of Social Affairs must implement robust oversight solutions to prevent irreversible abuses," columnist **Muzaffar Abdullah** wrote for **Al-Jarida** daily.

"Contrary to popular belief, bribery is not confined to poor and economically distressed countries. This misconception is disproven by evidence from wealthy nations, including Kuwait.

"For instance, a 2019 United Nations report estimated the annual global value of bribery at one trillion dollars, with corruption-related thefts exceeding 2.5 trillion dollars – amounting to 5% of the global GDP. A 2021 survey by "Nazaha" in Kuwait revealed that 92% of respondents perceived bribery as increasing, and 26% had been asked to pay a bribe.

"In Kuwait, bribery is prevalent in

various transactions, including disability files, citizenship, construction deals, the cooperative sector, and services to government institutions. Since the liberation from the Iraqi invasion, there have been no significant efforts to utilize scientific and research studies conducted by Kuwait University and state social institutions on financial behavior changes.

"Administrative and legislative loopholes have facilitated fraud and unethical manipulation of state resources, compounded by political corruption. The reputation of the administrative apparatus often suffers during political conflicts between Parliament and the government.

"For the past forty years, public discourse in Kuwait has consistently emphasized the need to protect public funds, yet bribery and waste remain rampant.

"There is a need to examine the spread of acquisitive values and the inclination to exploit illegal opportunities for personal gain. It is also crucial to distinguish bribery from gifts in the business environment and assess the effectiveness of electronic systems in controlling such behavior. Legislating the hidden dealer system to expose corruption is equally important.

"In conclusion, the responsibility to control the state's finances lies with the state and its agencies. Collective cooperation between the Audit Bureau, the Integrity Commission, and state universities is essential to identify and combat corruption effectively."

"If it were not for God Almighty, the burden of numerous worries would weigh heavily upon us. It is through His grace that we find solace, enabling us to navigate through the harsh desert of this challenging life and its desolate valleys," columnist **Dr. Abdulrahman Al-Jeeran** wrote for **Al-Rai** daily.

"Faith in God serves as a beacon in the heart of the believer, casting occasional light that guides us through the dark nights like a Doha – a resting place for travelers returning from the scorching desert, finding comfort and tranquility in its shade.

"It is like the insignificant rain that falls upon seemingly lifeless earth, yet upon contact, it stirs, swells, and brings forth every delightful variety of life.

"Similarly, God Almighty created man in a state of struggle and weariness, enduring the challenges of this world, the solitude of the grave, and the trials of the afterlife. Gratitude during prosperity and patience in adversity are necessary, as life is never without either of them.

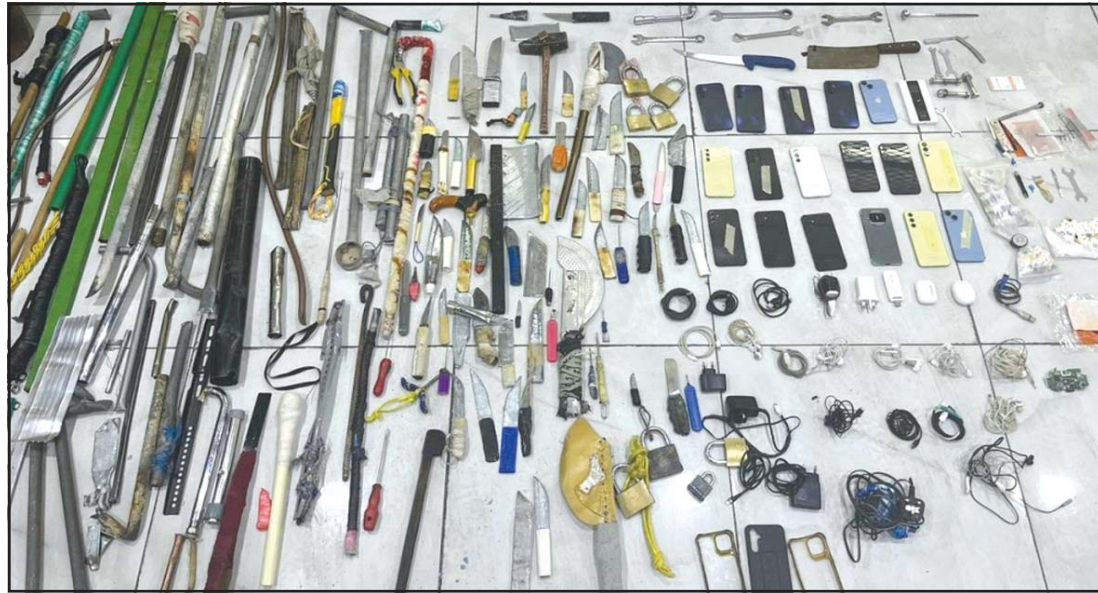
"God did not create humans like angels or jinn. They endure what the son of Adam endures, bearing a trust that even the heavens, earth, and mountains cannot bear. It is a duty filled with challenges. The first of these challenges is childbirth and its difficulties, followed by the necessity of breastfeeding for survival. Then comes enduring the pain of teething, circumcision, and weaning. Later in life, there is the struggle of upbringing and education, followed by the challenges of marriage, raising children, and managing household affairs. There is also the struggle of building a home, coping with old age, and dealing with the physical limitations of aging. Beyond that, there are the hardships of losing loved ones and enduring various calamities that can afflict health and wealth, among other things.

"Every day brings its share of challenges for a human being. Then comes death, oblivion, and the interrogation by the two angels, followed by resurrection, presentation before God, and the beginning of the reckoning until the final decision of Paradise or Hell for him is reached... If it were up to man, he would not willingly choose these trials. This indicates the existence of a Creator and a Controller who has ordained these circumstances. Therefore, let him obey His commands in good times and bad.

"What is strange is such a person to be weak in stature but with a bold heart towards God. He can display harshness towards people, neglecting what truly matters and becoming consumed by irrelevant matters. This is the effect of the so-called democracy on us today. It has replaced unity with discord.

"Indeed, God Almighty spoke the truth when He said, "Verily, we created man from a drop of sperm. In order to try him, we gave him (the gift of) sight and hearing."

— Compiled by PFX Fernandes & Mahmoud Ateyieh



Contraband seized during inspection campaign inside Central Prison.

Mol photo

Drugs, knives, mobiles seized in prison raid

By Munif Naif

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

In a coordinated effort, the inspection team of the General Administration of Correctional Institutions, in collaboration with the General Administration of the Special Security Forces and the Directorate-General of Fire Department (DGFD) conducted a surprise inspection at dawn today on a ward inside the Central Prison.

According to a security source a significant quantity of contraband,

including knives, mobile phones, narcotic pills, drug paraphernalia, and other communication devices were seized.

The Special Forces ensured the security of the inspection team and facilitated the procedures during the operation.

The operation was supervised by Major General Abdullah Safah, Assistant Undersecretary of the Ministry of Interior for the Special Security Forces, and Brigadier General Fahd Al-Obaid, Director General of the General Administration of Cor-

rectional Institutions.

The source highlighted that the inspection was sudden and swift, aimed at maintaining order and security within the prison. Following the seizure, the joint inspection team referred the confiscated items to the appropriate authorities and prepared a comprehensive report detailing the seized contraband.

This proactive effort underscores ongoing efforts to uphold discipline and prevent illicit activities within the central prison.

Court upholds expat teacher's 10-yr jail in sexual assault case

Arab doctor sentenced to 5 years imprisonment

By Jaber Al-Hamoud, Munif Naif

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff and Agencies

KUWAIT CITY, July 14: The Court of Cassation upheld the verdict issued by the Court of Appeals, which sentenced an expatriate Islamic education teacher to ten-year imprisonment for sexually assaulting a minor in Khaitan.

Earlier, the Court of Appeals overturned the verdict issued by the Criminal Court, which sentenced the defendant to death. He had been sentenced to several sentences between imprisonment and acquittal on the same charges in different cases.

Following reports of minors being kidnapped and assaulted by an Islamic Education teacher, the Public Prosecution ordered his detention. The court initiated proceedings by questioning victims and witnesses. Upon his arrest, the accused was interrogated regarding the allegations against him and subsequently referred to the Forensic Medicine Department.

The Public Prosecution has requested the Criminal Court to impose the maximum penalty, which is death, against the accused for the crimes he has committed.

Doctor gets 5 years jail: The Court of Appeals upheld the ruling of a lower court that sentenced an Arab doctor to five years in prison for impersonating a Kuwaiti citizen, stealing the latter's passport and entering Kuwait after changing her facial features to resemble those of the citizen.

The Public Prosecution referred the case to the court after the doctor was arrested when she returned to Kuwait. The immigration officer got suspicious of her accent and tone of voice when she spoke to her, leading to her arrest at Kuwait International Airport upon arrival from her country.

Results of investigations revealed that the accused is a gynecologist; but she opened a clinic for the treatment of drug addicts, through which she obtained large sums from the families of her patients.

She also used the passports of some patients who look like her. She used the passport of the abovementioned citizen in most of her travels.

Fashionista hearing set for July 21: The Court of Cassation declined to halt the execution of the ruling issued by a lower court which sentenced fashionista and social media celebrity Fatima Al-Moumen to imprisonment, and instead set the session of July 21 to issue ruling on the unintentional murder case filed against her for causing a horrific traffic accident.

It is noteworthy that the Court of Appeals upheld the ruling of the Court of First Instance to sentence the fashionista Fatima Al-Moumen to three-year imprisonment with hard labor and withdraw her driving license for a year. The court had referred the civil lawsuit to the competent department.

She was charged with manslaughter, jumping a red light, driving above the permitted speed limit, and causing a traffic accident that led to the death of two people.

Egyptian dies in accident: A truck overturned on King Fahad Expressway, resulting in the death of a 34-year-old Egyptian expatriate. His body was referred to the Forensic Medicine Department.

According to a security source, when the Operations Room of the Ministry of Interior received information about the truck accident on King Fahad Expressway, security personnel, paramedics and firefighters were immediately dispatched to the location of the report.

Upon their arrival, it became clear that the accident resulted in the death of an Egyptian man. His body was sent to the Forensic Medicine Department.

A case has been registered, and the truck was removed from the road along with its load.

Worker falls from height, dies: Tragedy struck as a construction worker, born in 1966, lost his life after falling from a 3.5 meters height in the Al-Mutlaa area, reports Al-Anba daily.

According to a security source, the incident was reported to the security authorities by the contractor. The body of the expatriate has been transferred to forensic medicine, and a case by accident has been reported at the area police station.

In another incident, an expatriate born in 2001 died after being run over on the farms road. The perpetrator, also an expatriate born in 1990, has been arrested and during interrogation he claimed the victim unexpectedly crossed the main street.

Authorities have registered a case of fatal run-over and transferred the deceased's body to forensic medicine for examination.

Securityman detained over drugs: The Central Prison Security Department has referred a securityman to the Public Prosecution for attempting to smuggle narcotic substances to inmates, reports Al-Anba daily.

Investigations are ongoing to determine the quantity of drugs that might have been smuggled earlier and identify the recipients among the inmates.

'Hoax' murder report triggers security alert in the Central Prison

KUWAIT CITY, July 14: A security alert triggered by a report of a murder inside the central prison ended with the case being registered as "hoax," reports Al-Anba daily.

The security authorities are now working to identify the prisoner who contacted the Interior Ministry's operations center to report the alleged murder.

The incident occurred the day before yesterday afternoon when the internal affairs operations received a call about a murder inside the prison.

Security personnel from the Sulabiya police station promptly responded, but prison officers confirmed that the report was incorrect.

Attempts to call the number from which the report was made revealed that it was 'out of coverage area. Further investigation with the phone company confirmed that the call originated from within the central prison.

Authorities are continuing their efforts to identify and take action against the individual responsible for the false report.



The marijuana and shabu seized by the Customs officials.

Al-Jarida photo

Customs seizes 16 kg marijuana, 5 kg shabu from package sent from the US

KUWAIT CITY, July 14: The Air Customs Department recently intercepted a package from the United States containing 16 kilograms of marijuana and 5 kilograms of shabu. Customs officers, acting on a tip-off, inspected the package, which was addressed to a local citizen and suspected of containing prohibited substances, reports Al-Jarida daily.

During the inspection, officers discovered a hollow iron table that had been expertly crafted to conceal the

narcotics. Inside the table, they found approximately 16 kilograms of marijuana and 5 kilograms of shabu. The contraband was promptly confiscated and referred to the relevant authorities for further action.

The General Administration of Customs has issued a stern warning to anyone attempting to smuggle narcotics or other prohibited goods into the country. They emphasized that such actions will lead to legal consequences and stringent customs measures.

51 persons arrested in Jleeb Al-Shuyoukh 'security raid'

By Munif Naif

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, July 14: The Special Forces officers, in cooperation with the Residency Affairs Investigation personnel in the Interior Ministry, recently launched an intensive security campaign in Jleeb Al-Shuyoukh under the leadership of Major General Abdullah Saffah; resulting in the arrest of 51 Residency Law violators, wanted persons and absconders. All of them were referred to the competent authorities in preparation for their deportation.

In a press statement, the ministry affirmed that in the presence of Assistant Undersecretary for Private Security Affairs Major General Abdullah Saffah and a number of security officials; the Private Security Sector,

in coordination with the Residency Affairs Investigation General Department, carried out a comprehensive security inspection campaign targeting Residency Law violators and those wanted by law for committing various crimes in Jleeb Al-Shuyoukh.

The campaign resulted in the arrest of a number of Residency Law violators who were referred to the concerned authority to take the necessary legal measures including deportation. The Public Relations and Security Media General Department confirmed that the security campaigns are continuing throughout the country in a bid to arrest Residency Law violators and those wanted by law. It called on everyone to fully cooperate with security officers by reporting violators and outlaws through emergency phone number 112.

WEDDINGS, UPTO 140

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Audit reveals contractual hurdles in KIPIC's cybersecurity upgrades

Bureau urges immediate action to bolster cyber defenses

KUWAIT CITY, July 14: The Audit Bureau's report for the fiscal year 2022/2023 highlighted issues with Contract No. "105/CH/IT," assigned to a local company for the cybersecurity operations center at Kuwait Integrated Petroleum Industries Company (KIPIC), reports Al-Jarida daily.

The report revealed several shortcomings such as:

■ The contract work, aimed at installing a protection system at Al-Zour Refinery, Industrial Island, and liquefied gas import facilities, failed to commence by March 31, 2023, despite a start date specified for May 2022. This delay was attributed to work groups not issuing necessary approvals for the contractor, resulting in inadequate cyber protection for the hardware, refinery operations, LNG facilities, and the artificial island.

■ A foreign contractor tasked with maintaining and supporting control devices for precision machines at Al-Zour Refinery and liquefied gas facilities did not provide essential information to start contract implementation. The contractor also requested additional funds, citing concerns over potential equipment malfunctions post-implementation.

■ The company's cybersecurity level drastically fell to 1.5, significantly below Kuwait Petroleum Corporation's set standards of 4 and 5, as per the Deloitte cybersecurity rating system.

The Audit Bureau recommended urgent measures to rectify these issues, stressing the importance of fulfilling contract obligations to enhance cybersecurity and protect KIPIC's infrastructure.

The company responded with plans for bi-monthly meetings among cybersecurity, maintenance, and engineering teams to expedite contract implementation and ensure comprehensive support for cybersecurity operations.

Advancing environmental responsibility

Kuwait-US alliance targets dust storms

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

KUWAIT CITY, July 14: The environmental team from the US Embassy recently visited the Environmental Protection Society to discuss avenues of cooperation, particularly in raising awareness about environmental issues

through social media initiatives.

Dr. Wijdan Al-Aqab, President of the Environmental Protection Society, highlighted the significance of the American delegation's visit, emphasizing the longstanding collaboration in environmental efforts.

This collaboration has spanned many years, culminating in the Ameri-

can Embassy's participation in the Society's Golden Jubilee events program this year, reinforcing global responsibility towards environmental protection.

Dr. Al-Aqab announced an agreement with the American delegation for the Kuwait Environment Protection Society to join a major awareness campaign organized by the embassy through social media.

Additionally, they agreed to participate in the annual "International Day for Combating Dust Storms" event, observed worldwide on July 12.

She underscored the Society's role in promoting awareness about preserving desert ecosystems and vegetation cover, advocating for the implementation of afforestation projects under the Green Belt Program.

Dr. Al-Aqab emphasized that the degradation of vegetation negatively impacts biodiversity, leading to increased sandstorms and dust phenomena. She called for active programs to propagate native plants capable of stabilizing sand in Kuwait's environment.



US embassy team with EPS members pose for a photo.

CAPT OK's int'l firms for railway project study

KUWAIT CITY, July 14: The Central Agency for Public Tenders has taken a significant step forward in the railway project by approving the technical offers from four international companies for the study and detailed design work, reports Al-Qabas daily.

The approved companies include Systra from Spain, China Railway Siyuan from China, Proyapi from Turkey and Systemas from France.

Next, the agency plans to proceed with opening the fi-

nanacial offers from these companies, which have passed the technical evaluation phase.

This process aims to select one company to carry out the comprehensive study necessary for the railway project.

The Public Authority for Roads and Land Transport emphasized that this milestone aligns with the state's strategic goals of fostering economic and industrial development, while also keeping pace with advancements in land transport infrastructure.



Ministry of Information and Culture conveys sincere condolences to the family of the late Khalil Ibrahim.

Kuwait mourns renowned radio personality

The Ministry of Information mourns "with great sadness and sorrow" the passing away, on Saturday, of the distinguished journalist Khalil Ibrahim, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

In a statement today, the Ministry's official spokesman, Acting Undersecretary of the News and Political Programs Sector, Dr. Badr Al-Enezi, conveyed the sincere condolences of the Minister of Information and Culture, Abdul Rah-

man Al-Mutairi, and the employees of the Ministry to the family of the deceased and his loved ones, asking God Almighty to cover him with His vast mercy.

Dr. Al-Enezi highlighted that the deceased enriched the media landscape, especially radio, with his programs and contributions, asking God Almighty to cover him with His vast mercy and great satisfaction.

Kuwait aims for economic resilience

Public & private partnerships at core of nine strategic initiatives

KUWAIT CITY, July 14: It has been learned from reliable sources that the government is preparing nine initiatives aimed at reducing the reliance on salaries funded by the state budget and increasing non-oil revenues. These initiatives are set to be included in the government's forthcoming work program, which will be announced within the next two months, reports Al-Anba daily.

According to the sources, the government is focusing on diversifying income sources and reducing the budget deficit. While the broad outlines of the nine initiatives have been established, they are still undergoing consensus and consultation processes. These initiatives will soon be ready for integration into the government's work program.

Key among the proposed initiatives are:

regarding the employment of Kuwaitis.

■ **Reviewing Government Agencies:** Evaluating the competencies of various government agencies to consider potential cancellations or mergers of those with overlapping functions.

■ **Legislative Reforms:** Issuing the Northern Economic Zone Law and announcing new revenue streams that do not rely on oil.

■ **Industrial Development:** Allocating industrial lands for projects that positively impact the local economy and boost exports.

■ **Expanding Petrochemical Industries:** Enhancing value-added petrochemical industries to serve global markets.

■ **Maximizing State Revenues:** Diversifying national industries and rationalizing support to ensure it reaches those in need.

■ **Housing Solutions:** Addressing the housing problem effectively.



JULY

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Undersecretary of the Ministry of Interior during his inspection tour.

Youth's vital role echoed in observance

Ministry of Interior undersecretary stresses need for vigilance in security of Hussainiyas

KUWAIT CITY, July 14, (Agencies): Undersecretary of the Ministry of Interior Lt.-Gen. Sheikh Salem Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah reaffirmed unwavering commitment to maintaining preparedness and vigilance to protect the security of visitors of Hussainiyas.

During an inspection tour of Hussainiyas in the governorates of Jahra and Hawalli on Saturday, he urged the security services to ensure the safety of the visitors, and remove any obstacles or difficulties that might face them.

Sheikh Salem also met with several field leaders to review the Ministry's field security plan for securing places of Husainiyas during these days, according to a press release from the Ministry's General Department of Security Relations and Media.

Meanwhile, the Hussainiyas and councils dedicated to the remembrance of the Prophet's (PBUH) family continued their commemoration of the nights of Muharram and the anniversary of Imam Hussein bin Ali's martyrdom on Ashura. This observance took place in a secure and reassuring atmosphere, thanks to the commendable efforts of the Ministry of Interior, the General Administration of Civil Defense and Medical Emergencies, and the full cooperation of Hussainiya officials, reports Al-Anba daily.

On the fifth night of Muharram, Abdullah Mulla Hadi, the preacher at Ashour Hussainiya, highlighted the paramount qualities of the Prophet's (PBUH) family, emphasizing their courage and steadfastness in the face of adversity. He noted that the Prophet's (PBUH) family served as a guiding light for others, citing the example of Hani bin Urwa, a supporter of Muslim bin Aqeel who remained unwavering in his



Congregation during the commemorative ceremonies.

stance even in his nineties.

On the sixth night, Muhammad Sabah Shabr, the preacher at the new Hussainiya, reflected on a hadith from the Messenger of Allah. The hadith states, "The feet of the son of Adam will not move on the Day of Judgment until he is asked about his life and how he spent it, his youth and how he wasted it, his wealth and where he acquired it from, and how he spent it."

Shabr emphasized the significance of youth as a pivotal period in one's life, characterized by strength and activity, and its profound impact on people's lives. He stressed the importance of utilizing this period in obedience to Allah Almighty.

He warned that if a person's record contains sins, a significant portion of these will likely stem from their youth, due to the period's inherent challenges. He invoked Allah's blessing for those who spend their youth in obedience to the Creator and highlighted the critical role of the tongue in leading to good or evil.

No rejections without valid cause

CSC enforces strict nominee rule

KUWAIT CITY, July 14: In a letter addressed to ministries and other government institutions, the Civil Service Commission (CSC) stressed that no nominees among the applicants registered in the Central Employment System should be rejected unless they do not visit the entity for which they are nominated within 30 days from the date of nomination, reports Al-Rai daily.

The CSC issued this instruction within the context of ensuring the implementation of the relevant directives and decisions.

In its letter, the CSC cited the decision issued on Feb 18, 2024 that all

State agencies should submit their manpower needs for approval in accordance with the regulations; in addition to CSC Circular No. 4/2024 on the approval of manpower needs in all government agencies covered by the Central Employment System.

The CSC pointed out that the recent nominations were based on the manpower needs received from the entities. It explained the decision was taken after confirming the number of vacancies under the financial grades stipulated in the entities' budgets, and verifying their manpower needs based on the specializations they entered into the integrated civil service system.

LOCAL

Promising hydrocarbon potential

KOC discovers huge oil reserves east of Failaka

KUWAIT CITY, July 14, (KUNA): Kuwait Oil Company (KOC) announced on Sunday the discovery of huge commercial quantities of light oil and associated gas in the offshore Al-Nokhatha field, located east of Kuwait's Failaka Island.

The initial estimated area of the field is approximately 96 square kilometers, marking a key breakthrough in Kuwait's exploration of hydrocarbon resources in its marine area, according to KOC's statement to KUNA.

The daily production from Al-Nokhatha well is around 2,800 barrels of light oil and 7 million cubic meters of associated gas, KOC explained.

Preliminary estimates suggest the hydrocarbon reserves at this well to be about 2.1 billion barrels of light oil and 5.1 trillion standard cubic feet of gas, equal to approximately 3.2 billion barrels of oil equivalent, it said.

These initial findings indicate huge potential to further enhance and increase hydrocarbon resource quantities in various layers and reservoirs within the discovered field, KOC added.

The launch of the current marine exploration project was based on two-dimensional seismic surveys of the area, along with geophysical and geological studies to understand the earth's layers and compositions, identify and secure the best drilling sites, and prepare for logistical operations, KOC mentioned.

KOC revealed that the marine area, representing about one-third of Kuwait's total land area and covering more than 6,000 square kilometers, in the first phase includes drilling six exploratory wells for oil and gas, with subsequent stages to be determined based on the drilling results.

KOC underscored the importance of the offshore exploration project as a national endeavor with the goal of enhancing Kuwait's hydrocarbon reserves sustainability and meeting global demand, aiming to elevate Ku-



KUNA photo Al-Nokhatha offshore field located east of Failaka Island in Kuwait's economic waters.

wait's status as a reliable global oil and gas producer and place it prominently on the regional map of leading offshore operators adhering to international standards.

Additionally, the project contributes to developing new technical skills in drilling and offshore production, creating varied employment opportunities for national talents, it pointed out.

Based on initial test results, a developmental plan will be established to commence actual production from the field at the earliest opportunity, boosting KOC's production capacity and laying another cornerstone for achieving its 2040 strategy, it indicated.

KOC confirmed that this discovery was the result of cohesive collaboration across its sectors, continuous support from Kuwait Petroleum Corporation's (KPC) management, and ongoing cooperation with all relevant government entities, paving the way for the successful exploration and investment in oil and gas drilling operations in the area.

Kuwait embarks on a comprehensive financial reform to develop revenues

Balancing spending and revenue diversification

KUWAIT CITY, July 14, (KUNA): Minister of Finance and Minister of State for Economic Affairs and Investment, Dr. Anwar Al-Mudhaf, emphasized that reducing the financial deficit in the state's general budget is a government priority. This goal will be achieved through rationalizing spending, addressing waste, and increasing and diversifying sources of income.

Dr. Al-Mudhaf made these remarks during the first general budget forum held by the Ministry of Finance on Sunday. He directed government agencies to implement the current fiscal year's budget in accordance with decisions, circulars, and budget implementation rules to enhance spending efficiency and address areas of waste identified by regulatory bodies.

The Minister highlighted that non-oil revenues are expected to constitute 4% of the GDP, aiming to increase this figure to 10% by 2030. He outlined Kuwait's path to financial sustainability, emphasizing the need to control budget growth with fixed government spending at 24.5 billion Kuwaiti dinars (approximately 80 billion US dollars). Additionally, efforts include doubling non-oil revenues to 4 billion dinars (about 13 billion dollars) by the fiscal year 2027-2028.

Cooperation

Dr. Al-Mudhaf outlined a plan for ongoing cooperation with government agencies throughout the fiscal year. This plan includes quarterly forums chaired by the Undersecretary of the Ministry of Finance, attended by financial sector officials to discuss developments and financial status reviews.

Regarding the General Reserve Fund, Dr. Al-Mudhaf noted a decline in liquidity due to increased withdrawals, with the balance standing at 2 billion dinars (about 6.5 billion dollars) in the fiscal year 2023-2024, compared to 33.6 billion dinars (about 109.8 billion dollars) in 2014-2015.

He stressed the importance of controlling the financial deficit for the future sustainability of Kuwait's public finances. The cumulative deficit from the fiscal year 2015-2016 to 2023-



Minister of Finance and Minister of State for Economic Affairs and Investment Dr. Anwar Al-Mudhaf during his speech.



KUNA photos

Part of the presence of government agencies.

2024 exceeded 30 billion dinars (about 98 billion dollars), with expectations that the deficit from 2025-2026 to 2028-2029 will exceed 26 billion dinars (about 84.9 billion dollars).

Dr. Al-Mudhaf projected revenues for the current fiscal year to reach 18.9 billion dinars (about 61.7 billion dollars), increasing to 21.8 billion dinars (about 71.2 billion dollars) in 2025-

2026 and 20.3 billion dinars (about 66.3 billion dollars) in 2026-2027. Expected revenues are estimated at about 20.4 billion dinars (about 66.6 billion dollars) for 2027-2028 and 20.3 billion dinars (about 66.3 billion dollars) for 2028-2029.

He also outlined the state's estimated expenditures, noting they amount to 24.5 billion dinars (about 80 billion

dollars) in the current fiscal year, increasing to 26.1 billion dinars (about 85.3 billion dollars) in 2025-2026 and 26.8 billion dinars (about 87.6 billion dollars) in 2026-2027. Projected expenditures are estimated at about 27.6 billion dinars (about 90.2 billion dollars) for 2027-2028 and 28.5 billion dinars (about 93.1 billion dollars) for 2028-2029.

Violators face fines up to KD500

AIS required for all marine vessels

KUWAIT CITY, July 14: The Coast Guard General Department at the Ministry of Interior issued a decision requiring owners of all marine vessels specified in Ministerial Resolution 410 /2024 to procure the automatic identification system (AIS) regardless of their shape or design and to use it whether the vessel is docked or moving, reports Al-Jarida daily.

The department explained AIS is a tracking system that provides information like the position, course and speed of the vessel; indicating the system can be purchased from entities approved by the Communication and Information Regulatory Authority (CITRA). It added that the system is installed after registering and obtaining a permit from the authority through its website by following these steps:

First: The user must create an account on the website, and then sub-

mit all the required documents to the authority.

Second: After approval by the authority, the transaction number will be sent to the user by telephone to track the procedures on the website.

Third: After completing the procedures and final approval, the user must pay the fees in the authority's office at Al-Hamra Tower.

Fourth: A license to purchase AIS will be issued within two working days after paying the fees.

The department advised users to always turn on the AIS whenever they sail; warning that if it is turned off for any purpose, a violation will be registered and the violator will be fined KD500.

It stressed the need for seafarers to strictly comply with maritime laws and regulations, clarifying that it took this decision to guarantee the safety of seafarers.

Foreign Minister,

Continued from Page 1

Moreover, if the Ministry of Foreign Affairs recalls 31 ambassadors to headquarters at once, how will they be utilized? Will they be retained there, spending their time drinking tea and coffee? How will the state benefit from them?

In the past, the fever of quotas for appointments controlled the joints of institutions when parliamentarians and influential people sought to obtain benefits by buying loyalties at the expense of public money.

However, in this new phase of Kuwait seeking a bright future, thanks to the efforts of His Highness the Amir, all these institutions must be reviewed, especially those that cost a lot of money and are of no use.

Therefore, when we highlight deficiencies in any institution or ministry, it is because we realize the importance of rationalizing spending on one hand and allocating any surplus to development projects on the other. This is crucial, especially considering the potential influence of former influential parliamentarians that may still prevail over certain ministries, such as the Ministry of Foreign Affairs - which needs restructuring - particularly in light of the considerable number of former and current ambassadors whose costs are covered by public finances.

The foundation of success is management, and behind it are distinguished human elements and competencies that realize the importance of sound management, good planning, quality, and time management.

Kuwait enacts

Continued from Page 1

This includes both automatic information exchange and responding to requests from the Ministry of Finance within 21 days.

Scope of Information Request - The competent authority can request and collect information from any person or entity within Kuwait's territory, as required under international tax infor-

Foreign Minister,

Financial Institutions Reporting - Financial institutions must annually collect and report required information to the competent authority by May 31 of the following year. They are required to ensure the accuracy of reported information through auditing by approved auditors.

Compliance and Procedures - Reporting financial institutions must establish internal procedures, appoint compliance officers, and adhere to due diligence requirements, including obtaining valid self-certification forms from customers when opening accounts.

Retention of Documents - Financial institutions must retain documents related to non-reportable accounts for at least six years, following the end of the year in which due diligence procedures were applied.

Penalties - The decree-law imposes fines ranging from 10,000 to 20,000 Kuwaiti dinars on individuals and financial institutions for non-compliance, failure to submit information accurately and timely, or violating due diligence procedures.

This legislation aims to align Kuwait's tax practices with international standards, facilitating the exchange of tax information while ensuring compliance and transparency in financial transactions.

CITRA mandates

Continued from Page 1

required to set the settlement price for terminating all types of short text messages at 5 fils per message.

They must provide CITRA with a final draft of the annex related to the interconnection of all types of short text messages within 30 days of the decision's issuance, attaching it to the main interconnection agreements approved pursuant to Resolution No. 120 of 2020.

Sources explained to the daily that this decision aims to develop and organize the communications sector within the country, fulfilling the interconnection instructions mentioned in the Communications Authority Law.

PACI to conduct survey to verify addresses

KUWAIT CITY, July 14: In an effort to restore state authority and impose the rule of law, the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defense and Interior Sheikh Fahad Yousef Al-Sabah has issued directives to the Public Authority for Civil Information (PACI) to conduct a comprehensive survey covering all residential areas throughout Kuwait to identify individuals who are registered under addresses where they do not actually reside, reports Al-Jarida daily.

According to informed sources, many citizens and residents are affected by such inaccuracies. In some instances, law enforcement authorities attempting to apprehend a violator or criminal based on recorded addresses find that the individual does not live there.

PACI recently cancelled thousands of addresses, mostly of the residents who do not actually stay in those addresses anymore.

It received complaints from homeowners who have had individuals erroneously registered under

their properties for several years even though they no longer stay there.

PACI intends to summon the owners of these houses and residential buildings to provide testimony, after which the individuals concerned will receive notifications via the Sahl application to visit PACI and correct their address details or provide new ones.

Failure to respond within two months of receiving the notification will result in a fine of KD 20 per month.

The service benefits many sectors, particularly major commercial companies such as banks and government agencies.

The Authority imposed high financial fines last year, amounting to 500,000 dinars, on some service providers for refusing to interconnect short text messages between themselves and other companies.

Regulations stipulate that it is not permissible to refuse interconnection between telecommunications networks, as subscribers must be enabled to obtain services from other operators per the systems and decisions.

CITRA is committed to ensuring the quality of services provided on the latest systems, monitoring them, and ensuring compliance by service providers with the set conditions.

The Market and Competition Sector periodically reviews and updates plans and programs related to the state's general policy in the communications and information technology sectors, approving policies that encourage competition and prevent monopolies.

Kuwait Amir

Continued from Page 1

Global leaders expressed concern over an apparent assassination attempt targeting former U.S. President Donald Trump at a rally in Pennsylvania that left one attendee dead and critically injured two others.

Trump's campaign said the presumptive Republican nominee was doing "fine" after being whisked off the stage though the shooting pierced the upper part of his right ear.

The Secret Service said it killed the suspected shooter who attacked from an elevated position outside the rally venue.

U.S. authorities are still investigating the shooting.

Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese condemned the "inexcusable attack" on the United States and Australia's shared democratic values.

"In Australia, as in the United States, the essence and the purpose of our democracies is that we can express our views, debate our disagreements and

resolve our differences peacefully," Albanese told reporters in the Australian Parliament House.

Austrian Chancellor Karl Nehammer said on X that he was appalled by the attempt.

"Political violence has no place in our society!" he said.

Brazil's president, Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, called the incident unacceptable and on X and said the attack must be "strongly repudiated" by all democracy defenders.

Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau said he was sickened by the shooting and his thoughts were with Trump, those at the event and all Americans.

"It cannot be overstated - political violence is never acceptable," he wrote on X.

The Chinese Foreign Ministry said in a statement that China is concerned about the attack and President Xi Jinping has already extended his sympathies to Trump.

Wishing Trump a speedy recovery, Czech President Petr Pavel said there's "no place for violence in a democratic society," adding that politicians "need to try to calm the situation down."

Egyptian President Abdel Fattah El Sisi stressed his country's condemnation of the attack in a statement and wished for the U.S. election campaigns to resume peacefully.

French President Emmanuel Macron sent his wishes to Trump for a prompt recovery. "It is a drama for our democracies. France shares the indignation of the American people," he posted on X.

German Chancellor Olaf Scholz posted on X saying the attack was "despicable" and such violent acts threaten democracy. "My compassionate thoughts are also with the other people who were hurt in the attack," he said.

Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orbán said his thoughts and prayers were with Trump "in these dark hours" on X.

India's prime minister, Narendra Modi, said he was deeply concerned by "the attack on my friend."

"Strongly condemn the incident. Violence has no place in politics and democracies," he wrote on X.

Masrour Barzani, the prime minister of the Kurdistan region of Iraq, condemned the attack "in the strongest terms," saying on X his thoughts are

with the victims of "this senseless act of terrorism."

At the start of the weekly Cabinet meeting in Jerusalem, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said he watched "in horror," adding that the attack was also an "assassination attempt on American democracy."

He said everyone in Israel was sending Trump wishes for "a quick recovery and return to full strength."

Italian President Sergio Mattarella said in a statement the attack was a cause for serious alarm and "a disconcerting symptom of the deterioration of the civil fabric and of the dangerous refusal of confrontation, dialogue and respect for democratic life."

Meanwhile, Premier Giorgia Meloni wished Trump a quick recovery.

"We must stand firm against any form of violence that challenges democracy," Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida said on X.

Mexico's president, Andrés Manuel López Obrador, denounced the attack on X and said "violence is irrational and inhumane."

Kuwait strongly

Continued from Page 1

protection to the Palestinian people and demand occupation forces to comply with relevant international resolutions.

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia denounced the continued massacres by the Israeli occupation forces against the Palestinian people, the latest of which targeted a refugee camp in Khan Yunis in southern Gaza Strip.

The Saudi Ministry of Foreign Affairs renewed, in a statement, the call for an immediate and permanent ceasefire, and provision of protection for civilians in all occupied Palestinian territories. The Ministry stressed the need to activate international accountability mechanisms regarding the continued Israeli violations of international humanitarian law and resolutions.

The Arab Parliament strongly condemned the horrible massacre committed by the Israeli occupation forces in Al-Mawasi neighborhood, Khan Yunis, southern Gaza Strip.

In a statement on Sunday, the Arab Parliament said that the occupation forces killed and injured more than 120 civilians, including women and children.

Israel's systematic and continuous targeting of civilians and shelters for displaced persons in the Gaza Strip constitutes genocide and ethnic cleansing against the Palestinian people, adding these actions are a blatant challenge to all international resolutions and laws.

The Arab Parliament held the international community and the Security Council fully responsible for these massacres, urging them to pressure Israel to end its annihilation, hold those responsible accountable, provide protection for Palestinian civilians, and ensure the entry of humanitarian and medical aid into the Gaza Strip.

The United Nations (UN) expressed their shock and sadness by the loss of lives over the Israeli occupation strikes on Khan Yunis.

UN Spokesperson Stephane Dujarric said in a press release on Saturday that reports indicated the attack had taken place in a densely populated area "designated as a humanitarian zone sheltering displaced people."

"This underscores that nowhere is safe in Gaza," he stressed. "The Secretary-General condemns the killing of civilians, including women and children."

The Secretary-General underlined once again that there must be an immediate humanitarian ceasefire, with all hostages released "immediately and unconditionally."

Over 50 Palestinians were killed and many were injured on Saturday in a new massacre by the Israeli occupation forces in Khan Yunis, southern Gaza.

Meanwhile, Israel said it targeted Hamas' shadowy military commander in a massive strike Saturday in the crowded southern Gaza Strip that killed at least 90 people including children, according to local health officials. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said "there still isn't absolute certainty" that Mohammad Deif and a second Hamas commander, Rafa Salama, were killed.

Hamas rejected the claim that Deif was in the area, saying "these false claims are merely a cover-up for the scale of the horrific massacre."

World News Roundup

Europe

33 Indian workers freed

Treason, espionage cases 'up' in Russia

TALLINN, Estonia, July 14, (AP): When Maksim Kolker's phone rang at 6 a.m., and the voice on the other end said his father had been arrested, he thought it was a scam to extort money. A day earlier, he had taken his father, prominent Russian physicist Dmitry Kolker, to the hospital in his native Novosibirsk, when his advanced pancreatic cancer had suddenly worsened.

The phone kept ringing and Kolker kept hanging up until finally his father called to confirm the grim news. The elder Kolker had been charged with treason, the family later learned, a crime that is probed and prosecuted in absolute secrecy in Russia and punished with long prison terms.

Treason cases have been rare in Russia in the last 30 years, with a handful annually. But since the 2022 invasion of Ukraine, they have skyrocketed, along with espionage prosecutions, ensnaring citizens and foreigners alike, regardless of their politics.

That has brought comparisons to the show trials under Soviet dictator Josef Stalin in the 1930s.

The more recent victims range from Kremlin critics and independent journalists to veteran scientists working with countries that Moscow considers friendly.

These cases stand out from the crackdown on dissent that has reached unprecedented levels under President Vladimir Putin. They are investigated almost exclusively by the powerful Federal Security Service, or FSB, with specific charges and evidence not always revealed.

The accused are often held in strict isolation in Moscow's notorious Lefortovo Prison, tried behind closed doors, and almost always convicted, with long prison sentences.

In 2022, Putin urged the security services to "harshly suppress the actions of foreign intelligence services, promptly identify traitors, spies and saboteurs."

Division

The First Department, a rights group that specializes in such prosecutions and takes its name from a division of the security service, counted over 100 known treason cases in 2023, lawyer Evgeny Smirnov told The Associated Press. He added there probably were another 100 that nobody knows about.

The longer the war goes on, "the more traitors" the authorities want to round up, Smirnov said.

Treason cases began growing after 2014, when Russia illegally annexed Crimea from Ukraine, threw its weight behind a separatist insurgency in the eastern part of the country and fell out with the West for the first time since the Cold War.

Two years earlier, the legal definition of treason was expanded to include providing vaguely defined "assistance" to foreign countries or organizations, effectively exposing to prosecution anyone in contact with foreigners.

The move followed mass anti-government protests in 2011-12 in Moscow that officials claimed were instigated by the West. Those changes to the law were heavily criticized by rights advocates, including those in the Presidential Human Rights Council.

Faced with that criticism at the time, Putin promised to look into the amended law and agreed "there shouldn't be any broad interpretation of what high treason is."

And yet, that's exactly what began happening. In 2015, authorities arrested Svetlana Davydova, a mother of seven in the western region of Smolensk, on treason charges in accordance with the new, expanded definition of the offense.

Also:

ROME: Italy's tax police said Saturday they had freed 33 Indian farm workers from "slave-like working conditions" in the northern province of Verona, while seizing almost half a million euros from the two alleged gangmasters.

Police said the two alleged abusers, also Indian, persuaded their fellow nationals to come to Italy, paying 17,000 euros each to obtain seasonal working permits.

The men were then obliged to work in farms for seven days a week and up to 10-12 hours a day, paid only 4 euros per hour, in conditions that the Italian police described as "slavery."

Some of the migrants were also asked to continue working for free to pay an additional 13,000 euros for a permanent work permit, which in reality they would have never obtained, the police added.

The two alleged abusers are under investigation for crimes including enslavement and labor exploitation. The victims will be offered protection, job opportunities and legal residency papers.

The issue of modern forms of slavery in Italy came under the spotlight recently following the case of Satnam Singh, a 31-year-old off-the-books Indian farm laborer who bled to death after being abandoned by his employer in front of his house after his arm was severed by a wrapping machine.

A Moody's report published in March showed that Italy persistently exhibited the highest number in Europe of modern slavery events, with approximately 32,000 incidents over five years from 2018.

PARIS: Paris hosted an extra-special guest for France's national holiday Sunday - the Olympic flame lighting up the city's grandiose military parade for Bastille Day.

Just 12 days before the French capital hosts exceptionally ambitious and high-security Summer Games, the torch relay joined up with thousands of soldiers, sailors, rescuers and medics marching in Paris beneath roaring fighter jets.

While people around France mark the day with concerts, parties and fireworks, here's a look at what the holiday's about, and what's different this year.

On July 14, 1789, revolutionaries stormed the Bastille fortress and prison in Paris, heralding the start of the French Revolution and the end of the monarchy. The holiday is central to the French calendar, with events across the country. It aims to embody the national motto of "liberty, equality and fraternity," though not everyone in France feels the country lives up to that promise.

The Paris parade is the holiday's highlight. This year, it paid tribute to those who freed France from Nazi occupation 80 years ago, with a re-enactment of the D-Day landings of June 6, 1944, and a presentation by service members from the 31 countries whose troops contributed to the liberation. About half are African nations that were under French colonial rule



German Chancellor Olaf Scholz, (left), and Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida review the honor guard on the occasion of their meeting at the Federal Chancellery, in Berlin on July 12. (AP)

Politics

Minnesota Republican Rahm drops out

Dems weigh Biden impact on House races

WASHINGTON, July 14, (AP): Democratic Leader Hakeem Jeffries provided a succinct answer this week when asked if President Joe Biden was a liability for the most vulnerable House Democrats seeking reelection - "No."

But a growing number of congressional Democrats are indicating otherwise. And it's not just the lawmakers representing true battleground districts but also House members in districts viewed as relatively safe.

About 20 House Democrats have called on the president to withdraw from the race since his debate with former President Donald Trump two weeks ago, and the number is growing by the day. Some are in highly competitive races, such as Reps. Angie Craig of Minnesota, Eric Sorensen of Illinois and Pat Ryan of New York. Others hold seats in Democratic strongholds, such as Reps. Mike Quigley of Illinois and Adam Smith of Washington.

With Republicans having a strong chance to retake the Senate and Trump gaining momentum for the presidency, many Democrats view the House as their best chance of preventing the GOP from controlling the White House and both chambers of Congress.

Initiative

They need to flip just four seats to retake the majority and give Democrats a seat at the table for any major legislative initiative. Still, some lawmakers fear their chances are slipping away.

The focal point for lawmakers asking Biden to withdraw is stopping Trump from being reelected. But Rep. Jim Himes, D-Conn., said the risk is wider than that. He said on MSNBC that "the trajectory, what Americans believe in their bones right now, suggests not only that Joe Biden would lose this race, but that we would lose the Senate and the House."

The call by some for Biden to step aside also could be smart political strategy. Steve Israel, a former New York congressman who led House Democratic election efforts twice, said law-

makers in competitive districts have to localize their races no matter who is at the top of the presidential ticket. Some are doing so now with their calls for the president to withdraw.

"You've got to make a distinction between the national political brand and your own," Israel said.

Rep. Richard Hudson, chair of the election campaign arm for House Republicans, claimed that every member of Congress has known Biden is "cognitively impaired" and now "these Democrats that are in competitive seats are running and hiding." He said it's too late for those calling for Biden to step aside now.

"I just think it's very callous, and it's very hypocritical. And I think the voters are going to see through it," Hudson said.

Rep. Jared Golden of Maine has not called on Biden to end his candidacy but has said he expects him to lose, which could provide some separation. Still, Golden said he isn't worried about Biden's impact on his race.

"All I know is I outperformed Joe Biden by 13 points in the last election and I got a thousand more votes than Donald Trump in that election. I'm not worrying about that, and my record in opposition to the Biden administration is pretty well established," Golden said. "So, no, I'm not as concerned about that as a lot of my colleagues, but that's their issue."

He noted that he voted with Biden on major infrastructure, veterans and semiconductor manufacturing bills, but against his rescue plan during the pandemic. He said he'll also be introducing a bill establishing a 10% universal tariff on imports, an idea Trump has proposed.

Golden rejected assertions from Republicans that swing district Democrats knew Biden was feeble but silently enabled him.

Also:

MINNEAPOLIS: Republicans got a straighter path to potential victory Saturday in what is expected to be Minnesota's closest congressional race when GOP-endorsed candidate **Taylor**

Rahm dropped out of a primary fight against the better-funded **Joe Teirab**, who already had tacit backing from key House leaders.

Rahm, a political newcomer and defense attorney, said in a statement that he was shifting gears to serve as a senior adviser to former President **Donald Trump's** campaign in Minnesota, where Trump insists he can defeat President **Joe Biden** after coming close to carrying the traditionally Democratic state in 2016.

That gives Teirab - a Marine Corps veteran, former federal prosecutor and son of a Sudanese immigrant - free rein to focus on incumbent Democratic Rep **Angie Craig** in the highly competitive 2nd District, which includes suburban and rural areas south of Minneapolis and St. Paul, and represents one of the best pickup opportunities for the narrow House Republican majority.

"In my opinion, there is nothing more important for this district than getting Biden (or a Democrat replacement) out of power and getting Donald Trump back in the White House," Rahm said in a statement. "Therefore, I will suspend my campaign operations and focus on doing everything possible to save our country."

Rahm won the endorsement with 74% of the vote at the district GOP convention in April, with backing from grassroots conservatives despite Teirab's huge fundraising edge and expected support from establishment Minnesota Republicans like House Majority Whip Tom Emmer, who is Trump's state chairman.

Teirab on Thursday announced he had raised nearly \$700,000 in the second quarter, bringing his total for the cycle to over \$1.5 million, while ending the quarter with over \$813,000 in cash on hand that he can now devote to the general election campaign. Rahm has not yet announced his second-quarter numbers.

Craig, who last Saturday called for Biden to withdraw from the presidential race and allow a new nominee to emerge, hasn't announced her latest quarterly totals either but finished the first quarter with \$2.8 million in the bank.



The Olympic torch is presented to French President Emmanuel Macron during the Bastille Day parade on July 14 in Paris. The Olympic flame is lighting up the city's grandiose Bastille Day military parade. It's 12 days before the French capital hosts exceptionally ambitious and high-security Summer Games. (AP)



Tao



Robinson

America

Alabama shooting kills 3: Three people including a young child were killed when their car was targeted with multiple gunshots outside a residence in Birmingham, Alabama, on Saturday evening.

The Birmingham Police Department said in a social media post that a triple homicide investigation was underway in the 3400 Block of 27th Street North.

The police said officers responded around 5:20 pm to a report of a vehicle accident at the scene of a shooting, WBRC-TV reported.

A man, woman and a small child in the car all suffered gunshot wounds and were pronounced dead at the scene by emergency medical personnel, WBRC reported.

The car at the front yard of a residence had numerous bullet holes, WBRC reported. (AP)

Crash injures 7 firefighters: Authorities say seven firefighters were injured when two tanker trucks crashed while responding to a large blaze in York, Pennsylvania.

Officials said the crash occurred shortly before 11 pm Friday in Spring Garden Township, about a third of a mile from the large warehouse fire in the city.

The York New Salem Volunteer Fire Company said in a post on its Facebook page that five members sustained injuries ranging from "some minor bumps and bruises to some being a little more serious" - but none of the injuries were life-threatening.

Chief David Rittenhouse of the Laurel Fire Company No. 1 of Windsor said both firefighters staffing its tanker were taken to WellSpan York Hospital for evaluation but had been discharged by 1 am Saturday.

"It's been a very long night," the New Salem company's post said. "At this point all we know is there was an accident involving a couple pieces of fire apparatus. We are asking everyone to please keep all involved from our station and the two members of the Laurel Fire Co in your thoughts and prayers." (AP)

Court reverses conviction: A federal appeals court has reversed the conviction of a researcher who was accused of hiding work he did in China while employed at

the University of Kansas.

Feng "Franklin" Tao was convicted in April 2022 of three counts of wire fraud and one count of making a mate-



Zhao Leji, chairman of China's National People's Congress (NPC) Standing Committee, meets with Russian President Vladimir Putin in St. Petersburg, Russia on July 11. At the invitation of Viacheslav Volodin, chairman of the Russian parliament's lower house, the State Duma, and Chairwoman of Russian Federation Council Valentina Matviyenko, Zhao paid an official goodwill visit to Russia from July 9 to 13. (Xinhua)

rially false statement. US District Judge **Julie Robinson** threw out the wire fraud convictions a few months later but let the false statement conviction stand. She later sentenced him to time served.

But the 10th US Circuit Court of Appeals in Kansas City, Missouri, on Thursday ruled that the government failed to provide sufficient evidence that Tao's failure to disclose his potential conflict of interest actually mattered, and it directed the lower court to acquit him of that sole remaining count. (AP)

Vermont floods up concerns: The latest flooding in Vermont has added fresh urgency to concerns about the hundreds of dams in the state, a third of which are more than a century old.

This week's deluge from the remnants of Hurricane Beryl wasn't as bad for the hundreds of dams compared to last year's floods, when five failed and nearly 60 overtopped. But the second bad flood in a year raises concerns about the viability of these structures as climate change brings heavier rains and more powerful storms.

"The many thousands of obsolete dams that remain in our rivers do not provide protection from flooding, despite what many may think," Andrew Fisk, the northeast regional director for the environmental advocacy group American Rivers, said. (AP)

Africa

Tunisia candidates held

Terrorism rampant in Sahel: UN envoy

UNITED NATIONS, July 14, (Agencies): Terrorism and organized crime by violent extremist groups linked to al-Qaida and the Islamic State are a "pervasive threat" in Africa's volatile Sahel region and are spilling over to West Africa's coastal countries, the top UN envoy for the area warned Friday.

Leonardo Simão, the UN special representative for the Sahel and West Africa, said the focus on combating terrorism has had limited effect in stopping rampant illegal trafficking in the Sahel and the effort needs more police.

"It's drugs, it's weapons, it's human beings, it's mineral resources, and even food," Simão said after briefing the UN Security Council.

According to Secretary-General Antonio Guterres' new report on the Sahel and West Africa, hundreds of people have been killed in the first half of 2024 alone in terrorist attacks, many of them civilians.

The vast majority of deaths occurred in Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger, whose ruling military juntas in March announced a joint security force to fight terrorism, though the force has yet to begin operations. The three countries are increasingly cutting ties with the US military and allying with Russia on its security challenges.

Last week, the three juntas doubled down on their decision to leave the Economic Community of West African States, the nearly 50-year-old regional bloc known as ECOWAS, following the creation of their own security partnership, the Alliance of Sahel States, in September.

Simão did not comment on the countries' international alliances, but said their withdrawals from ECOWAS will be "harmful to both sides." He lauded ECOWAS for taking a "vigorous approach" to engaging with Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger and urged the countries to maintain regional unity.

Support He called for the UN's continued support of the Accra Initiative, a military platform involving Burkina Faso and nearby coastal countries to contain the spread of extremism in the Sahel. He also said the Security Council should pursue financing regionally led police operations.

US Ambassador Linda Thomas-Greenfield expressed support for ECOWAS and UN efforts in West Africa and the Sahel and said the Security Council "must also step up."

Thomas-Greenfield urged increased funding and the appointment of a UN resident coordinator in the region, saying a UN presence is critical to support UN development efforts "as well as ensuring the delivery of much needed humanitarian assistance."

Russia's deputy ambassador, Anna Evstigneeva, countered that international security efforts amount to an "attempt to continue imposing new colonial models" on Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger. She accused Western donors of limiting assistance for "political reasons."

"Mali, Burkina Faso and Niger are conducting an uncompromising and coordinated fight against terrorist groups and they are achieving success and stabilizing their territories," Evstigneeva said.

The region's deadliest terrorist attacks this year took place in Burkina Faso, where the militant jihadist groups Jama'at Nasrat al-Islam wal-Muslimin, which has ties to al-Qaida, and the Islamic State claim "extensive swaths" of territory, Guterres said in the report. In February alone, major terrorist attacks killed 301 people, including a single assault that claimed 170 lives.

According to the Armed Conflict Location and Event Data Project, there were 361 conflict-related deaths in Niger during the first three months of 2024, a significant increase from 250 over the same period last year.

Also:

MOGADISHU, Somalia: Five prisoners and three soldiers were killed Saturday in a failed attempt by some inmates to break out of a prison in the Somali capital, Mogadishu, a corrections officer said.

Twenty-one people were wounded in the Saturday morning incident, said Col. Abdikani Khalaf, spokesman for the Somali army's custodial corps.

Speaking after the incident was over, he told reporters that some inmates armed with small arms and hand grenades exchanged fire with guards.

State-run media reported that an elite police unit intervened to thwart the attempted jailbreak.

The gunfire and explosions had interrupted weeks of relative calm for residents of Mogadishu, which faces sporadic attacks from the Islamic militant group al-Shabab.

The prisoners involved in the attempted jailbreak were believed to be members of al-Shabab, although it has not claimed responsibility for the incident.

Somali authorities said they had launched an investigation into how inmates were able to acquire weapons.

This is not the first instance of an attempted jailbreak at Mogadishu's main prison. A similar event in 2020 resulted in the loss of nine lives as inmates clashed with security guards while trying to flee.

TUNIS, Tunisia: As elections approach in Tunisia, potential candidates are facing arrest or being summoned to appear in court as authorities clamp down on those planning to challenge President Kais Saied.

On Friday, a judge in a Tunis court put a potential presidential candidate under a gag order and restricted his movements. Abdellatif Mekki, who served as Tunisia's health minister and was a prominent leader of the Islamist movement Ennahda before founding his own political party, is among a group of former politicians being investigated for the 2014 killing of a prominent physician.

His political party, Work and Accomplishment, has decried the timing of the murder charges as politically motivated due to his plans to run against Saied in Tunisia's October election.

"We strongly condemn these arbitrary measures, considering their political targeting of a serious candidate in the presidential elections," it said in a statement Friday.

Mekki is the latest potential candidate to face legal obstacles before campaigning even gets underway in the 12 million person North African nation.

The challenges facing opposition candidates are a far cry from the democratic hopes felt throughout Tunisia a decade ago. The country emerged as one of the Arab Spring's only success stories after deposing former dictator Zine El Abidine Ben Ali in 2011, holding peaceful, democratic elections and rewriting its constitution in 2014.



A North Korean flag flutters in North Korea's village Gijungdong as seen from a South Korea's observation post inside the demilitarized zone in Paju, South Korea during a media tour, March 3, 2023. North Korea threatened on July 13, 2024, to boost its nuclear fighting capability and get the US and South Korea to face 'an unimaginably harsh price' as it slammed its rivals' new defense guidelines that it says revealed an intention to invade the North. Inset: This undated photo provided on July 14, by the North Korean government, North Korean leader Kim Jong Un, (center), inspects a development project in Samjiyon, Ryanggang Province, during his July 11-12 visit. (AP)

Asia

Search on for missing military copter: Cambodia

Kim's sister hints at flying more balloons

SEOUL, South Korea, July 14, (Agencies): The powerful sister of North Korean leader Kim Jong Un vowed Sunday to respond to what she called a fresh South Korean civilian leafleting campaign, signaling North Korea would soon resume flying trash-carrying balloons across the border.

Since late May, North Korea has floated numerous balloons carrying waste paper, scraps of cloth, cigarette butts and even manure toward South Korea on a series of late-night launch events, saying they were a tit-for-tat action against South Korean activists scattering political leaflets via their own balloons. No hazardous materials have been found. South Korea responded by suspending a 2018 tension-reduction deal with North Korea and resumed live-fire drills at border areas.

In a statement carried by state media, Kim Yo Jong said that "dirty leaflets and things of (the South Korean) scum" were found again in border and other areas in North Korea on Sunday morning.

"Despite the repeated warnings of (North Korea), the (South Korean) scum are not stopping this crude and dirty play," she said.

Ready

"We have fully introduced our countermeasure in such situation. The (South Korean) clans will be tired from suffering a bitter embarrassment and must be ready for paying a very high price for their dirty play," Kim Yo Jong said.

North Korea last sent rubbish-carrying balloons toward South Korea in late July. It wasn't immediately known if, and from which activists' group in South Korea, balloons were sent to North Korea recently. For years, groups led by North Korean defectors have floated huge balloons carrying anti-Pyongyang leaflets, USB sticks containing K-pop songs and South Korean drama, and U.S. dollar bills toward North Korea.

Experts say North Korea views such balloons campaigns as a grave provocation that can threaten its leadership because it bans official access to foreign news for most of its 26 million people.

On June 9, South Korea redeployed gigantic loudspeakers along the border for the first time in six years, and resumed anti-North Korean propaganda broadcasts.

South Korean officials say they don't restrict activists from flying leaflets to North Korea, in line with a 2023 constitutional court ruling that struck down a contentious law criminalizing such leafleting, calling it a violation of free speech.

Kim Yo Jong's statement came a day after North Korea's Defense Ministry threatened to bolster its nuclear capability and make the U.S. and South Korea pay "an unimaginably harsh price" as it slammed its rivals' new defense guidelines that it says reveal an intention to invade the North.



'Search on for missing copter': Cambodia's Defense Ministry on Saturday announced that a military helicopter had gone missing while flying over the heavily forested Cardamom Mountain range in the country's southwest, confirming earlier media reports that contact with the aircraft had been lost on Friday.

The brief statement said the helicopter had been on a training flight, and was flying in bad weather when air force headquarters lost touch with it. The statement did not say how many people were aboard. An intensive search for the missing aircraft was launched Saturday morning, the statement said. Local press reports said the search was focused on Pursat province.

In 2014, a Chinese-made Z-9 helicopter crashed in a pond south of the Cambodian capital, Phnom Penh, killing two generals who headed the air force's helicopter unit along with two pilots.

Police at that time said the helicopter had been on a training exercise, and the cause of the accident was not clear.



3 dead in Japan landslide: Three people have been confirmed dead after they were trapped in a landslide in the early hours of Friday in western Japanese prefecture of Ehime, according to local authorities.

Firefighters and police searched the disaster-hit area in Matsuyama, Ehime Prefecture, and found two men and one woman on Saturday afternoon. They were later confirmed to be members of a family who had been reported missing since the landslide.

The victims were a man in his 90s, a woman in her 80s and their son in his 40s, who were living in a wooden house that collapsed due to the landslide.

At around 4 a.m. local time on Friday, a slope measuring around 50 meters wide and 100 meters high collapsed from a mountain, with mud flowing into nearby homes and apartments. Local authorities had been searching for the three missing people after the disaster.

There were no further reports of anybody missing and the search was called off at the landslide site.

The landslide occurred as the country's weather agency warned of heavy rain mainly in western Japan, urging people to be on high alert for landslides and flooding in low-lying areas.



Philippine flooding kills 1: At least one person died and two others were missing after flooding hit parts of the southern Philippines over the weekend, a government agency monitoring disasters said Sunday.

The National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council said that the lone fatality was due to drowning, reported in Davao Occidental province on Friday.

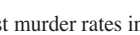
The two missing people were reportedly swept away by a strong current while crossing a river in Bukidnon province.

The agency said the flooding affected nearly 39,000 people in four regions. Around 10,000 displaced villagers of the affected population have stayed in evacuation centers while waiting for the flood to subside.

The agency recorded at least eight landslides triggered by incessant rains in Davao region and Zamboanga Peninsula.

The floods have damaged at least 47 houses in two regions, 40 roads, and two bridges in four regions of the Southeast Asian country.

the highest murder rates in the world. (AP)



2 officers killed in Mexico: Two police officers were shot to death in the embattled Mexican city of Celaya amid a wave of targeted attacks that authorities said were likely carried out by a drug cartel.

A total of 18 Celaya police officers have been shot to death so far this year, making the city of a half million inhabitants probably the most dangerous city in the hemisphere for police.

"This is something that worries us a lot, and more than that it hurts," President Andrés Manuel López Obrador said of the attacks.

Authorities confirmed that gunmen opened fire on police in at least four different locations in and around Celaya on Wednesday. Police sources and the federal government said the brutal Santa Rosa de Lima gang appears to have been behind the attacks.

Celaya is located in the north-central state of Guanajuato, which has the highest number of homicides of any state in Mexico, largely due to drug cartel and gang turf wars.

An employee of the 300-member Celaya police force who was not authorized to speak publicly about the matter said that gunmen opened fire on three unarmed municipal traffic officers while they were setting up a checkpoint to check vehicle registrations. (AP)



Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi, also a member of the Political Bureau of the Communist Party of China (CPC) Central Committee, meets with Gabonese Minister of Foreign Affairs Regis Onanga Ndiaye, who is in China for the Second High-Level Conference of the Forum on Global Action for Shared Development, in Beijing, capital of China on July 12. (Xinhua)



Bolsonaro



Obrador

Lat/Am

'Agency spied on judiciary': An investigation by federal police has led to allegations that Brazil's intelligence agency spied on members of the judiciary, lawmakers and journalists during the administration of former president Jair Bolsonaro, court records showed.

Among those targeted were Chamber Speaker Arthur Lira, Supreme Justice Alexandre de Moraes, the former governor of Sao Paulo João Dória and members of the environmental agency Ibama, according to a Supreme Court document signed by Moraes himself.

Also targeted were three senators who led a parliamentary enquiry into Bolsonaro's actions during the COVID-19 pandemic, in addition to well known journalists Mônica Bergamo of Folha de S.Paulo newspaper and Vera Magalhães of O Globo newspaper.

Police on Thursday carried out five preventive arrest warrants to dismantle a "criminal organization" that allegedly illegally monitored public authorities and produced fake news using systems from Brazil's intelligence agency, known by its Portuguese acronym ABIN.

The group essentially ran a "parallel structure", the court document said. "The criminal organization also illegally accessed computers, telephone devices and telecommunications infrastructure to monitor people and public officials," police said. (AP)

US sanctions Venezuela gang: The Biden administration sanctioned a Venezuelan gang allegedly behind a spree of kidnappings, extortion and other violent crimes tied to migrants that have spread across Latin America and the United States.

The US also offered a \$12 million reward for the arrest of three leaders of Tren de Aragua, which now joins the MS-13 gang from El Salvador and the Mafia-styled Camorra from Italy on a list of transnational criminal organizations banned from doing business in the US.

"Tren de Aragua poses a deadly criminal threat across the region," the US Treasury Department said in a statement, adding that it often preys on vulnerable populations such as migrant women and girls for sex trafficking.

"When victims seek to escape this exploitation, Tren de Aragua members often kill them and publicize their deaths as a threat to others," the statement added.

The Tren de Aragua traces its origins to more than a decade ago, to an infamously lawless prison in the central state of Aragua where a number of hardened criminals

were held. But it has expanded in recent years as millions of desperate Venezuelans fled President Nicolás Maduro's rule and migrated to other parts of Latin America or the US.

Authorities in countries such as Colombia, Peru and Ecuador - with large populations of Venezuelan migrants - have accused the group of being behind a spree of violent crimes in a region that has long had some of



Soldiers raid the Tocarón Penitentiary Center, in Tocarón, Venezuela on Sept 20, 2023. The Tren de Aragua gang originated at the prison. The Biden administration on July 11 sanctioned the Venezuelan gang allegedly behind a spree of kidnappings, extortion and other violent crimes tied to migrants that have spread across Latin America and the United States. (AP)

Boursa general index gains 1.8% by mid-2024

A recent report sheds light on significant disparities between market prices and book values among companies listed on the Kuwait Stock Exchange (KSE), despite a notable increase in market liquidity, reports Al-Jarida daily.

The report underscores the expectation that stock prices should rise in tandem with increased market liquidity, which saw a rise of about 31.7% in the first half of the current year compared to the same period in 2023, following a steep decline of -29.5% the previous year.

Despite the rise in liquidity, reflected in the KSE's general index gaining 1.8% by mid-year compared

to year-end 2023, there remains a disconnect between liquidity strength and market index movements.

This discrepancy complicates the understanding of market dynamics, as indices may not fully mirror liquidity improvements.

The report highlights a widespread phenomenon where many listed companies exhibit significant discrepancies between their market share prices and book values.

Analysis of financial statements from the first quarter of 2024 and closing prices at mid-year reveals:

Gulf stock exchanges see 43.9% surge in liquidity

In a dynamic period for Gulf stock exchanges, Al-Shall reported substantial changes in liquidity levels across the region's markets, reports Al-Jarida daily.

The total liquidity of the seven exchanges surged from \$250.7 billion in the first half of 2023 to \$360.9 billion in the same period of 2024, marking a robust increase of approximately 43.9%. This rise was predominantly driven by significant gains in Saudi Arabia's market liquidity, while two other exchanges experienced varying declines.

Saudi Arabia witnessed the highest relative increase in liquidity, soaring by 72.1% compared to the first half of 2023. However, despite this liquid-

ity boost, the Saudi market index incurred losses of approximately -2.4% by the end of 2023. This dichotomy underscores the divergence between liquidity levels and market performance metrics.

Similarly, the Kuwait Stock Exchange recorded a 31.7% rise in liquidity, albeit with modest index gains of 1.8%, the lowest in the region, while the Bahrain Stock Exchange saw a notable 31.9% increase in liquidity, accompanied by index gains of about 2.7%.

The Muscat Stock Exchange ranked fourth in liquidity increase at 31.1%, achieving the highest index gains in the region at 3.8%.

Market Movements

14-07-2024

SAUDI	Tadawul	Change	Closing pts	EGYPT	EGX 30	Change	Closing pts
▲		+89.14	11,881.55	▼		-245.92	28,042.06

Business

Kuwait's non-oil exports surge 8% in first five months of 2024

Exports to GCC countries rise by 5%

By Marwa Al-Bahravi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, July 14: Kuwait's non-oil exports experienced a remarkable 8% increase during the first five months of 2024 compared to the same period in 2023. Total exports reached approximately 227 million dinars, up 10 million dinars from 217 million dinars in the same period last year.

The exports were distributed across various regions:

Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) Countries: Exports to GCC countries amounted to 85 million dinars, a 5% increase over the same period in 2023.

Arab Countries: Exports to Arab countries totaled 36 million dinars, a substantial 33% increase.

European Countries: Exports to European countries reached 4.3 million dinars, a 37% jump.

African Countries: Exports to African countries more than doubled, increasing by 63% to 523 thousand dinars.

Asian and Australian Continents: Exports to these regions surged by 40% to 221 million dinars.

Two American Continents: Exports to the Americas increased by 61% to 592 thousand dinars.

Monthly export figures also showed strong growth, with the exception of April, which saw a 30% decline compared to the same month in 2023. The other months recorded

Private housing transactions fall 20.6%

Kuwait's real estate market liquidity dips 15.7% in June

KUWAIT CITY, July 14: Recent data from the Real Estate Registration and Documentation Department of the Ministry of Justice revealed a decrease in liquidity within Kuwait's real estate market for June 2024 compared to the previous month, reports Al-Jarida daily.

The total value of contract trades in June amounted to approximately 316.4 million dinars, marking a decline of -15.7% percent from May's liquidity level of 375.4 million dinars.

However, this figure represents a significant increase of 50.6 percent compared to June 2023, which recorded 210.1 million dinars in transactions.

June 2024 saw a total of 323 contract deals, all of which contributed to the market's liquidity dynamics. Al-Ahmedi Governorate led with 119 deals (36.8 percent of the total), followed by Hawalli Governorate with 73 deals (22.6 percent), while Al-Jahra Governorate reported the lowest number with 19 deals (5.9 percent).

Transactions in private housing ac-

tivities totaled around 107 million dinars, down -20.6 percent from May's 134.8 million dinars.

This sector constituted 33.8 percent of total transactions, a slight decrease from May's 35.9 percent while the average value per transaction increased by 7.4 percent to approximately 491 thousand dinars.

The investment housing activities surged to about 112.1 million dinars, up 56.3 percent from May's 71.7 million dinars. This sector's contribution to total liquidity rose to 35.4 percent from 19.1 percent in May.

Despite fewer transactions (84 compared to 103 in May), the average transaction value rose sharply by 91.7 percent to about 1.3 million dinars.

The commercial activity, however, declined sharply to 93.7 million dinars, a -43.0 percent decrease from May's 164.5 million dinars. This sector's contribution to total transactions fell to 29.6 percent from 43.8 percent in May, while the average transaction value for commercial activities decreased

by -40.0 percent to approximately 4.9 million dinars.

The warehouse activities saw two transactions worth 3.6 million dinars in June 2024, down -16.9 percent from May's 4.3 million dinars.

Comparing June 2024 to June 2023, the market showed a 50.6 percent increase in liquidity, driven primarily by a substantial rise of 180.8 percent in commercial activity liquidity.

For the first half of 2024, total market liquidity increased by 11.2 percent compared to the same period in 2023, reaching approximately 1.573 billion dinars.

If market liquidity continues at the current rate for the remainder of the year, projected annual trading could reach approximately 3.145 billion dinars, an 8.6 percent increase over the previous year.

These insights highlight the dynamic shifts within Kuwait's real estate market, reflecting changes in transaction volumes and sectoral contributions amid fluctuating economic conditions.

efforts to diversify its economy and reduce its reliance on oil revenues. The data suggests that Kuwait's strategic trade initiatives and increased global demand for its products have contributed to this positive trend.

the following increases:

January 2024: 4% increase to 23 million dinars

February 2024: 14% increase to 21 million dinars

March 2024: 27.5% increase to

40 million dinars

May 2024: 12.5% increase to 24 million dinars

The significant growth in Kuwait's non-oil exports across various regions highlights the country's

Saudi led region raising total of \$2.1 billion

GCC IPOs raise \$3.6 billion in H1 2024

KUWAIT CITY, July 14: Kuwait Financial Centre "Markaz" released its research report titled "Initial Public Offerings (IPO) in the GCC markets", stating that the region has raised total proceeds of USD 3.6 billion through 23 offerings during the first six months of 2024, marking a year-on-year decline in value by 32% compared to the first half of 2023, where issuers raised USD 5.3 billion through 21 offerings.

Geographical Allocation:

Markaz's report stated that Saudi Arabia led the region in terms of IPO proceeds during the first half, raising a total of USD 2.1 billion from 19 offerings constituting 59% of total GCC IPO proceeds. This represented an increase of 141% in the value of Saudi IPOs compared to H1-2023. In the UAE, IPO proceeds totaled USD 1.3 billion during the period with 3 offerings constituting 37% of total GCC IPO proceeds. However, this marked a decline of 67% in UAE proceeds compared to the same period of last year. In Kuwait, IPO proceeds totaled USD 147 million during the period with 1 offering constituting 4% of total GCC IPO proceeds.

Sector Allocation:

The Healthcare sector accounted for nearly 22% of the total proceeds during the period through three offerings amounting to a total of USD 788 million in proceeds led by Dr. Soliman Fakeeh Hospital IPO that raised USD 764 million. The Technology sector raised more than USD 515 million through the IPO of Alef Education, constituting 14% of total GCC IPO proceeds raised during the period. This was followed by IPOs from the Industrials, Consumer Staples, Food and Beverages, Commercial & Professional Services and Insurance sectors that constituted 12%, 11%, 9%, 8% and 6% respectively. Other sectors primarily include companies from the Financial Services, Utilities, Capital Goods, Pharma Biotech & Life Science,

Materials, Software & Services, and Consumer Services.

Exchange Allocation:

Saudi Arabia market (Tadawul) recorded 59% of the total IPO proceeds with the total value of USD 1.95 billion listed in its Main Market and USD 143 million in Nomu-Parallel Market. Dubai Financial Market (DFM) hosted a total of USD 805 million constituting 23% of the total GCC IPO proceeds, while Abu Dhabi Securities Exchange (ADX) saw a total of USD 515 million accounting for 14% of the total proceeds during the period. Kuwait accounted for 4% of the total GCC IPO proceeds with USD 147 million listed on Boursa Kuwait.

Top 5 GCC IPOs by Proceeds

during Q1-2024:

Markaz's report highlights the top 5 GCC IPOs by proceeds during H1-2024 as follows:

Dr. Soliman Abdulkader Fakeeh Hospital Company raised a total of USD 764 million in proceeds, marking the largest IPO in H1 2024. The company offered 49.8 million shares, or 21% stake, which was covered 119 times. The IPO proceeds constituted 21% of total GCC IPO proceeds during the period. The company was listed on Tadawul's Main Market on the 5th of June 2024.

Alef Education IPO raised a total of 515 million USD in proceeds making it the second largest IPO in 2024. The company offered 1.4 billion shares, or 20% stake which

was covered 39 times. The IPO proceeds constituted 14% of total GCC IPO proceeds during the period. The company was listed on June 11th on ADX.

Parkin Company IPO raised a total of USD 429 million in proceeds. The company offered 750 million shares or 25% stake. The IPO proceeds constituted 12% of total GCC IPO proceeds during the period and was covered 165 times. The company was listed on DFM on March 21st.

Spinneys Company IPO raised a total of USD 375 million in proceeds. Spinneys Company offered 900 million shares or 25% stake and was covered 64 times. The proceeds constituted 11% of total GCC IPO proceeds in H1 2024. The company was listed on DFM on the 9th of May.

Modern Mills Company raised a total of USD 314 million in proceeds through the sale of 24.5 million shares, or 30% stake, and was covered 127 times. Modern Mills Company IPO constituted 9% of total GCC IPO proceeds of H1 2024. The company was listed on Tadawul's Main Market on the 27th of March.

Recycling industry growth could create 50,000 jobs in Gulf

Gulf countries eye \$2 trillion boost from green projects by 2030

KUWAIT CITY, July 14: The report by Strategy&, a consulting firm, highlights significant opportunities for Gulf countries in green projects and sustainable financing, aiming to boost their economies and create jobs by 2030, reports Al-Qabas daily.

Here are the key points from the report:

Economic Impact -- Investing in green projects and sustainable financing could potentially contribute \$2 trillion to the Gulf economies by 2030 and generate over a million jobs across sectors like agriculture, food, construction, energy, transportation, and water and waste management.

Recycling Industry -- Increasing recycling rates from 10 percent to 40 percent in Gulf countries could create approximately 50,000 new jobs and enhance the recycling market valued at around \$6 billion.

Capital Markets -- The report emphasizes the need to en-

hance Gulf countries' capital markets to facilitate investments in sustainable projects. This includes improving market liquidity and investor accessibility, which are currently lagging behind global standards.

Green Finance -- There is a significant opportunity in green financing within the Gulf region, leveraging developed capital markets.

Initiatives like green bonds and sustainable finance frameworks are gaining traction, with over \$8.5 billion in green bonds and sukuk issuances recorded in 2022, up from \$605 million in 2021.

Strategic Priorities -- To capitalize on these opportunities, the report identifies four key priorities such as promoting environmental sustainability, establishing green sovereign funds, strengthening capital markets and developing transparent mechanisms for environmental performance.

Private sector stagnant at 5%

Kuwait Vision 2035 objectives slack behind, reports Al-Shall

KUWAIT CITY, July 14: A recent economic report by Al-Shall highlighted the lack of substantial advancement in achieving the objectives of Kuwait Vision 2035 during the 2010-2024 period, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

Key findings from the report:

Public sector employment among citizens increased from 74% to 80%, while private sector employment remained stagnant at around 5%. This contradicts the Vision 2035 goal of enhancing the private sector's role.

Capital spending rose by 7.7% but was not fully utilized in any fiscal year. This spending on high-cost construction projects did not contribute to sustainable job creation or increased production of goods and services.

Import reliance remains at 90%, and crude oil exports still account for over 90% of export revenue, indicating a lack of economic diversification.

The private sector's contribution to GDP fluctuated between 23% and

38%, averaging 30%, driven primarily by oil market variables rather than targeted economic strategies.

The upcoming flood of development projects lack any reference to their potential impact on national job creation or private sector economic contributions, focusing mainly on population and housing expansion.

The report criticized the descriptive and reactive nature of the General Secretariat's reporting, emphasizing the need for proactive policies that foresee and mitigate potential economic bottlenecks.

In summary, the economic report highlights the lack of substantial progress in achieving the key objectives of Kuwait Vision 2035, such as enhancing the role of the private sector, diversifying the economy, and creating sustainable employment opportunities for citizens. The report calls for more proactive and targeted policy interventions to address these shortcomings.

Kuwait's economic performance and policy initiatives over 5 years

KUWAIT CITY, July 14: The report issued by the General Secretariat of the Supreme Council for Planning and Development highlights several key economic indicators and factors influencing Kuwait's economy over the past five years, reports Al-Qabas daily.

The report says local inflation rates in Kuwait remained relatively low compared to global levels due to strong social safety nets and government subsidies on many commodities while the economic growth in terms of GDP growth rate experienced significant fluctuations.

In 2019 it was 0.9 percent, in 2020: -21.8 percent (largely due to economic challenges); in 2021: 29.9 percent (beginning of economic recovery), in 2022: 30.9 percent (peak growth) and in 2023: 11.1 percent (decline from peak).

Local demand for goods and services saw fluctuations - in 2019 it rose by 0.3 percent, 2020: contracted by 3.4 percent; 2021-2022: showed growth, peaking at 8.5 percent and 2023: decreased to 3.2 percent.

The average interest rates in Kuwait increased in 2022 and 2023 due to monetary policy adjustments by the Central Bank -- 2022: increased by 2.35 percent; 2023: increased further by 4.13 percent and previously de-

creased in 2020 and 2021.

Kuwait's crude oil production varied - in 2019: 2,683 thousand barrels per day; 2020-2021 saw production reductions; in 2022 production increased to 2,706 million barrels per day and in 2023 production reduced to 2,58 million barrels per day.

Government policies -- Measures since 2019 aimed at reducing inflation included forming committees for food security, enhancing the pharmaceutical system, and implementing price monitoring to combat price hikes.

Import dependence -- Despite government efforts, prices of non-subsidized goods were impacted by global inflation due to Kuwait's reliance on imported consumer goods. Price increases were notable from 2019 to 2022, with a slowdown in 2023.

In Global Economic Context the global inflation rates also fluctuated as follows: in 2019 it was 2.2 percent; in 2020: 1.9 percent; in 2021: 3.5 percent; in 2022: 8.3 percent (peak) and in 2023: 6.4 percent (decreased from peak)

The report underscores the interconnectedness of Kuwait's economy with global economic trends and the importance of robust government policies in managing economic stability and inflationary pressures.

'Commitment to innovation'

IRU highlights key risks facing insurance sector

KUWAIT CITY, July 14: The head of Kuwait's Insurance Regulatory Unit, Mohammed Al-Otaibi, highlighted key risks facing the insurance sector and outlined strategic plans to address them, reports Al-Jarida daily.

He identified legislative stagnation as a historical risk, emphasizing the importance of updated laws in protecting both customers and companies.

Al-Otaibi stressed the need for enhanced insurance awareness among the public and industry professionals to prevent misinformed decisions and ensure comprehensive coverage.

He also underscored the necessity for digital infrastructure

development to replace outdated paper-based systems, enhancing operational efficiency and regulatory oversight.

Al-Otaibi outlined the unit's pivotal role in safeguarding consumer rights and fostering a transparent market environment through proactive regulatory measures.

The unit's strategic initiatives include establishing the Central Insurance Warehouse Company, aimed at centralizing insurance data and facilitating efficient claims management.

Moreover, Al-Otaibi emphasized the unit's commitment to promoting innovation, supporting Kuwaitization efforts, and driving digital transformation across the insurance sector.

Green Hydrogen -- The report also highlights the potential of green hydrogen energy in the Gulf, with projections suggesting a market worth \$300 billion annually by 2050. Gulf countries are in a favorable position to capitalize on green hydrogen production technologies.

Global Perspective -- Globally, achieving the UN's Sustainable Development Goals requires substantial investments, estimated at \$4.2 trillion annually. The financial sector is increasingly directing funds towards sustainable assets, with global sustainable investments surpassing \$30 trillion by the end of 2022.

Overall, the report underscores the transformative potential of sustainable investments in the Gulf region, urging governments and financial institutions to seize these opportunities to drive economic growth, job creation, and environmental sustainability.

more Chinese enterprises motivated to trade green electricity: experts

Several provincial regions across China reported robust trade in green electricity and green certificates during the first half of 2024, amid the country's drive to deliver on its dual carbon promises.

Experts cited growing demand for both domestic and global enterprises to reduce emissions, coupled with policy facilitation, as causes to drive the increasingly brisk trade.

Among the provincial regions that registered surges in the trading volume of green electricity, northwest China's Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region saw 860 million kilowatt-hours (kWh) of green electricity transacted during the first half of this year. This figure marks an increase of

two times compared to the entire year of 2023.

Moreover, electricity users in Xinjiang had purchased more than 1.44 million green certificates during the first six months, 3.5 times the volume recorded in the same period last year.

In northeast China's Heilongjiang Province, the transaction volume of green electricity in the first six months had reached 741 million kWh, including 686 million kWh of wind power and 55 million kWh of photovoltaics, a surge of 5.3 times compared with the entire year of 2023.

Additionally, the first six months saw over 5.15 million green certificates transacted in the northeastern province, about 1.22 million more than the volume

throughout 2023.

In Shanghai, over 15 million green certificates had been transacted from January to early June, a steep rise from the annual volume of 460,000 in 2023.

Power users can achieve green electricity consumption through green electricity trading or purchasing green certificates.

Green electricity refers to electricity with zero or near-zero carbon dioxide emissions during its production process. This is crucial for a company's journey toward achieving carbon neutrality and for transforming and upgrading the entire industry.

Buyers of green electricity will also obtain a green

certificate as proof. Each government-issued certificate represents 1,000 kWh of electricity generated from renewable energy.

Green electricity and certificate trading offer enterprises opportunities to achieve energy conservation and emission reduction targets while promoting renewable energy consumption, said Zhao Pengfei, staff member at Shanghai Power Exchange Center Company Ltd.

The sharp increase in the trading volume underlines the constant improvement of relevant policies and mechanisms, as well as enterprises' growing awareness for energy conservation and emission reduction, Zhao noted. (Xinhua)

UK GDP grew more than expected at 0.4% on the month versus 0.2% forecasted

Mixed US inflation data raises mkt expectations of further rate cuts

By NBK

United States

Fed Chair Jerome Powell Testimony

Federal Reserve Chair Jerome Powell testified that inflation has significantly decreased from its peak two years ago, but more progress is needed before cutting interest rates. Powell emphasized the need for confidence that inflation is moving sustainably toward the 2% target. While recent inflation data shows modest progress, the Fed remains cautious. Powell's testimony before the Senate Banking Committee highlighted the balance the Fed seeks between stabilizing prices and maximizing employment, and that key decisions are being taken without considering political pressure. "Our undertaking is to make decisions when and as they need to be made, based on the data, the incoming data, the evolving outlook and the balance of risks, and not in consideration of other factors, and that would include political factors" Powell said. The Fed's key interest rate remains high, with officials projecting a single rate cut this year, down from previous forecasts. Powell also noted that the job market is strong but not overheated, with recent signs of cooling. The Fed is also monitoring consumer spending, which has shown signs of weakening, adding complexity to their decision-making on interest rates.

Mixed Inflation Data

The Consumer Price Index (CPI) report for June showed inflation slowing down more than anticipated, coming in at 3% annually from 3.3% in May and 3.1% forecasted. On a monthly basis, inflation fell 0.1% whereas it was expected that it would rise 0.1%. This marks the first monthly decline of inflation since the COVID pandemic in May 2020 driven by a fall in energy prices as well as new and used cars. Core inflation, which excludes volatile energy and food components, rose 0.1% on the month and 3.3% annually, a three-year low. On the other hand, the Producer Price Index (PPI) rose 2.6% annually versus 2.2% previously and 2.3% forecasted. Annual

14th July 2024

Currencies	Previous Week Levels				This Week's Expected Range		3-Month Forward
	Open	Low	High	Close	Minimum	Maximum	
EUR	1.0864	1.0860	1.0911	1.0906	1.0815	1.1060	1.0954
GBP	1.2909	1.2899	1.2993	1.2992	1.2820	1.3270	1.3002
JPY	158.80	157.37	159.44	157.89	156.55	160.00	155.75
CHF	0.8964	0.8931	0.8970	0.8940	0.8830	0.9000	0.8845

core PPI increased 3% versus 2.5% forecasted and 2.3% previously and jumped 0.4% on the month while it was expected to rise 0.2%. The higher-than-expected PPI print conflicts with the CPI report released prior, leaving traders scrambling to gauge the direction of inflation and monetary policy. Markets are pricing in three rate cuts by year-end totaling 75 bps worth of reductions beginning in September's meeting.

Consumer Sentiment Falls to Eight Month Low

The University of Michigan's preliminary reading of consumer sentiment showed continued frustration on the inflation front, with the print coming in at 66.0 versus 68.2 in June and 68.5 forecasted. Nearly half of consumers are frustrated about the impact of high inflation, despite the survey demonstrating that one-year and the five-year inflation expectations fell to 2.9% from 3.0% previously. The current economic conditions index declined again coming in at 64.1 from 65.9 the previous month and reaching a 19-month low. The sour sentiment comes

amid recent readings that show progress on the consumer price inflation front, however an easing labor market as well as squeezed budgets in households due to elevated interest rates could be playing a role in the weakening sentiment.

The US Dollar index closed the week at 104.093.

Europe

French Parliamentary Elections

The second round of parliamentary elections in France saw a surprise victory for the left-wing coalition. The leftist alliance won 198 seats compared to 169 seats for President Emmanuel Macron's party, and 143 seats for the far-right National Rally party led by Marine Le Pen. The result was a major blow for Le Pen's party, who were projected to be first but ended up third in the elections, and centrist President Emmanuel Macron, who called for early elections and is set to deal with a heavily divided parliament made up of three factions with opposing outlooks on key policies.

The EUR/USD currency pair closed the week at 1.0906.

United Kingdom

GDP Growth Surpasses Expectations

The UK economy grew by 0.4% in May, exceeding expectations of a 0.2% increase and is a welcome sign after April's reading came in flat. The growth in GDP was driven mainly by the services sector, which saw a 0.3% increase in output. Additionally, both production output and construction grew on the month at 0.2% and 1.9% respectively. The Sterling rose to its highest level in nearly a year, as a combination of higher economic growth in the UK and lower than expected US inflation data boosted sentiment. Moreover, the strong growth in May suggests that quarterly GDP growth could come in more than the Bank of England's forecasts, potentially complicating the decision of an interest rate cut. Markets are split on the BOE's early August meeting, with traders slightly favoring the central bank to hold rates at 51% as opposed to delivering a cut at 49%.

The GBP/USD currency pair closed the week at 1.2992.

Asia-Pacific

China Inflation Rate Falls

China's consumer price inflation rate continued to slow in June 2024, dropping to 0.2% year-on-year, which was lower than market forecasts. This marked the fifth consecutive month of consumer price increases, but it was also the weakest inflation reading since March. Food prices fell for the twelfth month in a row, despite a rise in pork prices during a key holiday, the Dragon Boat Festival. On the other hand, non-food inflation remained stable, with price increases seen in sectors like clothing, housing, healthcare, and education. The cost of transportation, however, continued to decline. Overall, China's inflation is subdued, posing challenges for the country's economic recovery.

The USD/CNY currency pair closed the week at 7.2500.

RBNZ Maintains Rates at Current Level

The Reserve Bank of New Zealand maintained the cash rate at 5.5%, meeting market expectations. The central bank signaled that monetary policy needs to remain restrictive, however the effects of tightening are starting to reflect positively as inflation goes down. In their policy statement, RBNZ members said that "The Committee agreed that monetary policy will need to remain restrictive. The extent of this restraint will be tempered over time consistent with the expected decline in inflation pressures." Additionally, the committee is "expecting headline inflation to return to within the 1 to 3 percent target range in the second half of this year." Markets are slightly favoring a rate cut in the August meeting, and an additional rate cut by year-end for a total of 50 bps worth of cuts.

The NZD/USD currency pair closed the week at 0.6117.

Kuwait

Kuwaiti Dinar USD/KWD closed last week at 0.30600.

Renewable energy resources abundant

China emerges as a crucial partner in Africa's green energy transition

NAIROBI/BEIJING, July 14, (Xinhua): As night falls, many remote African villages are enveloped in absolute darkness, relying solely on candles and kerosene lamps for light. Even in African metropolises with electrical grids, frequent power outages disrupt daily life.

Despite the continent's immense renewable energy potential, around 600 million people in Africa still live without electricity. Nevertheless, with the increasing availability of affordable Chinese clean and renewable energy products and technologies in Africa, a bright future driven by a green transition is in sight.

Accessible to all

Africa boasts rich renewable energy resources like solar and wind power. The Sahara Desert's vast sunlight makes it ideal for developing the photovoltaic industry, while Africa's extensive coastline provides perfect conditions for offshore wind energy development.

In some remote African villages, photovoltaic panels are used to develop small solar power stations that provide electricity to nearby households. Although these stations are small in scale, they have significantly improved the living conditions of local residents.

With nighttime lighting, children can read and families can cook and boil water. Some villages have used the lighting to boost economic activity.

According to the Energy and Petroleum Regulatory Authority, Kenya generates around 87 percent of its electricity from renewable sources, such

as geothermal, hydro, solar and wind energy.

Hannington Gochi, a renewable energy expert at Kenya's Rural Electrification and Renewable Energy Corporation, said that the Garissa Solar Power Plant, constructed by a Chinese company, has been connected to Kenya's national grid and is gradually improving the production and living conditions of people in the northern region of Kenya. The 55-megawatt facility is the largest grid-connected solar power plant in East and Central Africa.

Elizabeth Wanjiku, who owns a food stall in Garissa town in northeastern Kenya, said that in the past, she relied on generators to run her business, especially for powering the refrigerator where she preserved her food. "The town is now connected to the national grid thanks to the solar plant, and we are experiencing fewer power blackouts and enjoying the benefits of a more reliable electricity supply," she told Xinhua.

Such initiatives, often supported by international partners like China, show promising results. Zimbabwean economist Brains Muchemwa said Africa has benefited immensely from China's booming green energy industry through the supply of affordable green energy products such as solar panels and batteries.

Muchemwa told Xinhua in a recent interview that the new green energy products have significantly improved the lives of many Africans despite Western criticism of China's growing green industry production capacity.

One-third of millionaires to come from emerging mkts by 2028: UBS

US has the highest number of wealthy people

Borrowing costs eased for home shoppers

Average rate on a 30-year mortgage falls slightly

LISBON, July 14, (Xinhua): Nearly one-third of the world's millionaires will be from emerging markets by 2028, according to the latest "Global Wealth Report 2024" by Swiss financial services company UBS.

The report issued this week projects that the millionaire population is expected to increase in 52 of the 56 markets analyzed, not limited to developed countries.

Its data for 2023 showed that millionaires already accounted for 1.5 percent of the adult population analyzed.

"The United States had the highest number, at nearly 22 million people (or 38 percent of the total). Mainland China was in second place with just over six million - roughly double the number of the United Kingdom, which came third," the report said.

"People around the world are getting progressively wealthier - and that doesn't just apply to those who already own great wealth," the report stated.

The "Global Wealth Report 2024" noted that global wealth has consistently increased since 2008, despite recessions and financial crises, with few exceptions.

According to UBS, most of the people with a wealth close to 10,000 U.S. dollars moved up to the richer level. The bracket of people with wealth between 10,000 and 100,000 dollars more than doubled. And people are now three times as likely to have wealth exceeding 1 million dollars.

Easing borrowing costs for home shoppers, driven by growth in Europe, the Middle East and Africa, and Asia-Pacific. This contrasted with a 3 percent contraction in wealth growth in 2022, largely attributed to the strengthening of the U.S. dollar.

LOS ANGELES, July 14, (AP): The average rate on a 30-year mortgage fell slightly this week, providing modest relief for home shoppers facing record-high home prices.

The rate fell to 6.89% from 6.95% last week, mortgage buyer Freddie Mac said Thursday. A year ago, it averaged 6.96%.

The average rate has mostly hovered around 7% this year - more than double what it was just three years ago. The elevated mortgage rates, which can add hundreds of dollars a month in costs for borrowers, have put off many home shoppers this year, extending the nation's housing slump into its third year.

Borrowing costs on 15-year fixed-rate mortgages, popular with homeowners refinancing their home loans, also fell this week, pulling the average rate down to 6.17% from 6.25% last week. A year ago, it averaged 6.30%, Freddie Mac said.

Mortgage rates are influenced by several factors, including how the bond market reacts to the Federal Reserve's interest-rate policy and the moves in the 10-year Treasury yield, which lenders use as a guide for pricing home loans.

"Since 2008, wealth has grown fastest in Asia-Pacific - apparently fueled by debt. Wealth in Asia-Pacific has grown the most," the report pointed out.

In turn, Latin American growth is strong, but inequality is ever-present. Brazil's average wealth per adult has grown by over 375 percent since the 2008 financial crisis, when measured

The yield, which topped 4.7% in late April, has been generally declining since then on hopes that inflation is slowing enough to get the Fed to lower its main interest rate from the highest level in more than two decades.

"Following June's jobs report, which showed a cooling labor market, the 10-year Treasury yield decreased this week and mortgage rates followed suit," said Sam Khater, Freddie Mac's chief economist.

On Thursday, the yield was down to 4.18% in midday trading in the bond market after a new update on inflation raised expectations that the central bank will soon begin lowering its benchmark rate.

Fed officials have said that while inflation has moved closer to the central bank's target level of 2% in recent months, they want to see more data supporting that trend before moving to cut rates.

Most economists expect the Fed's first rate cut to come in September, with potentially another cut by year's end.

Until the Fed begins lowering its short-term rate, long-term home

Pakistan reaches new \$7b loan agreement with IMF

Pakistan has reached a staff-level agreement for a new \$7 billion loan deal, the International Monetary Fund said Friday, the country's latest turn to the global lender for help in propping up its economy and dealing with its debts through big bailouts.

Earlier this year, the IMF approved the immediate release of the final \$1.1 billion tranche of a \$3 billion bailout to Pakistan. Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb said the government planned to seek a long-term loan to help stabilize the economy after the end of that bailout package.

The new loan deal will last for 37 months. It is aimed at strengthening fiscal and monetary policy as well as reforms to broaden the tax base, improve the management of state-owned enterprises, strengthen competition, secure a level playing field for investment, enhance human capital, and scale up social protection through increased generosity and coverage in a major welfare program, the IMF said.

"The program aims to capitalize on the hard-won macroeconomic stability achieved over the past year by

furthering efforts to strengthen public finances, reduce inflation, rebuild external buffers and remove economic distortions to spur private sector-led growth," said Nathan Porter, IMF's mission chief to Pakistan.

The agreement is subject to approval by the IMF's executive board.

Pakistan's new coalition government presented its first budget in parliament last month, promising an increase of up to 25% in the salaries of government employees and setting an ambitious tax collection target.

The finance minister said Pakistan wants to collect 13 trillion rupees (\$44 billion) in taxes, which would be 40% more than in the current fiscal year.

Aurangzeb also said the government will ensure that the number of taxpayers increases. Only about 5 million people in Pakistan pay taxes.

Analysts said the new budget of about \$68 billion - up from \$50 billion in the last fiscal year - was aimed at qualifying for a long-term IMF loan of \$6 billion to \$8 billion to help stabilize the economy. Pakistan in 2023 nearly defaulted on the payment of foreign debts.

Fewer Americans apply for jobless claims last week as labor market remains sturdy

NEW YORK, July 14, (AP): Fewer Americans filed for unemployment benefits last week as the labor market remains sturdy despite high interest rates.

The Labor Department reported Thursday that jobless claims for the week ending July 6 fell by 17,000 to 222,000 from 239,000 the previous week.

The total number of Americans collecting unemployment benefits declined for the first time in 10 weeks. About 1.85 million Americans were collecting jobless benefits for the week

of June 29, around 4,000 fewer than the previous week.

Economists say that because so-called continuing claims have been on the rise in recent months, it suggests that some who are receiving unemployment benefits are finding it more challenging to land jobs.

Weekly unemployment claims are widely considered as representative of layoffs.

The four-week average of claims, which evens out some of the week-to-week volatility, fell by 5,250 to

233,500.

The Federal Reserve raised its benchmark borrowing rate 11 times beginning in March of 2022 in an attempt to extinguish the four-decade high inflation that shook the economy after it rebounded from the COVID-19 recession of 2020. The Fed's intention was to cool off a red-hot labor market and slow wage growth, which can fuel inflation.

Many economists had expected the rapid rate hikes would trigger a recession, but so far that hasn't happened,

thanks in large part to strong consumer demand and a resilient labor market. As inflation continues to ease, the Fed's goal of a soft-landing - bringing down inflation without causing a recession and mass layoffs - appears within reach.

The Fed's next policy meeting comes at the end of this month, but few experts are expecting a rate cut then. However, investors are betting that there is nearly a 70% chance for a reduction at the Fed's September meeting.

cent of the world's wealth in 2022.

On an individual market level, Switzerland continued to top the list for average wealth per adult, followed by Luxembourg, Hong Kong, and the United States, the survey revealed.

Backed by 30 years of data, the "Global Wealth Report 2024" is the UBS' fifteenth edition.

What's On



Ms. Ghalia receives the honorary award on behalf of Burgan Bank.

Burgan Bank supports 'Partners to Hire' program graduation

In its latest effort to support people with disabilities in Kuwait, Burgan Bank participated in the graduation ceremony for the fifth batch of talented participants in the "Partners to Hire" program. The ceremony was organized and hosted by the Public Authority for Disability Affairs, with the support of leading Kuwaiti institutions across all industries and led by the banking sector. Held under the auspices and presence of the Minister of Social Affairs, Family and Childhood Affairs, and the Minister of State for Youth Affairs, Dr. Amathal Al-Huwaila, the ceremony celebrated a group of outstanding graduates who completed the tailored training program that equips professional talents with disabilities to join Kuwait's workforce as customer service agents. Burgan Bank's renewed participation in the event along with the employment of several graduates is a testament to its commitment to inclusivity, social responsibility, and social sustainability in its community.

"The health of any ecosystem can be measured by its diversity and inclusivity, and at Burgan Bank, we take a similar approach to evaluating the health and sustainability of our workforce," said Ms. Ghalia Al-Saleh, Senior Manager – Talent Acquisition at Burgan Bank. "We are both honored and delighted to welcome new, exceptionally talented calibers to our Burgan family who have shown remarkable resilience in the face of challenges. We firmly believe that our varying capacities and skills are at the heart of our integrated success. That's why we continue searching for the unique value everyone holds in tailoring a holistic employment and growth plan that suits their capabilities and brings out their best."

Al-Saleh added that paving a smooth path for integrating national talents with disabilities in the workforce is central to the social cohesion and collective welfare that Burgan Bank continues to contribute to achieving under the umbrella of its comprehensive social responsibility program. In addition



The fifth batch of participants in the 'Partners to Hire' program.

to its previous support of the "Partners to Hire" graduation ceremonies and employment events, Burgan Bank has also partnered with the Public Authority for Disability Affairs and the Kuwait Society for the Handicapped as part of efforts to provide Al Ahmadi Educational Center with essential equipment and supplies that guarantee an elevated quality of life for many among this segment of the community in Kuwait.

It serves to note that Burgan Bank's efforts to ensure the integration and empowerment of all national talents with disabilities span all fronts, beginning with employment and healthcare and extending to areas such as sports. Among the icons of national pride whom the Bank continues to support well into his journey of athletic achievement and success is Tareq Al-Qallaf, a celebrated wheelchair fencing world champion, in addition to others who are recipients of Burgan's direct and indirect support as they unveil their full potential and unique passion.

Winner of KD 1 million prize will be announced on July 18, 2024

Gulf Bank announces 10 winners of AIDanah monthly draw

KUWAIT CITY, July 14: As part of its ongoing commitment to reward its customers, Gulf Bank has announced the 10 monthly winners of the AIDanah account draw for June 2024. Each lucky winner will receive a prize of KD 1,000. The winners are:

1. Rafat Mohammed Ali Al-Masry
2. Abdullah Hasan Abdullah Mohammed (Minor)
3. Abdullah Abdul Rasouli Ali Saad
4. Hana Abdullah Rashed Al-Duaij
5. Nasra Abdullah Abbas Abu Alhasan
6. Salwa Abdullah Mohammed AL-Jasme
7. Saleh Ismael Mohammed
8. Moustapha Adnan Badra
9. Joyal Dominic Aerath
10. Shaikha Fahid Manoukh Al-Dafiry

Gulf Bank recently made two significant announcements regarding its prizes. Firstly, to divide the KD 100,000 prize among 100 winners, with each receiving KD 1,000 instead of one winner taking the full amount. Secondly, to increase the annual grand prize from KD 1.5 million to KD 2 million, earning it a place in the Guinness World Records as the largest cash prize linked to a bank account globally.

Following these adjustments, Gulf Bank has revised its AIDanah Millionaire account draw schedule. Now, there will be two major draws held annually, each granting a grand prize of KD 2 million. Additionally, there will be a semi-annual draw with a KD 1 million prize, along with monthly draws where 10 winners will each receive KD 1,000.

Furthermore, a separate draw for KD 100,000 will take place, with the winner announcement scheduled for April 18, 2024. Furthermore, on October 17,



AIDanah account.

2024, there will be another draw where 100 lucky winners will each receive a prize of KD 1,000. The deadline for participation and deposits for this draw is June 30, 2024.

It is worth mentioning that the semi-annual draw for the AIDanah Millionaire Account, where the winner of the KD 1 million prize will be announced, is scheduled for July 18, 2024. Representatives from the Ministry of Commerce and Industry and Ernst & Young, will be present at the event.

Gulf Bank announced the grand prize winner of the annual draw for the AIDanah Millionaire account on February 1, 2024, for the first time, following the increase in the prize's value to KD 2 million in 2023. This is part of the bank's continuous efforts to reward its customers and foster a culture of savings within the community.

Renowned as one of the top savings accounts in Kuwait, the AIDanah account offers numerous benefits, including periodic draws with substantial prizes.

Gulf Bank's AIDanah account offers monthly opportunities to win KD 1,000 to ten lucky winners, in addition to two quarterly draws with KD 100,000 prizes each, a semi-annual draw prize of KD 1 million and a grand draw prize of KD 2 million.

One of the many advantages of the AIDanah account, is being the only account in Kuwait that transfers the customers' chances of winning from the previous year to the next, as part of a program that rewards customers for their loyalty to Gulf Bank.

In order to increase one's chances of winning, customers must maintain a minimum of KD 200 in their accounts, or deposit continuously to increase their chances of winning. AIDanah account holders are eligible to win Gulf Bank's monthly, quarterly, and annual AIDanah draws.

Gulf Bank's vision is to be the leading Kuwaiti Bank of the Future. The Bank is constantly engaging and empowering its employees as part of an inclusive and diversified workplace in recognition of every employee's role in delivering customer excellence and serving the community at large. With its extensive network of branches and innovative digital services, Gulf Bank is able to give its customers the choice of how and where to conduct their banking transactions, all while ensuring a simple and seamless banking experience.

Gulf Bank is committed to maintaining robust developments in sustainability at environmental, social and governance levels through diverse sustainability initiatives, strategically selected to benefit the Bank both internally and externally. Gulf Bank supports Kuwait Vision 2035 "New Kuwait" and works with various parties to achieve it.

Open Al Najma account via app

Al-Tijari announces winner of Al Najma account weekly draw

KUWAIT CITY, July 14: Commercial Bank of Kuwait conducted the weekly draw for Al Najma Account on Sunday July 14, 2024. The draw was conducted in the presence of Ministry of Commerce and Industry representative Mr. Mansour Al-Dhafiri.

The result of the draw as follows:
Al Najma weekly draw – the prize of 5,000/- Kuwaiti Dinars went to the winner Ms. Fatemah Mohammad Al Failakawi.

The Bank stated that Al Najma Account prizes are distinguished by the diversity of prizes throughout the year clarifying that the account offers weekly prize of KD 5,000/-, monthly prize of KD 20,000/- and a semi-annual prize of KD 500,000 in addition to the mega annual prize of KD 1,500,000.

Al-Najma Account can be opened by depositing KD 200, and customer should maintain a minimum amount of KD 200 to be eligible to enter all draws on Al-Najma Account prizes. As for the chances of winning, the more balance a customer maintains in Al Najma Account, the more chances the account



Al Najma weekly draw poster.

holder will get to win, the account also offers additional benefits like the ATM card, a credit card against customer's account and all CBK banking services that customer can enjoy.

The Bank revealed that Al Najma account is available to everyone, and anyone can open Al Najma account through CBK mobile application in simple steps from anywhere and at any time.

Including foreign currency cards and safe deposit boxes

KFH offers banking products for holiday and travel season

KUWAIT CITY, July 14: During the holiday and travel season, Kuwait Finance House (KFH) offers a variety of products and services tailored to its customers' needs. The bank consistently provides exceptional benefits and innovative solutions designed to fit customers' lifestyles and ensure a smooth banking experience.

Banking Cards

KFH offers a variety of credit, debit, and prepaid cards that provide convenience and limit customers' reliance on cash for enhanced security. These cards come with spending rewards and benefits, allowing cardholders to enjoy a list of outstanding perks, including discounts and access to VIP lounges.

KFH recently launched a range of new credit cards, including the Mastercard World Elite, Visa Infinite with a metal finish, Visa Signature, and the Al-Tayseer Diamond card. Additionally, it introduced the Foreign Currency Visa Prepaid Card, designed to simplify travel and online shopping in various currencies. This card allows customers to conveniently load and pay in different currencies, manage their payments directly, and avoid foreign exchange fees. It provides a secure and convenient alternative for travelers to carry their spending money. The card is available in five major currencies: US Dollar, Pound Sterling, Euro, UAE Dirham, Saudi Riyal, and Turkish Lira.

Safe Deposit Boxes

KFH offers its customers peace of mind with its Safe Deposit Boxes. These secure boxes come in three sizes: small, medium, and large. Customers can rent the boxes for short or long terms, ensuring the safety of their valuables and belongings at all times, especially while traveling.

Foreign Currencies

KFH offers competitive foreign exchange services for over 25 of the world's most traded currencies, allowing customers to exchange money at affordable rates.

International Toll-Free Calls

KFH offers an international toll-free service in 7 countries: USA, Canada, UK, France, Germany, Türkiye, and Spain. This service allows customers to call KFH's call center 24/7 at no additional charge. Customers calling from these countries will receive priority service from KFH's agents, ensuring a faster response time. To use this service and reach KFH's (Aloo Baitak) Call Center, customers outside Kuwait can call the following toll-free numbers: USA & Canada (1-800-818-8608), UK (0800 014 8898), France (0805 08 66 20), Germany (0800 181 7080), Spain (900 905 440), Türkiye (908 503 902 170). This is a free service offered for calls from mobiles or landlines only. It does not apply to roaming services.

Opening a Banking Account in Türkiye

KFH customers in Kuwait can open a bank account with KFH-Türkiye and enjoy a variety of benefits. These include free online transfers from their KFH-Kuwait account to beneficiary accounts



One of the KFH branches.

at KFH-Türkiye, with no SWIFT fees and no minimum balance requirement. Additionally, they can conveniently manage invoices and other payments in Türkiye through KFH's online banking services.

Financing Cars outside Kuwait

KFH offers a convenient service for customers looking to buy a car abroad. Customers can choose their desired vehicle and have it delivered directly to Egypt, Jordan, the USA, or Türkiye through KFH's network of authorized suppliers. This service comes with flexible financing options that comply with KFH's established credit criteria. It simplifies the car buying process and is a strong contender for one of the best financing solutions available.

20 customers winning cash prizes worth KD1,500 each

KFH unveils winners of Al-Rabeh draw

KUWAIT CITY, July 14: Kuwait Finance House (KFH) announced the winners of the AlRabeh draw with 20 customers winning cash prizes worth KD1,500 each for the 26th and 27th weeks of 2024, additionally, KFH announced Ashraf Al-Ardah as the monthly winner of 1 kilo Gram of KFH Gold for the month of June 2024 and the bank also announced Ali Al-Ostad as the winner of the 2nd quarter draw of a prize worth 25,000 K.D.

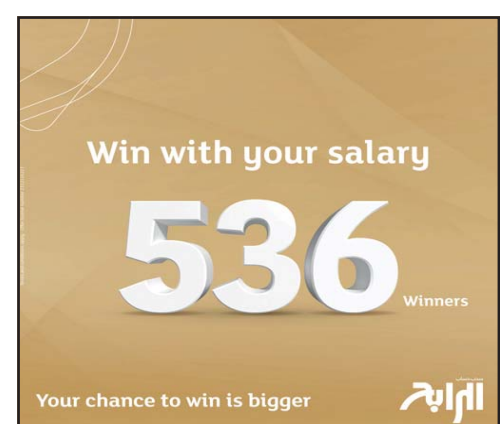
The winners of KD 1,500 are: Bader Al-Khazi, Yousef Al-Nasrallah, Mohammad Hafeel, Bashaer Al-Najjar, Rashed Al-Marri, Mohammad Sheleh, Ammar Saleh, Fatemah Al-Awadhi, Hadeyah Al-Rasheedi, Hussain Al-Musallam, Hessah Al-Hasan, Fouzeyah Al-Awadhi, Mohammad Al-Khashti, Mastourah Qarzouh, Mohammad Ahmed, Barrak Al-Benayyan, Eslam Emam, Owayed Al-Rasheedi, Essam Ahmad, Nazar Al-Kashif.

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

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

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

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



The campaign visual

to enter the draw provided that the transfer of salary to Al-Rabeh account is constant.

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

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



Warba Bank announces winners of the 'Sunbula Grand Draw' on 360FM Radio

Bank leads in digital Islamic banking

Warba announces winners of Sunbula Grand Draw '24

KUWAIT CITY, July 14: Warba Bank, renowned for its excellence in corporate and investment banking services in Kuwait, proudly announced the winners of the "Sunbula Grand Draw" for the second quarter of 2024. The draw took place in the presence of a Ministry of Commerce and Industry representative and Warba Bank officials, broadcast live on 360FM.

Mr. Mohammed Ali Shleiwhi Al-Ajmi emerged as the grand prize winner, securing 250,000 KD. Additionally, ten lucky winners received 1,000 KD each, totalling 10,000 KD. Among them are Mr. Mohammed Humoud Al-Azmi, Mr. Nawaf Abdulrahman Al-Sifran, Mr. Hamad Nasser Al-Shehab, Mr. Fahad Khalid Faleh Al-Azmi, Ms. Fatima Ali Hamad Al-Mujbil, Mr. Nasser Ali Nasser Al-Ajmi, Mr. Adel Abdulaziz Al-Madkur, Ms. Fatima Naif Nafal Al-Ajmi, Mr. Bader Abdulrahman Al-Mulhem, and Ms. Sarah Kamal Saleh Jado.

In the Sunbula monthly children's draw, seven winners were announced. Ms. Ghalia Saud Mohammed Al-Shammari received the top prize of 1,000 KD, with Ms. Ghadeer Hussein Ameer Al-Attar securing 500 KD as the second prize winner. Mr. Yousef Mohammed Ali Al-Misbah, Ms. Amal Yousef Abdulmajid Al-Najjar, Mr. Khalid Faisal Ahmed Al-Awadi, Mr. Fahad Faleh Abdullah Al-Rashidi, and Ms. Awwaad Bader Dughaem Al-Dhuwahi each received 100 KD as the third to seventh prize winners.

The Sunbula account continues to be a preferred choice for savers looking to earn attractive financial returns and stand a chance to win cash prizes throughout the year.

Regarding the Sunbula campaign for 2024, Warba Bank will continue to award 10 weekly winners with 1,000 KD each in the Sunbula campaign. Quarterly grand draws of 250,000 KD will be conducted four times a year, with draws scheduled in April, July, October of 2024, and January of 2025.

To participate in the weekly and grand draws, customers need a minimum balance of 100 KD. Each 10 KD in the account provides one entry, with chances based on the lowest monthly balance. Funds must remain in the account for a full month for weekly draws and two months for grand draws eligibility. There are no restrictions on deposits or withdrawals; the more deposited, the greater the chances of winning.

Notably, in accordance with the terms of its ambitious five-year strategy, Warba Bank has launched its latest banking solutions service "Customer Onboarding". This will enable non-Warba Bank customers to apply for opening an account in an easy digital way through the bank's website without the need to visit any of the bank's branches, and within only five minutes - through the new and unique automated system used to enable this service - new customers will be able to complete the request to open an account at any time and any place.

It is worth mentioning that Warba Bank is one of the banks that achieved great successes in a short period of time, as it occupied a leading position in the field of digital Islamic banking services for individuals, and it is one of the most local banks in terms of the number of shareholders, and these are among the most prominent elements that make the bank close to all members of society.

Ichikawa revitalizes Kabuki with 13-role performance

TOKYO, July 14, (AP) — Onstage, Danjuro Ichikawa, one of the biggest stars of Japan's Kabuki theater, is a virtuoso in switching roles.

In his latest production, he plays 13 parts, including a princess, a sushi chef and a fox. He hobbles offstage as a feeble old man, then dashes back on moments later as a fierce warrior. He gets in a few sword fights, dies tragically more than once, and takes flight on wires.

Offstage, he's wondering if it's time for the often rigid role of a Kabuki star to change.

The 13th man to bear the name Danjuro Ichikawa - which has been passed down between generations of Kabuki stars for over 300 years - he's a household name in Japan, showing up in ads, movies and TV shows.

Kabuki, an all-male theatrical tradition that combines music, dance and acrobatics, remains popular, but Danjuro grants that it can be out of step with modern tastes. Audiences accustomed to TikTok videos and streaming don't always have the patience for four-hour performances in archaic formal Japanese. Social distancing restrictions during the pandemic hit theaters hard, and audiences are still coming back.

Danjuro has made efforts to update Kabuki in "Hoshiawase Jusandan," at the Kabukiza Theater in Tokyo through July 24, trimming longer scenes and modernizing some dialogue.

"Traditional culture might be hard to follow and get tiresome, but I hope people will have fun. The action moves quickly because I'm one

person playing 13 roles," Danjuro told The Associated Press.

Dapper and tanned, Danjuro, 46, can be disarmingly playful for a famous artist. Amid discussions of the future of live performance, he gamely posed for photos, striking the kind of pose you'd see on the romantic lead of a manga comic book.

The all-male theatrical style can be intensely conservative, preserving many of its traditions nearly unchanged from the Edo court.

Training

Today's Danjuro took on the name in 2022, after going through earlier names he and all the previous Danjuros have gone through: Shinnosuke, and then Ebizo.

Training starts at childhood. When he was 20, about to go on stage for the first time as the monk Benkei - a role that his father, grandfather and all the Danjuros before him had made famous - the pressure was so intense he ran away and spent the night sleeping in the park. He did get back in time for the show.

Today's Danjuro inherited the name from his father, Danjuro XII, who died in 2013 at 66 of leukemia.

The death cost him both a beloved parent and a teacher he desperately need. At 35, he was still a novice by Kabuki standards, an artform in which beautiful maidens are often played by octogenarian masters. He had to turn to uncles and veterans from other families to learn the

craft, defying criticism from peers and even family who said only a Danjuro can teach another Danjuro.

But these days, critics say the 13th Danjuro is living up to his name. Despite the art's firm commitment to tradition, Danjuro says, Kabuki stories contain universal emotions that young people and foreigners who are new to the genre can connect with.

In "Hoshiawase Jusandan," he plays a fox who disguises himself as a warrior to stalk a court dancer who's carrying a drum made from the hide of his parents.

When at the climax, a merciful samurai gives the fox the drum, Danjuro's takes flight on wires, bouncing with joy over the crowd toward the third-floor balcony seats, accompanied by drums, flute and song.

The showy, somewhat dated effect could look like something out of a circus - but it sells a moving scene that contrasts the human folly of war and revenge with the simple love shown by an animal.

For all his worry, Danjuro says he trusts that the power of human performance will survive.

He's training his son Shinnosuke to take his place, and taking care of his health to be sure future generations of Shinnosukes have a chance to know their ancestor.

One day, Shinnosuke will become Ebizo, and later, he'll be Danjuro XIV.

"One must live," said Danjuro. "That's my responsibility."

Stage

Variety



A production team is filming scenes of a Turkish drama with actor Paris Baktas and actress Yagmur Yuksel, Turkey, Tuesday, April 30, 2024. (AP)

Television

Global fans travel to Turkey to live their favorite series

Turkish TV dramas win hearts worldwide

ISTANBUL, July 14, (AP) — Under the sweltering Turkish sun, tourists wander through sets that recreate Ottoman and Byzantine-era castles, take selfies with actors in traditional Ottoman costumes and watch horseback stunt performances. Among them is Riia Toivanen, 22, a devoted fan of Turkish television drama who traveled to Istanbul from Finland with her mother to delve into the realm of her beloved shows.

Some 8,000 miles (12,800 kilometers) across the globe in Villa Carlos Paz in Argentina, 66-year-old retired teacher Raquel Greco watches an episode of a Turkish romantic comedy, surrounded by memorabilia from her once-in-a-lifetime trip to Istanbul where she visited landmarks she knew from years of watching Turkish shows.

"It seemed to me that I was dreaming, I couldn't believe I was living what I saw every day in the series," she said of her visit in April this year.

The global popularity of Turkish TV dramas -- or dizi in Turkish -- has thrust Turkey into the position of a leading exporter of television, greatly bolstering the nation's international image and drawing millions of viewers and tourists worldwide to its historical and cultural sites which are backdrops to many of the shows.

The success of television shows has fueled a burgeoning billion-dollar industry that continues to expand into new markets, experts say. The popularity of these shows is also greatly enhancing Turkey's soft power on a global scale.

Between 2020 and 2023, the global demand for Turkish series increased by 184%, positioning Turkey as one of the biggest exporters of TV shows around the world, according to Parrot Analytics, a research company.

"We reach over 400 million viewers every night around the world," said Izzet Pinto, CEO of Global Agency, which exports Turkish dramas to world markets. "The soft power we create with Turkish dramas cannot be even compared to what could be done in politics."

Although "Deli Yurek" was the first Turkish series to be exported - to Kazakhstan in 2001 - it was the 2005

romantic series "Gumus" that catapulted Turkish dizi to global fame. The series, which revolves around a woman from a traditional background adapting to urban life, became immensely popular in the Middle East.

"A Thousand and One Nights," a 2006 romantic drama loosely based on the collection of Middle Eastern folktales and set in modern-day Istanbul, captivated audiences in the Balkans. "Magnificent Century," based on the 16th-century Ottoman Sultan Suleyman the Magnificent, led the way for historical fiction.

Once an importer of Latin American telenovelas, Turkey is now exporting its dramas to the region. Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro visited the set of the historical drama series "Resurrection: Ertugrul" in 2018, highlighting the appeal of the dizi in his nation.

Lifestyles

Haley Uganadi, the founder of the Turkish TV series fan platform "Dizilab," says the popularity of the dramas comes from themes that focus on family, friendship, and love, usually set against the backdrop of luxurious lifestyles in Istanbul or Turkey's rich history.

"They offer something for everyone, regardless of where you are from. Watching Turkish dramas, I see reflections of my mom, myself, and my siblings," Uganadi said.

Her platform receives about 1.5 million viewers monthly, with fans from the United States, Canada, Greece, India, and Pakistan.

Pinto points to the family-oriented nature of Turkish dramas. "There's no nudity, no cursing or bad words, not much hate. So, this becomes watchable by the family," he explains.

As the industry grows, it is expanding the themes of its series, such as "Red Roses," which explores the dynamics between a staunchly secular Western-oriented family and a fictional Islamic brotherhood.

During a lull in filming, actor Ozcan Deniz, who previously starred in series such as "The Mansion with Vines" and "Bride of Istanbul," said this diversification was essential if the industry is to flourish.

"Countries that were not able to transform (into) a different genre are now lagging behind in the export of series," Deniz said. "Turkey has now caught this mo-

mentum, but if it cannot diversify, if it cannot also tell different things, it will end somewhere."

Toivanen and her mother were touring Bozdog Film Studios, a vast complex in northern Istanbul, where historical Ottoman-era blockbusters like "Resurrection: Ertugrul" and "Foundation: Osman" were shot.

Toivanen says her love of the romantic dramas "Black Money Love" and "Endless Love" brought her to Istanbul. "I like Turkish culture very much," she said. "(The series are) very friendly and warm, and there is a lot of drama going on."

The first episode of "Resurrection: Ertugrul" had over 157 million views on the Urdu-language YouTube channel of Turkish state broadcaster TRT, said producer and screenwriter Mehmet Bozdog, who created the popular historical dramas that fictionalize the lives of Ottoman leaders and heroes. "Foundation: Osman" was broadcast in over 110 countries, he said.

During its run, "Resurrection: Ertugrul" peaked as the fourth most in-demand show worldwide in May 2020, with demand more than 68 times that of the average show worldwide, according to Parrot Analytics.

Dr. Deniz Gergen Atalay, assistant professor of film and TV at Bahcesehir University in Istanbul, says the industry generated \$1 billion in 2023 from overseas exports and has an important impact on tourism, especially in Istanbul.

"The TV series sector has a huge share in this. The image of Istanbul presented by the series, the food eaten here, the drinks drunk, the music listened to, the living standards, and the culture here offer a very pleasant place of appreciation within the framework of the series," Atalay said.

Mert Yazicioglu, another star of "Red Roses," whose eagerly anticipated second season is set to premiere in late September, was clad in the attire of his character, a member of an Islamic sect, when he took a break from filming to chat.

The series has propelled the soft-spoken 31-year-old to stardom, with Turkey's media tracking his every footstep.

"We have introduced Turkish culture abroad. That makes us very happy," he said, wearing his character's baggy beige trousers and matching waistcoat.

Features

ARABIC TIMES

MONDAY, JULY 15, 2024

LOS ANGELES: A New Mexico judge dismissed the involuntary manslaughter case against Alec Baldwin over the fatal shooting of cinematographer Halyna Hutchins in a sudden move Friday.

Judge Mary Marlowe Sommer dismissed the case based on the misconduct of police and prosecutors over the withholding of evidence from the defense. She said the case cannot be filed again.

Baldwin, the lead actor and co-producer of the film "Rust," was pointing a gun at Hutchins during a rehearsal on the set outside Santa Fe in October 2021 when the gun went off, killing her and wounding director Joel Souza. Baldwin has said he pulled back the hammer - but not the trigger - and the gun fired.

He and other producers still face civil lawsuits from Hutchins' parents and sister, which white collar defense attorney Mark Sedlander told The Associated Press are more common for workplace accidents like the fatal shooting.

"By civil law standards, it is common for someone like Mr. Baldwin to be held responsible for what happened, but it is relatively unusual in the criminal context," Sedlander said in an interview before the case was dismissed.

Whether "Rust" will be released is still unclear. The plot follows Baldwin as a Western outlaw who works to break his grandson out of prison after he is convicted of an accidental murder. Filming wrapped in 2023, and producers have said finishing the film was meant to honor Hutchins' artistic vision and generate money for her young son.

The career of the "30 Rock" star and frequent "Saturday Night Live" host - who has been a household name for more than three decades - had been put into doubt, and he could have gotten 18 months in prison if convicted.

In June, amid the looming trial, Baldwin and his wife, Hilaria, announced they would appear in a reality series about their large family. He shares seven young kids with Hilaria and one adult daughter, Ireland Baldwin, with his ex-wife, Kim Basinger. The TLC series, tentatively titled "The Baldwins," is set to release in 2025. (AP)

LONDON: We hear you. That was the simple message offered to a group of young people

hosted in London on Friday by King Charles III, who also invited Hollywood megastar Idris Elba and Prime Minister Keir Starmer to St. James' Palace to discuss the troubles that young people face.

Elba, the London-born star of "The Wire" and "Luther," has used his celebrity status to shine a light on youth violence, urging



Baldwin



Elba

the British government to ban machetes and serrated "zombie" knives to help stop young people from falling victim to knife crime.

"This topic has always had a spike in interest when we lose a life," Elba said. "I think where we are right now ... our country is wanting to have some change and is consistently banging on that door for change."

In the U.K., which has strict gun-control laws, about four in 10 homicides involve a knife or sharp instrument. But knife crime involving young people in Britain's cities has prompted particular concern. In London, 21 teenagers were killed in 2023, 18 of whom were stabbed to death. In worrying about the nation's youth, Elba

finds a kindred spirit in the king. Charles has long championed efforts to help young people. As the Prince of Wales, Charles founded the Prince's Trust - now known as the King's Trust - which helps young people get jobs, education and training. Since its founding in 1976, it has helped more than 1 million young people across the UK. (AP)

People & Places

Obituary

Mixed laughs, sweat

Fitness guru Richard Simmons dies at 76

NEW YORK, July 14, (AP) — **Richard Simmons**, television's hyperactive court jester of physical fitness who built a mini-empire in his trademark tank tops and short shorts by urging the overweight to exercise and eat better, died Saturday. He turned 76 on Friday.

Simmons died at his home in Los Angeles, his publicist Tom Estey said in an email to The Associated Press. He gave no further details.

Los Angeles police and fire departments say they responded to a house - whose address the AP has matched with Simmons through public records - where a man was declared dead from natural causes.

Simmons, who had revealed a skin diagnosis in March 2024, had lately dropped out of sight, sparking speculation about his health and well-being. His death was first reported by TMZ.

Simmons was a former 268-pound teen who became a master of many media forms, sharing his hard-won weight-loss tips as host of the Emmy-winning daytime "Richard Simmons Show" and author of best-selling books and the diet plan Deal-A-Meal. He also opened exercise studios and starred exercise videos, including the wildly successful "Sweatin' to the Oldies" line, which became a cultural phenomenon.

"My food plan and diet are just two words - common sense. With a dash of good humor," he told The Associated Press in 1982. "I want to help people and make the world a healthier, happy place."

Simmons embraced mass communication to get his message out, even as he eventually became the butt of jokes for his outfits and flamboyant flair. He was a sought-after guest on TV shows led by Merv Griffin, Mike Douglas and Phil Donahue. But David Letterman would prank him and Howard Stern would tease him until he cried. He was mocked in Neil Simon's "The Goodbye Girl" on Broadway in 1993, and Eddie Murphy put on white makeup and dressed like him in "The Nutty Professor," screaming "I'm a pony!"

Motivate

Asked if he thought he could motivate people by being silly, Simmons answered, "I think there's a time to be serious and a time to be silly. It's knowing when to do it. I try to have a nice combination. Being silly cures depression. It catches people off guard and makes them think. But in between that silliness is a lot of seriousness that makes sense. It's a different kind of training."

Simmons' daytime show was seen on 200 stations in America, as well as in Australia, New Zealand, the Philippines, Japan and South America. His first book, "Never Say Diet," was a smash best-seller.

He was known to counsel the severely obese, including Rosalie Bradford, who held records for being the world's heaviest woman, and Michael Hebranko, who credited Simmons for helping him lose 700 pounds. Simmons put real people - chubby, balding or non-telegenic - in his exercise videos to make the fitness goals seem reachable.

Throughout his career, Simmons was a reliable critic of fad diets, always emphasizing healthy eating and exercise plans. "There'll always be some weird thing about eating four grapes before you go to bed, or drinking a special tea, or buying this little bean from El Salvador," he told the AP in 2005 as the Atkins diet craze swept the country. "If you watch your portions and you have a good attitude and you work out every day you'll live longer, feel better and look terrific."

Simmons was a native of New Orleans, a chubby boy named Milton by his parents. (He renamed himself "Richard" around the age of 10 to improve his self-image.) He would tell people he ate to excess because he believed his parents liked his older brother more. He was teased by schoolmates and ballooned to almost 200 pounds.

Simmons told the AP his mother watched exercise guru Jack LaLanne's TV show religiously when he was growing up, but he wasn't crazy about the fitness fanatic. "I hated him," Simmons said. "I wasn't ready for his message because he was fit and he was healthy and he had such a positive attitude, and I was none of those things."

Exchange

Simmons went to Italy as a foreign exchange student and ended up doing peanut butter commercials and bacchanalian eating scenes for director Federico Fellini in his film "Fellini Satyricon." He told the AP: "I was fat, had curly hair. The Italians thought I was hysterical. I was the life of the party."

His life changed after getting an anonymous letter. "One dark, rainy day I went to my car and found a note. It said, 'Dear Richard, you're very funny, but fat people die young. Please don't die.' He was so stunned that he went on the starvation diet that left him thin but very ill.

After the crash diet he gained back 65 pounds. Eventually, he was able to devise a sensible plan to take off the pounds and keep them off. "I went into the business because I couldn't find anything I liked," he said.

When Simmons hadn't been seen in public for several years, some news outlets speculated that he was being held hostage in his own house. In telephone interviews with "Entertainment Tonight" and the "Today" show, Simmons refuted the claims and told his fans he was enjoying the time by himself. Filmmaker-writer Dan Taberski, one of his regular students, launched a podcast in 2017 called "Missing Richard Simmons."

In 2022, Simmons broke his six-year silence, with his spokesperson telling the New York Post that the beloved fitness icon was "living the life he has chosen."

One of the online tributes after Simmons' passing was from actor-comedian Pauly Shore, who previously developed an unauthorized biopic of Simmons, which Simmons objected to at the time.

"I just got word like everyone else that the beautiful Richard Simmons has passed," he began in an Instagram post. "I hope you're at peace and twinkling up in the heavens," adding "You're one of a kind, Richard. An amazing life. An amazing story."



Simmons



In this Jan. 14, 2012 file photo, Shannen Doherty participates in a panel for the television show 'Shannen Says' on WE tv during the AMC Networks portion of the Television Critics Association Winter Press Tour in Pasadena, Calif. Doherty, the 'Beverly Hills, 90210' star, has died, Saturday, July 13. She was 53. (AP)

Obituary

'90210' star was devoted daughter, sister, aunt

Doherty succumbs to cancer at 53

LOS ANGELES, July 14, (AP) — **Shannen Doherty**, the "Beverly Hills, 90210" star whose life and career were roiled by illness and tabloid stories, has died at 53.

Doherty died Saturday, according to a statement from her publicist, Leslie Sloane. She had had breast cancer for years.

"The devoted daughter, sister, aunt and friend was surrounded by her loved ones as well as her dog, Bowie. The family asks for their privacy at this time so they can grieve in peace," Sloane said in a statement. The news was first reported by People magazine.

Her illness was publicly revealed in a lawsuit filed in 2015 against her former business managers, in which she alleged they mismanaged her money and allowed her health insurance to lapse. She later shared intimate details of her treatment following a single mastectomy. In December 2016, she posted a photo of her first day of radiation, calling the treatment "frightening" for her.

In February 2020, Doherty revealed that the cancer had returned and she was at stage four. She said she came forward because her health conditions could come out in court. The actor had sued insurance giant State Farm after her California home was damaged in a fire in 2018.

A native of Memphis, Tennessee, Doherty moved to Los Angeles with her family at age 7 and, within a few years, became an actor.

"It was completely my decision," she told The Associated Press in a 1994 interview. "My parents never pushed me into anything. They support me. It really wouldn't matter if I was a professional soccer player - they'd still be as supportive and loving."

As a child star, she worked steadily in such TV series as "Little House on the Prairie," in which she played Jenny Wilder. She detoured as a teenager to

the big screen in "Girls Just Want to Have Fun" (1985) and "Heathers."

In 1990, the doe-eyed, dark-haired actor won her breakout role as Brenda Walsh in producer Aaron Spelling's hit teenage melodrama set in posh Beverly Hills. She and Jason Priestley's Brandon, Brenda's twin brother, were fish-out-of-water Midwesterners.

But Doherty's fame came with media scrutiny and accounts of outbursts, drinking and impulsiveness - the latter most notably after a very brief marriage to George Hamilton's son. Doherty's second marriage, in 2002, was to Rick Salomon, who was involved in a sex-tape incident with Paris Hilton. The marriage was annulled within a year. In 2011, Doherty married photographer Kurt Iswarrienko. She filed for divorce in April 2023.

She left "90210" at the end of its fourth season in 1994 (the show aired until 2000), reportedly removed by Spelling because of conflicts with her co-stars and chronic lateness.

But in her 1994 AP interview, Doherty described her life as peaceful.

Charmed

"It must be, if you pick up the Enquirer and find the only thing they can write about me is that I installed a pay phone next to my house and was seen at Stroud's (a discount bed-and-bath chain) buying \$1,400 worth of bed linens and wouldn't go to an expensive store," she said. "It must be calm if they're pulling that stuff out of their heads."

Three years later, in 1997, Doherty was sentenced to anger-management counseling by a Beverly Hills Municipal Court judge after she allegedly smashed a beer bottle onto a man's windshield during a quarrel. In another legal scrape, she pleaded no contest after a 2001 drunken driving arrest and was ordered to serve five days in a work-release program.

Doherty reunited with Spelling

when he cast her in 1998 as Prue Halliwell in "Charmed." In an AP interview that year, the actor expressed regrets about her past.

"I did bring a lot of it on myself," Doherty said. "I don't think I can point fingers and say, 'Oh, YOU'RE to blame.' And I don't do that with myself, either. Because I was just growing up."

Her personality was "grotesquely misconstrued" by the media, Doherty added.

Spelling said at the time that their relationship was never as bad as some made it seem.

"We had a few bumps along the road, but golly, who doesn't?" said Spelling, who died in 2006. "Everything Shannen did was blown out of proportion by the rag sheets." Doherty co-starred with Holly Marie Combs and Alyssa Milano in "Charmed" from 1998-2001, at which point her character was replaced by one played by Rose McGowan. Doherty appeared in the "90210" sequel series seven years later, along with original series star Jennie Garth, and competed on "Dancing with the Stars" in 2010. She also worked on the third "Beverly Hills, 90210" reboot, called "BH90210," a meta send-up of the show that aired for one season in 2019.

She also appeared in a tribute episode of "Riverdale" dedicated to that show's star - and her late "Beverly Hills, 90210" on-screen love interest - Luke Perry.

Doherty struggled to recapture her "Beverly Hills, 90210" star status, but worked in big-screen films including "Mallrats" and "Jay and Silent Bob Strike Back" and in such TV movies as "A Burning Passion: The Margaret Mitchell Story," in which she played the "Gone with the Wind" author. A nadir was "Blindfold: Acts of Obsession," an erotic thriller opposite Judd Nelson.



Ryan Reynolds and Peggy a.k.a. Dogpool the 'UK's Ugliest Dog Winner,' pose for photographers at the photo call for the film 'Deadpool & Wolverine' on Friday, July 12, in London. (AP)



Kahlo



Ma

Variety

MEXICO CITY: Frida Kahlo had no religious affiliation. Why, then, did the Mexican artist depict several religious symbols in the paintings she produced until her death on July 13, 1954?

"Frida conveyed the power of each individual," said art researcher and curator **Ximena Jordán**. "Her self-portraits are a reminder of the ways in which we can exercise the power that life - or God, so to speak - has given us."

Born in 1907 in Mexico City - where her "Blue House" remains open for visitors - Kahlo used her own personal experiences as a source of inspiration for her art.

The bus accident that she survived in 1925, the physical pain that she endured as a consequence and the tormented relationship with her husband - Mexican muralist **Diego Rivera** - all nurtured her creativity.

Her take on life and spirituality sparked a connection between her paintings and her viewers, many of whom remain passionate admirers of her work on the 70th anniversary of her death.

One of the keys to understand how she achieved this, Jordán said, lies in her self-portraits.

Kahlo appears in many of her paintings, but she did not portray herself in a naturalistic way. Instead, Jordán said, she "re-created" herself through symbols that convey the profoundness of interior human life.

"Diego and I" is the perfect example. Painted by Kahlo in 1949, it sold for \$34.9 million at Sotheby's in New York in 2021, an auction record for a work by a Latin American artist.

In the painting, Kahlo's expression is serene despite the tears falling from her eyes. Rivera's face is on her forehead. And, in the center of his head, a third eye, which signifies the unconscious mind in Hinduism and enlightenment in Buddhism.

According to some interpretations, the painting represents the pain that Rivera inflicted on her. Jordán, though, offers another reading.

"The religiosity of the painting is not in the fact that Frida carries Diego in her thoughts," Jordán said. "The fact that she bears him as a third eye, and Diego has a third eye of his own, reflects that his affec-

tion for her made her transcend to another dimension of existence."

In other words, Kahlo portrayed how individuals connect to their spirituality through love.

"I connected with her heart and writings," said **Cris Melo**, a 58-year-old American artist whose favorite Kahlo work is the aforementioned painting. "We had the same love language, and similar history

of heartache." (AP)

BEIJING: Chinese comedy "Successor" topped the daily box office chart on the Chinese mainland on its first day of preview screenings, with whopping daily box office sales of 156.53 million yuan (21.95 million US dollars) on Saturday.

Starring comedy stars **Shen Teng** and



Japanese Kabuki actor Danjuro Ichikawa speaks during an interview session of his new show 'Hoshiawase Jusandan,' June 11, 2024, in Tokyo. Danjuro is a virtuoso in switching roles. In his latest production, he plays 13 parts, including a beautiful princess, a sushi chef and the owner of the sushi restaurant, a brave samurai and a fox who impersonates that samurai to get close to the court dancer Lady Shizuka. (AP) — **Details Page 11**

Ma Li and directed by **Yan Fei** and **Peng Damo**, the film tells the story of a poor rural couple who count on their son to change their fate. It will be available for public screening on Tuesday.

Crime thriller "A Place Called Silence" stood second, raking in over 81.82 million yuan on its 11th day of public screening.

Universal and Illumination's animated comedy "Despicable Me 4" came up third with 44.09 million yuan of box office sales.

The total box office revenue of the Chinese mainland on Saturday stood at 308.51 million yuan. (Xinhua)

ZHENGZHOU: Chinese archaeologists have unearthed the ruins of an inner city gate of the capital of the Northern Song Dynasty (960-1126). This discovery marks the largest and highest-scale city gate ruins from the Northern Song period found so far.

The ruins are located in the city of **Kaifeng**, which was the ancient capital of the Northern Song Dynasty for 168 years.

Jinglong Gate, the only inner city gate of the ancient capital discovered to date, is about 60 meters wide with the gateway extending 19.3 meters.

"The overall scale of Jinglong Gate is larger than the **Shuntian Gate** in the ancient capital of **Song**, which had earlier been discovered," said **Wang Sanying**, vice president of Kaifeng municipal institute of cultural heritage and archaeology.

He added that the discovery of the inner city gate holds great significance in locating the imperial city of the Northern Song Dynasty and the palaces within. (Xinhua)

Affordable healthcare essential for economic growth and public health

Access to healthcare in US: A fundamental right or privilege?

By Fahad Al Mojl

Independent Research

In a nation celebrated for freedom and equality, access to healthcare remains contentious. While some view it as a commodity, healthcare is an essential human right vital for life preservation. This essay argues that healthcare must transcend financial barriers, embodying a core social right. It discusses economic benefits, ethical state obligations, and public health outcomes to show that equitable healthcare access is crucial for a thriving society.

Affordable healthcare boosts productivity and curbs long-term costs. Access to preventive care and early treatment reduces missed workdays and enhances job performance. A study by the Partnership to Fight Chronic Disease found the US loses \$1.3 trillion annually due to chronic disease-related productivity losses. Affordable healthcare helps manage health better, reducing

chronic illness risks and saving billions in lost productivity.

Early access to healthcare lowers future costs by preventing chronic illnesses and treating infectious diseases early.

This also stimulates economic growth through increased productivity and reduced absenteeism.

States, especially the US, have clear ethical obligations regarding healthcare. According to UN Resolution A/76/L.75 and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, healthcare is a fundamental right for all. The 14th Amendment of the US Constitution reinforces this by guaranteeing equal protection under the law. States must provide universal healthcare, ensuring it is affordable, adequate, and high-quality. Proper training, licensing, and regulation of healthcare providers are also essential to ensure safe and effective care.

Public health outcomes in the US highlight the importance of accessible healthcare. The Affordable Care Act (ACA) expanded healthcare

access, reducing the number of uninsured Americans by 20 million. This led to increased preventive services, reduced healthcare costs, and fewer medical bankruptcies. Medicaid expansion under the ACA improved health outcomes for low-income Americans by providing primary care access and reducing uninsured rates. Public health programs like the CDC have been crucial in preventing infectious diseases, improving vaccination rates, reducing tobacco use, and promoting healthy lifestyles, leading to better public health outcomes.

In conclusion, healthcare is a fundamental human right that should be accessible to everyone without discrimination. Affordable healthcare benefits society economically and is an ethical obligation of the state. The economic benefits, ethical state obligations, and positive public health outcomes in the US demonstrate the necessity of equal healthcare access for a thriving society. The US must prioritize high-quality, affordable healthcare for all citizens to ensure a healthy and prosperous life.

Measles kills 160 in Afghanistan

4 children die of suspected 'Chandipura virus' in India

NEW DELHI, July 14, (Agencies): At least four children have died and two others are undergoing treatment for suspected infection of Chandipura virus in the western Indian state of Gujarat, officials said Saturday.

The deaths have been reported at Himmat Nagar Civil Hospital in Sabarkantha district, about 63 km northeast of Gandhinagar, the capital city of Gujarat.

According to chief district health officer Sabarkantha Raj Sutariya, the blood samples of all these children have been sent to the National Institute of Virology in Pune for confirmation.

Health officials said the Chandipura virus causes fever, with symptoms similar to flu, and acute inflammation of the brain. The pathogen is transmitted by vectors like mosquitoes, ticks and sandflies.

Measles: At least 160 people have died from measles in Afghanistan over the past six months, the World Health Organization (WHO) has reported.

According to the report, 36,618 people were infected with the disease during the current year, and 160 deaths have been registered, out of which 81.1 percent of suspected cases of measles were children below the age of five, and 45 percent of them were women.

Most of the cases have been recorded in eastern Afghanistan's Khost province, the report added.

Lack of awareness of measles, lack of access to health facilities, non-vaccination of children and migration of Afghans from one place to another are factors in the increase of the disease in some remote areas of Afghanistan, the report added.

Avian flu: The H5N1 highly pathogenic avian flu virus may be more infectious to humans if passed on from cattle than directly from birds, Japanese daily Mainichi Shimbun has reported, citing a team of researchers in Japan.

The researchers led by Yoshihiro Kawaoka, director of the University of Tokyo, Pandemic Preparedness, Infection and Advanced Research Center, published their findings in the online edition of the British scientific journal Nature dated July 9.

The team used receptors in human respiratory cells to react with both bovine-derived and avian-derived H5N1 viruses, and found that the bovine-derived virus had stronger binding strength than the avian-derived virus, with the data suggesting that the former "more efficiently infects humans" than the latter, the media report published on Wednesday said.

The researchers also confirmed that bovine-derived virus is highly pathogenic to mice and ferrets. When ferrets and mice were infected with bovine-derived H5N1, the virus multiplied throughout the body, including the brain and muscles, and was highly virulent, it added.

"It has been suggested that the nature of the virus may have changed. We should be concerned about human-to-human transmission as well in the future," Kawaoka said.

The H5N1 strain is characterized by its extremely high infectivity and virulence in birds. Global outbreaks began in the 2000s, causing mass deaths of chickens in many regions.

A series of cases of infection in various mammals have been found since 2020, with 28 human infections reported to the World Health Organization, but no cases of human-to-human transmission have been confirmed, Mainichi Shimbun reported.

Cholera: Prolonged rainfall and flash floods in Somalia have led to an increase in cholera cases, disproportionately affecting displaced women and children, global charity CARE International warned on Friday.

According to the charity, 123 lives were lost to cholera between January and June. The organization said that its national partners are working to provide affected communities with medical services, clean water and sanitation facilities.

"We fear that the cases might increase as seasonal rains and flash floods are expected to affect at least 770,000 people in the next few months," Abdifarhan Gure, CARE Somalia deputy country director of programs, said in a statement issued in Mogadishu, the capital of Somalia.

Gure said flooding, which has mostly affected displaced women and children, threatens to worsen as communities lack access to clean water. Its supported health facilities treated over 11,925 acute diarrheal cases from January to May, with more than 60 percent of patients being children under five.

Water infrastructure were destroyed, leaving thousands without clean water and sanitation, Gure said.

Also: **MINNEAPOLIS:** US Sen. Amy Klobuchar said Friday that she remains cancer-free following her bout with breast cancer in 2021, but doctors recently removed a small calcification and that she'll get radiation treatment as a precaution.

The Minnesota Democrat, who chairs the powerful Rules Committee, was successfully treated for early-stage breast cancer three years ago.

Klobuchar said at the time that the cancer was detected during a routine mammogram. Her cancer was stage 1A, meaning it had not spread beyond the breast. She had a lumpectomy to remove it followed by radiation therapy. She was treated amid a busy hearing schedule involving the Jan 6 insurrection, including one treatment two days after her father died.

In a post Friday on X, the social media site formerly known as Twitter, Klobuchar said she recently had a routine six-month exam at the Mayo Clinic.

Astronauts confident Boeing's capsule can return them safely, despite failures

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla., July 14, (AP): Two astronauts who should have been back on Earth weeks ago said that they're confident that Boeing's space capsule can return them safely, despite a string of vexing breakdowns.

NASA test pilots Butch Wilmore and Suni Williams launched aboard Boeing's new Starliner capsule early last month, the first people to ride it. Helium leaks and thruster failures almost derailed their arrival at the International Space Station, and have kept them there much longer than planned. Now the earliest they could return may be the end of July, officials said.

In their first news conference from orbit, the pair said they expect to return once thruster testing is complete here on Earth. They said they're not complaining about getting extra time in orbit, and are enjoying helping the station crew. Both have previously spent stints at the orbiting lab, which is also home to seven others.

"I have a real good feeling in my heart that the spacecraft will bring us home, no problem," Williams told reporters.

The test flight should have lasted eight days, ending on June 14.

NASA's commercial crew program director Steve Stich said the earliest the Starliner astronauts might return is the end of July. The goal is to get them back before SpaceX delivers a fresh crew in mid-August, but that, too, could change, he noted.

Propulsion

This week, NASA and Boeing are trying to duplicate the Starliner's thruster problems on a brand new unit at White Sands Missile Range in New Mexico, one of the prime landing sites in the US western desert. The trouble is in the propulsion system, used to maneuver the spacecraft.

Five thrusters failed as the capsule approached the space station on June 6, a day after liftoff. Four have since been reactivated. Wilmore said there should be enough working thrusters to get him and Williams out of orbit. There are also bigger engines that could fill in, if necessary.

"That mantra you've heard, failure is not an option, that's why we are staying here now," Wilmore said. "We trust that the tests that we're doing are the ones we need to do to get the right answers, to give us the data that we need to come back."

Boeing and NASA consider the ground tests essential to determine what might have gone wrong since that part of the capsule - the service module - is discarded before landing. The leaks also are located in this disposable section.

So far, testing has not replicated the

Ground tests vital to solve Starliner module issues

Milky Way galaxy can be larger than expected

Webb Space Telescope captures 'intertwined galaxies' in infrared

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla., July 14, (Agencies): The Webb Space Telescope has captured a pair of intertwined galaxies glowing in the infrared.

The observatory operated by NASA and the European Space Agency photographed the two galaxies 326 million light-years away, surrounded by a blue haze of stars and gas. A light-year is 5.8 trillion miles.

The pictures, released Friday, marks the second anniversary of Webb's science operations.

The neighboring galaxies, nicknamed Penguin and the Egg, have been tangled up for tens of millions of years, according to NASA. They'll eventually merge into a single galaxy. The same interaction will happen to our own Milky Way and the Andromeda Galaxy in 4 billion years, the space agency said.

Considered the successor to the aging Hubble Space Telescope, Webb is the biggest and most powerful astronomical observatory ever launched. It rocketed away in 2021 and underwent six months of commissioning, before its first official images were released in July 2022.

It's positioned 1 million miles (1.6 million kilometers) from Earth.

"In just two years, Webb has transformed our view of the universe," NASA's Mark Clampin said in a statement.

Meanwhile, a SpaceX rocket has failed for the first time in nearly a decade, leaving the company's internet satellites in an orbit so low that they're doomed to fall through the atmosphere and burn up.

The Falcon 9 rocket blasted off from California on Thursday night, carrying 20 Starlink satellites. Several minutes into the flight, the upper stage engine malfunctioned. SpaceX on Friday blamed a liquid oxygen leak.

The company said flight controllers managed to make contact with half of the satellites and attempted to boost

hot temperatures reached during the flight, according to Stich. Managers want to make sure the suspect thrusters are not damaged, before bringing Starliner back. They were fired more frequently than anticipated early in the flight, and the extra demand on them



In this photo provided by NASA and the Space Telescope Science Institute, two interacting galaxies are captured by the Webb Space Telescope in the infrared. Scientists say the neighboring galaxies, nicknamed Penguin, (right), and the Egg, (left), have been tangled up for tens of millions of years. (AP)

them to a higher orbit using onboard ion thrusters. But with the low end of their orbit only 84 miles (135 kilometers) above Earth - less than half what was intended - "our maximum available thrust is unlikely to be enough to successfully raise the satellites," the company said via X.

SpaceX said the satellites will re-enter the atmosphere and burn up. There was no mention of when they might come down. More than 6,000 orbiting Starlinks currently provide internet service to customers in some of the most remote corners of the world.

The Federal Aviation Administration said the problem must be fixed before Falcon rockets can fly again.

It was not known if or how the accident might impact SpaceX's upcoming

crew flights. A billionaire's spaceflight is scheduled for July 31 from Florida with plans for the first private space-walk, followed in mid-August by an astronaut flight to the International Space Station for NASA.

The tech entrepreneur who will lead the private flight, Jared Isaacman, said Friday that SpaceX's Falcon 9 has "an incredible track record" and as well as an emergency escape system.

The last launch failure occurred in 2015 during a space station cargo run. Another rocket exploded the following year during testing on the ground.

The study, conducted by researchers from Yunnan University and several international institutes, was recently published in Nature Astronomy.

Using data from stellar spectroscopic surveys, researchers constructed a radial density distribution of stars from the inner to the outer regions of the Galaxy, measuring the Galaxy's radius.

The result indicates that the Galactic disk structure in the outer disk region conforms to a classical exponential distribution while the inner disk region remains nearly flat. This finding is distinct from the long-standing assumption of a single exponential disk for the Galaxy, according to Lian Jianhui, a researcher at Yunnan University.

Lian said the study can impact measuring the Galaxy's key physical properties. Based on the assumption in the past, the half-light radius of the Galaxy, within which half of its luminosity is contained, was estimated to be about 10,000 light-years. The radius was extraordinarily smaller compared to galaxies of similar mass, and thus, the Galaxy was classified as a compact galaxy.

Also: **KUNMING:** The Milky Way galaxy can be larger than previously expected and have a more complex radial structure, according to scientists.

The result indicates that the Galactic disk structure in the outer disk region conforms to a classical exponential distribution while the inner disk region remains nearly flat. This finding is distinct from the long-standing assumption of a single exponential disk for the Galaxy, according to Lian Jianhui, a researcher at Yunnan University.

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for the trip home. Hurricane Beryl slowed some of the work. Johnson Space Center in Houston, home to the control centers for both NASA and Boeing, was closed earlier this week to all but the most critical staff.

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Argentina beat France for first time in 8 years



Argentina's Los Pumas celebrate with the trophy after winning a rugby test match against France, in Buenos Aires, Argentina. (AP)

Hosts restores wounded pride

BUENOS AIRES, Argentina, July 14, (AP): Argentina beat France 33-25 for the first time in eight years with a powerful pride-restoring performance.

A Pumas side stocked with Rugby World Cup players surprisingly lost to the third-string French last weekend in Mendoza. The French XV had less than 100 caps.

The Pumas were far more aggressive in Buenos Aires and the forwards were responsible for four of their five tries. They blew a 21-10 lead at halftime and fell behind 25-21, but while France prop Georges-Henri Colombe was in the sin-bin, the pack engineered two tries finished by replacement prop Thomas Gallo.

RUGBY

France was consumed by controversy in the past week as two of its players were arrested and charged with aggravated sexual assault and Melvyn Jaminet, a first test try-scorer, was sent home after making a racist comment on a social media video.

France's tour continued under a dark cloud which it hoped to alleviate with a first series win in Argentina since 1998. It put itself in a winning position with its energetic start to the second half which saw tries to center Emilien Gailleton and winger Theo Attisogbe.

But Argentina rallied to seize back the lead and give Felipe Contempomi his first win as head coach.

"We played better than last week. There were a lot of things to improve and I'm proud of the character we showed," said Pumas captain Julian Montoya, who was

forced from the field injured after 20 minutes.

France scored first from an Argentina knock-on on halfway. In the counterattack, Mickael Guillard broke and Attisogbe was in support to put in captain Baptiste Serin.

In the 17th minute, the Pumas won a penalty and pumped the ball into the right corner. After seven phases, prop Eduardo Bello drove the ball over to level.

Antoine Hastoy's penalty nudged France ahead but Argentina claimed the lead for the first time after 30 minutes when it was awarded a penalty try from a pushover scrum. Mayco Vivas popped France opposite Demba Bamba and the visiting scrum disintegrated.

Santiago Carreras' own converted try, when he barged through two defenders at the line, increased the Pumas' lead to 21-10 at halftime.

France was re-energized in the second half and cut Argentina's lead to a single point within six minutes.

Another Hastoy penalty was followed by Gailleton's try from his own chargedown.

Three minutes later, France reclaimed the lead when fullback Leo Barre's grubber kick bounced kindly for Attisogbe to snatch and score his second try of the series. Hastoy missed the conversion after four successive goalkicks.

Argentina steered itself, helped when Colombe received a yellow card for a high tackle.

Gallo scored the next two tries in similar circumstances: Lineout mauls and pick-and-go that France couldn't stop. Argentina earned a first home win in two years.

"For me," Serin said, "it was very proud to prepare the last week and I'm very proud of the guys."

O'Ward finishes second

McLaughlin stays fast, wins 1st race of IndyCar's doubleheader at Iowa

NEWTON, Iowa, July 14, (AP): Scott McLaughlin said he didn't feel like he was an IndyCar driver until he got a win on an oval track.

He reached that goal on Saturday night.

McLaughlin continued his fast weekend at Iowa Speedway on Saturday night, winning the first race of the IndyCar Series doubleheader for his first victory on an oval track.

McLaughlin led 164 of the 250 laps, winning by nearly a half-second over second-place driver Pato O'Ward at the 0.875-mile oval.

"I, personally," McLaughlin said. McLaughlin, in his fourth full IndyCar season, came into this weekend with five wins on road courses and street courses in the series.

"I felt like an open-wheel driver, but an IndyCar driver is someone who can win on all three race tracks," McLaughlin said. "Thankfully, I'm very proud to say I've won an oval now as well as a road and a street course. Yeah, proud moment for me."

CAR RACING

McLaughlin had the strongest car all weekend. He had the fastest time in Friday's practice, set the track single-lap record in qualifying Saturday afternoon on his second lap to earn the pole for Sunday's race, and started on the outside of the first row of this race after posting the second-fastest first lap during qualifying.

And he was the fastest out of the pits when it counted during two caution-flag stops.

Colton Herta, the pole-sitter for the race, led the first 86 laps, but lost the lead by a narrow margin when McLaughlin beat him out of the pits during a caution-flag round of pit stops. Herta tried to get by on the restart, but McLaughlin was able to hold him off.

"I was saying, 'I think I got him,'" McLaughlin said of taking the lead coming out of the pits. "I believed I was in front of him. It must have been by a whisker. I don't know what it was."

McLaughlin was leading by more than three seconds when series points leader Alex Palou crashed on Lap 177. Herta, who had just pitted before the Palou crash, went a lap down, and McLaughlin kept his lead after the pit stops during the caution flag.

"At the end of the day, I knew I did the job from my perspective, but it was a team win," McLaughlin said. "They got me the lead, and I was able to show how good that car was, just controlling the pace from the front."

McLaughlin gave Team Penske its eighth IndyCar win at Iowa Speedway. It was the second win for a Penske car at the track this season - Ryan Blaney won the NASCAR Cup Series race in June.

"Blaney texted me and he said, 'We're corn brothers now,'" McLaughlin said.

Josef Newgarden, McLaughlin's teammate who swept last year's doubleheader, finished third after starting 22nd. Scott Dixon was fourth, and

Trio of cyclists to beat in tight road race

PARIS, July 14, (Xinhua): If there is one event in the Olympic Games that is hard to predict, it is the Olympic road race in men's and women's cycling.

The leg-breaking 273 kilometers of the men's course, which finishes in the shadow of the Eiffel Tower, gives plenty of scope for the unexpected to happen, where a puncture at the wrong moment could derail a gold-medal attempt.

The Olympics follow hot on the heels of the Tour de France, which this year finishes in Nice, and tired legs from three weeks in the saddle could be a factor for some riders as they face 2,800 meters of climbing in quest for medals.

The Olympic road race is like few others, partly because teams are limited to a maximum of four riders for the most powerful cycling nations - France, Belgium, Denmark, Britain and Slovenia, while others such as Spain, Italy, the Netherlands, and Australia have only three riders each.

Smaller teams mean a change of tactics - normally, a rider will have a team of six or seven companions, with three or four to use their energy to chase down any breakaways. However, with only three or four members in a team, it's all too easy to burn out your teammates if nobody else collaborates in a chase - this is what happened to Mark Cavendish in London in 2012.

Cavendish went to London as the best sprinter in the world and clear favorite to win if the race ended in a sprint finish, so when there was an attack off the front, nobody helped the

Team GB riders chase it down, leaving Cavendish frustrated and without a medal.

The small teams and style of race probably rule out pure sprinters, such as Jasper Philipsen and favors riders who can specialize in the so-called 'one day classics', with current Tour de France leader Tadej Pogacar the standout favorite after storming to the victory in the Giro de Italia earlier this year, while also winning the 'Classic' races Strade Bianche and Liege-Bastogne-Liege.

In the Strade Bianche and Liege-Bastogne-Liege, Pogacar was able to attack the field on a climb and ride off the front with over 50 kilometers left in the race, and he could look to repeat that in Paris.

CYCLING

Any questions over Pogacar will be over his fitness after riding the Tour de France and Giro, and also whether the climbs in Paris are tough enough to allow him to launch a decisive solo attack.

If Pogacar has to contest a sprint finish then Belgian Remco Evenepoel and Dutch rider Mathieu Van der Poel also have to be considered favorites as they can all but match his stamina and both have slightly faster finishes.

Reigning world champion Van der Poel is a supreme one-day rider, with three wins in the Tour of Flanders and wins in the 2023 and 2024 editions of the Paris-Roubaix.

Evenepoel was the world champion

in 2022, and two Liege-Bastogne-Liege among his 'palmares' also highlighted the talents of the Belgian, who will also have Wout van Aert in his team, although Van Aert's preparations have not been helped by a bad fall he sustained in the spring.

Reigning Olympic champion Richard Carapaz has not been called up by Ecuador and won't defend his crown, while twice Tour de France winner Jonas Vingegaard is more of a stage rather than a one-day rider.

The only thing that looks certain in this race is that sooner or later French Julian Alaphilippe will launch an attack and the pavements packed with fans cheering him on, who certainly has the chance of a medal.

Italy's Filippo Ganna will start the time trial as favorite, but Evenepoel is also a good medal hopeful in this race, with young British rider Joshua Taring could also threaten the podium.

In the women's road race, Dutch rider Demi Vollering looks to be the favorite after a magnificent 2024, while Lotte Kopecky of Belgium goes to Paris as the reigning world champion and winner of the women's Paris-Roubaix and Strade Bianche.

Italy's Elisa Balsamo should also be close as Britain's Lizzie Deignan, while if the race goes to a sprint, don't bet against 2012 gold medal winner, Marianne Vos adding another Olympic gold to her haul of titles.

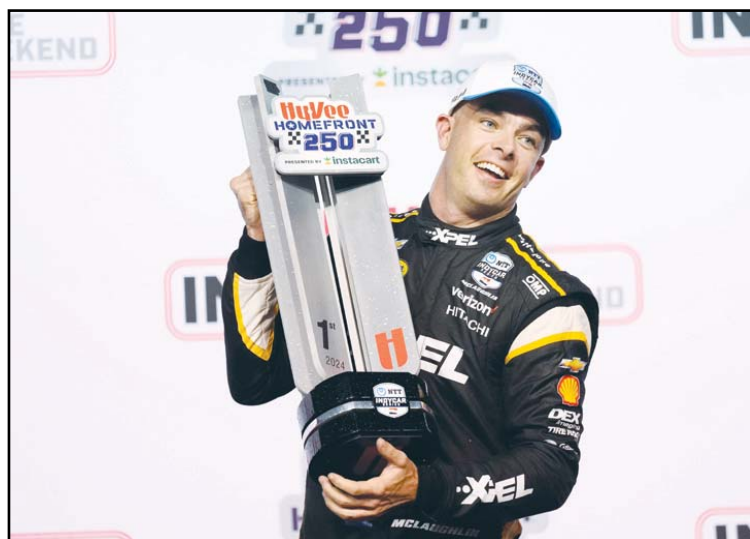
Van der Poel should also go close in the time trial, where riders such as America's Chloe Dygert, Grace Brown of Australia and France's Juliette Labous should also challenge for medals.

Rinus VeeKay was fifth.

"You can't start 22nd," Newgarden said. "In other years, I would have been

OK starting 22nd. This was almost the kiss of death starting that far back."

The concern, after the partial re-



Scott McLaughlin celebrates after winning an IndyCar auto race, Saturday, July 13, 2024, at Iowa Speedway in Newton, Iowa. (AP)

Change Name

I, SEEMA RANI Holder of Indian Passport M 6718421 have add Surname KHIPAL to my name I changed my name from SEEMA RANI (old) to SEEMA RANI KHIPAL (New) I also undertake to carry out this name change in all my documents

High drama and emerging stars at the Olympics

PARIS, July 14, (Xinhua): Drawing its Olympic lineage from the ancient Greek sport of pankration, boxing is considered one of the Games' marquee events. Despite recent controversies, including accusations of financial mismanagement and governance issues by the IOC-suspended International Boxing Association and judging scandals, Olympic boxing remains a premier event.

For fans and pundits alike, the Olympic boxing competition is where future super-

stars announce themselves to the world. Former gold medalists like Muhammad Ali, Sugar Ray Leonard, Oscar De La Hoya, Lennox Lewis and, more recently, Anthony Joshua, have used the Games as a crucial springboard to global stardom.

The event will take place from July 27 to August 10.

The boxing competition will feature athletes from around the world, competing in weight classes ranging from flyweight to super heavyweight.

The men's competition includes seven weight classes: 51kg, 57kg, 63.5kg, 71kg, 80kg, 92kg, and +92kg. The women's competition features six weight classes: 50kg, 54kg, 57kg, 60kg, 66kg, and 75kg.

From 1984 to 2012, male boxers wore protective headgear, a requirement dropped for the 2016 Rio Olympics, though female boxers still wear headgear. Men's matches consist of three rounds lasting three minutes each, while women's matches include four rounds of two minutes each.



Los Angeles Sparks' Aari McDonald, (left), and Dallas Wings' Jacy Sheldon, (right), compete for the ball in the second half of a WNBA basketball game in Arlington, Texas. (AP)

Sparks top Wings 87-81

Ionescu, Liberty beat Sky

CHICAGO, July 14, (AP): Sabrina Ionescu scored 28 points for New York and the Liberty snapped Angel Reese's WNBA-record double-double streak at 15 games as they beat the Chicago Sky 81-67 on Saturday.

Jonquel Jones added 14 points, nine rebounds and seven assists for New York (20-4), which has won three games in row, including a 91-76 win over the Sky on Thursday. Leonie Fiebich tied her career high (set in the win over Chicago last time out) with 13-points and Ivana Djokic added 12.

Reese, a front-runner for WNBA rookie of the year, finished with eight points and 16 rebounds for the Sky. Marina Mabrey finished with 21 points, a career-high 12 rebounds and seven assists, and Michaela Onyenwere scored a season-high 14.

New York shot just 29% (6 of 21) and allowed the Sky to grab nine offensive rebounds while Mabrey scored 11 points in the first quarter to give Chicago a seven-point lead but the Liberty outscored the Sky 29-13 - including nine points by Djokic - in the second quarter.

Dana Evans hit a 3-pointer that gave Chicago a 34-29 lead with 4:59 remaining in the first half but the Sky went 0 for 5 from the field and committed five turnovers from there as New York closed the second quarter on a 14-0 run to take the lead for good and make it 43-34 at halftime.

The Liberty led by at least seven points throughout the second half.

New York, which committed five turnovers, scored 11 points off 14 Sky turnovers.

Breanna Stewart (hamstring) did not play for the Liberty. The two-time WNBA MVP (2018, 2023) leads New York in scoring (19.3 per game), steals (2.0) and blocks (1.5).

Sparks 87, Wings 81

In Arlington, Dearica Hamby scored 27 points, rookie Rickea Jackson added a career-high 23 points and the Los Angeles Sparks beat the Dallas Wings in a battle between the WNBA's cellar dwellers.

Azurá Stevens finished with 16 points, eight rebounds, four assists, four steals and three blocks while shooting 6 of 10 from the field, 4 of 4 from 3-point range, for the Sparks (6-17). Aari McDonald added 12 points.

Stevens hit a 3-pointer to make it 72-44 with 5:49 to play and spark an 11-1 run that gave the Sparks an 80-73 lead when Hamby's capped the spurt with 3:49 left. Arike Ogunbowale hit two free throws to trim Dallas' deficit to 80-77 with 2:28 remaining but Hamby answered with a layup. Aari McDonald followed with a pair of foul shots and the Wings got no closer.

BASKETBALL

Odyssey Sims led Dallas (5-19) with 23 points. She has scored in double-figures in seven of eight games, including each of the last six, since she signed with the team on June 25. Natasha Howard scored 14 points, Kalani Brown 13 and Teaira McCowan 10. Ogunbowale score 12 points but was just 2-of-14 shooting and committed five turnovers.

Los Angeles won for just the second time in its last 12 games. The Sparks have four wins (two wins each against the Wings and the Las Vegas Aces) since May 28.

Dallas has won just twice since May 26.

Jackson scored six points - and Stevens hit a 3-pointer and followed with a layup that gave Los Angeles its first lead at 20-18 - in an 11-0 run to close the first quarter and Jackson's layup to open the second gave the Sparks a 24-18 lead.

Hamby scored 17 points on 8-of-12 shooting and Jackson added 12 points as the Sparks took a 45-44 lead into halftime. Los Angeles shot 56% (20 of 36) and had eight steals - three by Stevens, who also had eight points and six rebounds - in the first half.

Stevens and Kia Nurse hit back-to-back 3-pointers to cap a 12-2 run to open the third quarter that gave Los Angeles a 57-46 lead with 6:34 left in the period.

Dallas overcomes Galaxy

Torres scores brace as Orlando City earn 3rd straight victory

Uruguay edge Canada in shootout for third place

Suárez gets stoppage-time goal

CHARLOTTE, July 14, (AP): Luis Suárez still has a knack for big plays.

The 37-year-old Suárez, Uruguay's career scoring leader, tied the score two minutes into second-half stoppage time, and Uruguay beat Canada 4-3 on penalty kicks after a 2-2 draw on Saturday night to finish third in the Copa America.

Uruguay goalkeeper Sergio Rochet saved Ismael Koné's weak penalty kick after the shooter's stutter step on Canada's third attempt, and Alphonso Davies put Canada's fifth and final kick off the crossbar.

Federico Valverde, Rodrigo Bentancur, Giorgian de Arrascaeta and Suárez converted Uruguay's attempts past goalkeeper Dayne St. Clair while Jonathan David, Moïse Bombito and Mathieu Choinière made their kicks for Canada, which went first in the shootout.

SOCCER

"Uruguay is one of the three best teams of this tournament and taking into consideration that the tournament included Central, North and South America, and we finished third, allows us to be optimistic," Uruguay coach Marcelo Bielsa said through an interpreter.

But Bielsa clearly wasn't happy with his team's effort, and added that he may have misjudged how tired his team was after playing on just two days rest.

"The draw was barely deserved," Bielsa said.

Bielsa praised Suárez's "physical skills and mental aptitude" after the match following his 69th international goal on a quick attack following a centering pass from José María Giménez.

"It is very well known what he has done throughout his career and having shared this time with him, I believe he is a top-notch player and a great teammate," Bielsa said of Suárez.

Canada, which hired American Jesse Marsch as coach in May, will consider the tournament one of its best performances since winning the 2000 CONCACAF Gold Cup. The Canadians reached the World Cup for the second time in 2022, the first since 1986.



Uruguay players pose with their medals after beating Canada in a penalty shootout during the Copa America third place soccer match in Charlotte, N.C. (AP)

Canada made six changes for its starting semifinal lineup and Uruguay made two. Davies, Canada's top player, entered in the 62nd minute after leaving the semifinal with a leg injury.

Marsch said his players made a "statement" and are well ahead of where he thought they'd be at this time.

"The players are disappointed in the way that we gave the match away," Marsch said. "But I was very positive with them. We have been together for about six weeks and to play against one of the best teams in the world and dominate the match - we were too much for them for most of the match

- is pretty good."

He said his team simply gave the ball away too often in the final minutes.

"We should have been able to shut that game down," Marsch said. "But that savviness of how to handle those situations, we need to develop that - and we will."

Bentancur put Uruguay ahead in the eighth minute but Canada built a 2-1 lead on goals by Koné in the 22nd and David in the 80th.

St. Clair was given an unusual yellow card as Rochet was preparing for Bombito's penalty kick, possibly for trying to distract the goalkeeper.

FOXBOROUGH, July 14, (AP): Facundo Torres scored two goals, Ramiro Enrique scored for the second consecutive game and Orlando City beat the New England Revolution 3-1 Saturday night.

Orlando City (10-9-6) has three consecutive games and four of its last five.

Torres scored for the second game in a row to make it 1-1 in the 51st minute. New England's Ian Harkes redirected a pass played by Martin Ojeda but the ball rolled to Torres for a one-touch finish from just inside the area.

Enrique made his second start of the season and scored for the second

consecutive game to give Orlando City a 2-1 lead in the 59th. César Araujo played a header to the near post where Enrique tapped in from point-blank range.

New England (7-13-1), which is coming off a 2-0 loss to the Sounders in Seattle, has lost back-to-back games after it had won five of six games.

Aljaz Ivacic had four saves for the Revolution.

Torres capped the scoring with a goal in the 81st minute. It was the second multi-goal game in the past five for Torres, who has scored six goals in as many games.

Petar Musa and Logan Farrington each scored a goal to help FC Dallas beat the LA Galaxy 2-0.

Farrington's one-touch shot from the right side of the area was kick-saved by goalkeeper John McCarthy but Musa was there for the putback into a wide-open net from the center of the area that gave Dallas a 1-0 lead in the 19th minute.

Musa became the first FC Dallas player to score in three consecutive MLS regular season games since Jesús Ferreira in May 2023.

Farrington slipped behind the defense, ran onto a long arcing ball from Asier Illarramendi and beat McCarthy one on one for a goal that made it 2-0 in the 55th.

Maarten Paes had one save for Dallas (7-11-5).

The Galaxy were shutout for the first time since a 0-0 tie with Charlotte FC on May 18.

Brian White scored two goals to continue his white-hot streak and the Vancouver Whitecaps beat St. Louis City 3-1.

White has scored in four consecutive games, beginning with a hat trick in 4-3 win over St. Louis on June 29. Vancouver (10-7-5) is unbeaten, with three wins, in that span. The 28-year-old, who also scored in four straight games in April became the first player in club history to accomplish the feat twice in a single season.

St. Louis (4-9-10) has one win since a 3-1 victory over the Chicago Fire on May 11.

White put away a feed from Fafa Picault to give the Whitecaps the lead for good just before halftime. Picault's header was parried by goalkeeper Roman Bürki but he headed his own rebound to White for the finish from point blank range to make it 2-1 in the 44th minute.

Jordan Morris scored a goal and Stefan Frei had four saves to help the Seattle Sounders beat Austin FC 1-0 for its fourth win in a row.

Seattle (9-7-7) has five wins in its six-game unbeaten streak.

SOCCER

Obed Vargas evaded multiple defenders as he raced down the right side, then tapped a pass to Paul Rothrock, who rolled a sliding pass to Morris for the finish from the center of the area to give the sounders a 1-0 lead in the 63rd minute.

Deandre Kerr scored four minutes after an own goal by Philadelphia's Jack Elliott to rally Toronto FC to a 2-1 victory over the Union.

Philadelphia (4-10-9) grabbed a 1-0 lead in the 39th minute and took it into halftime when Tai Baribo used an assist from defender Kai Wagner to score his third goal of the season and the third of his two-year career. It was the seventh helper of the campaign for Wagner.

Toronto (8-13-3) pulled even in the 74th minute on an own goal by Elliott, a defender.

Toronto grabbed the lead in the 78th when Kerr used assists from Lorenzo Insigne and Deybi Flores to score for the first time this season. It was the sixth assist for Insigne and the second helper of the season and career for Flores, who is in his first year with the club. Flores, who subbed in for Sigurd Rosted in the 61st minute, has been out of the league since making six starts and 10 appearances for the Vancouver Whitecaps in 2015-16.

Sean Johnson saved three shots in goal for Toronto. He became the fourth keeper in league history to reach 150 career wins.

Christian Ramírez scored a goal in each half, Juan "Cucho" Hernández and Alexandru Matan both had a goal and an assist and the defending-champion Columbus Crew thumped Los Angeles FC 5-1 with three red cards being handed out late in a testy rematch of last year's championship match.

The Crew (12-3-6), who earned a 2-1 victory in Columbus to win the MLS Cup last season, earned their fifth straight victory and snapped a 10-match unbeaten run by LAFC (13-5-4) that had moved the club into a three-way tie for first place in the Western Conference with Real Salt Lake and the Los Angeles Galaxy. All three leaders lost on Saturday.

Three players won't be suiting up for matches on Wednesday after receiving red cards. LAFC lost defender Sergi Palencia in the 83rd minute and defender Jesús Murillo in the seventh minute of stoppage time. Columbus midfielder Marino Hiestroza was sent off when Murillo exited.

Columbus took a 1-0 lead into halftime when Ramírez used Max Arfsten's fifth assist of the season and Cucho's eighth to score in the 38th minute.

Hernández gave the Crew a two-goal lead in the 56th minute with his 12th goal of the campaign. Defender Steven Moreira picked up his third assist on the score. Diego Rossi made it 3-0 four minutes later when he scored unassisted. It was his eighth netter this season.

Neymar Jr. set to return to Al Hilal training in August

Al-Ittihad appoint Laurent Blanc as new head coach

JEDDAH, July 14: Al-Ittihad Saudi Club has appointed French coach Laurent Blanc to lead the first team, succeeding Argentine Marcelo Gallardo.

The Jeddah Football Association welcomed the 58-year-old coach and shared photos of his arrival at the team's camp in Spain on their social media accounts, as they prepare for the new season.

This marks Blanc's sixth coaching stint and his second in the Arab world, following his tenure with Al Rayyan in Qatar. He has also coached Bordeaux, Lyon, and Paris Saint-Germain, as well as serving as the head coach of the French national team.

The club announced a friendly match against the Spanish team Elche on July 20 during their Spanish training camp in preparation for the new season.

The team began their external camp in Spain on Friday and will hold another camp in Portugal from July 27 to August 3.

Blanc has an impressive record as a coach, with 15 titles from 446 matches, including 273 wins, 82 draws, and 91 defeats.

The Saudi Sports newspaper revealed the anticipated return date for Brazilian star Neymar Jr. to team training, as the "samba dancer" enters the final stage of his rehabilitation program.

The report stated: "International Brazilian star Neymar Junior, the lead striker for Al Hilal football team, informed the team's medical and fitness staff of his potential readiness to start training in early August."

SOCCER

It continued: "Neymar has reached the final stages of his rehabilitation program after undergoing reconstructive surgery on his cruciate ligament last November."

Neymar's return to training next month increases the likelihood of his inclusion in the team's roster during the summer registration period, potentially at the expense of his compatriot Michel Delgado, the right winger, who has six months remaining on his contract with the club.

If this occurs, Al Hilal Club management will consider offers for Michel, aiming to benefit financially from selling his remaining contract term.

Carson Tyler new name to watch in Paris

China try to go for 8-for-8 sweep in diving gold

BEIJING, July 14, (AP): Chinese divers won seven of eight gold medals at the last Olympics in Tokyo, termed one of the greatest performances in Olympic history.

Even more is expected this time in Paris.

China has ruled diving for decades. But it's never pulled off the elusive gold sweep at the Games. The People's Daily - the official newspaper of the Communist Party - termed this lapse "regrettable" in a recent article.

How's that for pressure?

"I hope that all of us can stand on the top of the podium," Tokyo gold medalist Quan Hongchan said in an interview on state-run television.

They might, and the record is already staggering.

Starting with the 1984 Los Angeles Olympics where China claimed its first diving gold, it has won 47 of 64 gold medals. Add to that 23 silver and 10 bronze. If you start counting from the 2008 Beijing Olympics, Chinese have won 27 of 32 gold.

That's almost perfection, but someone always spoils the party - like American David Boudia, Australian Matthew Mitcham, Briton Tom Daley or Russian Ilya Zakharov.

Neymar suffered a tear in his cruciate ligament and meniscus in his left knee while playing for his national team against Uruguay in the South American qualifiers for the 2026 World Cup last October.



Laurent Blanc addressing the players.

The People's Daily urged the team to "launch an all-out bid this time for gold medals in all diving events."

Eight might be the charm. That number is viewed as fortuitous in Chinese culture. Note the 2008 Beijing Games opened on Aug. 8, 2008, at 8 p.m.

Quan was only 14 when she won gold three years ago on the 10-meter platform. Teammate Chen Yuxi, the gold medalist in synchro on the platform, was only 15. Both are back and probably in a class by themselves.

OLYMPICS

For the men, Wang Zongyuan was the silver medalist on the 3-meter springboard in Tokyo behind teammate Xie Siyi and should be the favorite in Paris.

This will be Drew Johansen's fourth straight Olympics as the U.S. diving coach. The head coach at Indiana University is assisted by Wenbo Chen, the China-born coach at the University of Minnesota. Also on the staff is Purdue coach David Boudia, the Olympic gold medalist on the platform in 2012.

Three silver medalists from Tokyo return: Andrew Capobianco, Jessica Parratto and Delaney Schnell. They all made the podium in synchronized events, and those events may offer the best chances for the Americans and others.

Parratto will dive again with Schnell in the 10-meter synchronized platform,

and Capobianco is on the 3-meter springboard. He did not qualify in synchroized. Schnell and Daryn Wright will compete on the platform.

"The world has been catching up to the Chinese in all the events except for women's platform," Johansen said. "Chinese women on the tower are still way ahead of the world."

Sarah Bacon and Cassidy Cook have a shot in the 3-meter synchroized springboard, and Bacon and Alison Gibson should contend as individuals in the 3-meter springboard.

The new name to watch is Carson Tyler in both the 10-meter platform and 3-meter springboard, a rarity participating in both events and a reminder of Greg Louganis' double-double gold medals in 1984 and '88.

"Carson has shown up as a great mental performer," Johansen said.

"We've managed to beat China in certain events over the years and I feel like some parity has come to the sport," he added. "We have been hovering around those gold medals and points away from getting them."

Johansen said part of the strategy is to put the pressure on the Chinese by attempting dives with a higher degree of difficulty, which earn more points if successfully delivered.

"It's a risk-reward game," he said.

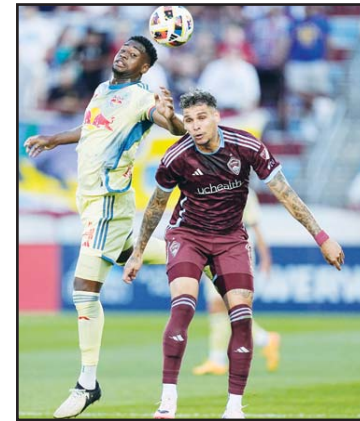
Johansen credits Xu Yiming, who coached Chinese Olympic divers from the mid-1980s into the 2000s, for sharing his technical knowledge with the rest of the world. Johansen calls Xu a mentor from time they spent together when Johansen was coaching at Duke University. "He taught me a lot of their physical techniques right after he retired," Johansen said. Having incorporated that knowledge, the next plateau is mental conditioning.

"I physically couldn't train them any better," he said. "I didn't know anybody in the world who was doing it any better. The only way I was going to get my athletes to succeed was to prepare them mentally, and I didn't know how to do that."

Johansen said he recently has begun assembling what he calls a "performance think tank" to teach mental focus and sports psychology. Without giving names, he said the team includes Navy SEAL, a book author and others who study executing under pressure.



Toronto FC defender Sigurd Rosted (top) tackles Philadelphia Union attacker Quinn Sullivan (bottom) during second-half MLS soccer match action in Toronto. (AP)



New York Red Bulls defender Andrés Reyes (left) pursues the ball with Colorado Rapids forward Rafael Navarro in the first half of an MLS soccer match in Commerce City, Colo. (AP)

Poland rally past Germany

WARSAW, July 14, (Xinhua): Poland's men's volleyball team made a spectacular comeback to beat Germany 3-2 (20-25, 22-25, 25-19, 25-21, 15-12) in the Hubert Wagner Memorial in Krakow.

The team coached by Nikola Grbic secured their second victory in the tournament after beating Egypt in straight sets. Lukasz Kaczmarek was the most prolific player with 15 points, while Mateusz Bieniek added 14. Gyorgy Grozer and Anton Brehme delivered 15 points each for Germany.

The visitors, led by Polish coach Michal Winiarski, made a strong

start en route to win the first set 25-20 with good attack from the middle by Tobias Krick.

They continued the momentum in the second set and secured the lead with an effective block to make it 25-22.

However, Poland turned the pace as Tomasz Fornal, Kaczmarek and Grzegorz Lomacz led the hosts to a spectacular comeback.

In the tie-break, Grbic's players proved their quality once more as they built a four-point advantage early in the set before Poland's block killed Germany's hopes to win tie-break 15-12.



Stage winner Slovenia's Tadej Pogacar, wearing the overall leader's yellow jersey, celebrates as he crosses the finish line of the fifteenth stage of the Tour de France cycling race over 198 kilometers (123 miles) with start in Loudenvielle and finish on Plateau de Beille, France. (AP)

Sports

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Alcaraz defends Wimbledon title

Spaniard tops Novak for 4th major

LONDON, July 14, (AP): Carlos Alcaraz defeated Novak Djokovic 6-2, 6-2, 7-6 (4) in the Wimbledon men's final Sunday to collect his fourth Grand Slam title at age 21.

It was a rematch of last year's championship match on the grass of the All England Club, which Alcaraz won in five sets.

This one - played in front of a Centre Court crowd that included Kate, the Princess of Wales, in a rare public appearance since announcing she has cancer - was much easier for Alcaraz, at least until he stumbled while holding three match points as he served for the victory at 5-4 in the third set.

Still, Alcaraz regrouped and eventually picked up a second major trophy in a row after last month's triumph on the clay at the French Open.

The Spaniard won his first Slam title at the 2022 U.S. Open as a teenager, and no man ever has collected more Slam hardware before turning 22 than



Novak Djokovic of Serbia plays a forehand return to Carlos Alcaraz of Spain during the men's singles final at the Wimbledon tennis championships in London. (AP)

he has.

He improved to 4-0 in major finals. The 37-year-old Djokovic, wearing a gray sleeve on his surgically repaired right knee, was denied in his bid for an eighth Wimbledon title and record 25th major overall. He tore his meniscus at Roland Garros on June 3 and had an operation in Paris two days later.

Less than six weeks later, Djokovic was hardly at his best on Sunday - and Alcaraz certainly had something to do with that.

"Especially in the first couple of sets, the level of tennis wasn't really up to par on my side," said Djokovic, whose two children were in his guest box. "He had it all today. I tried to push him. ... It wasn't meant to be."

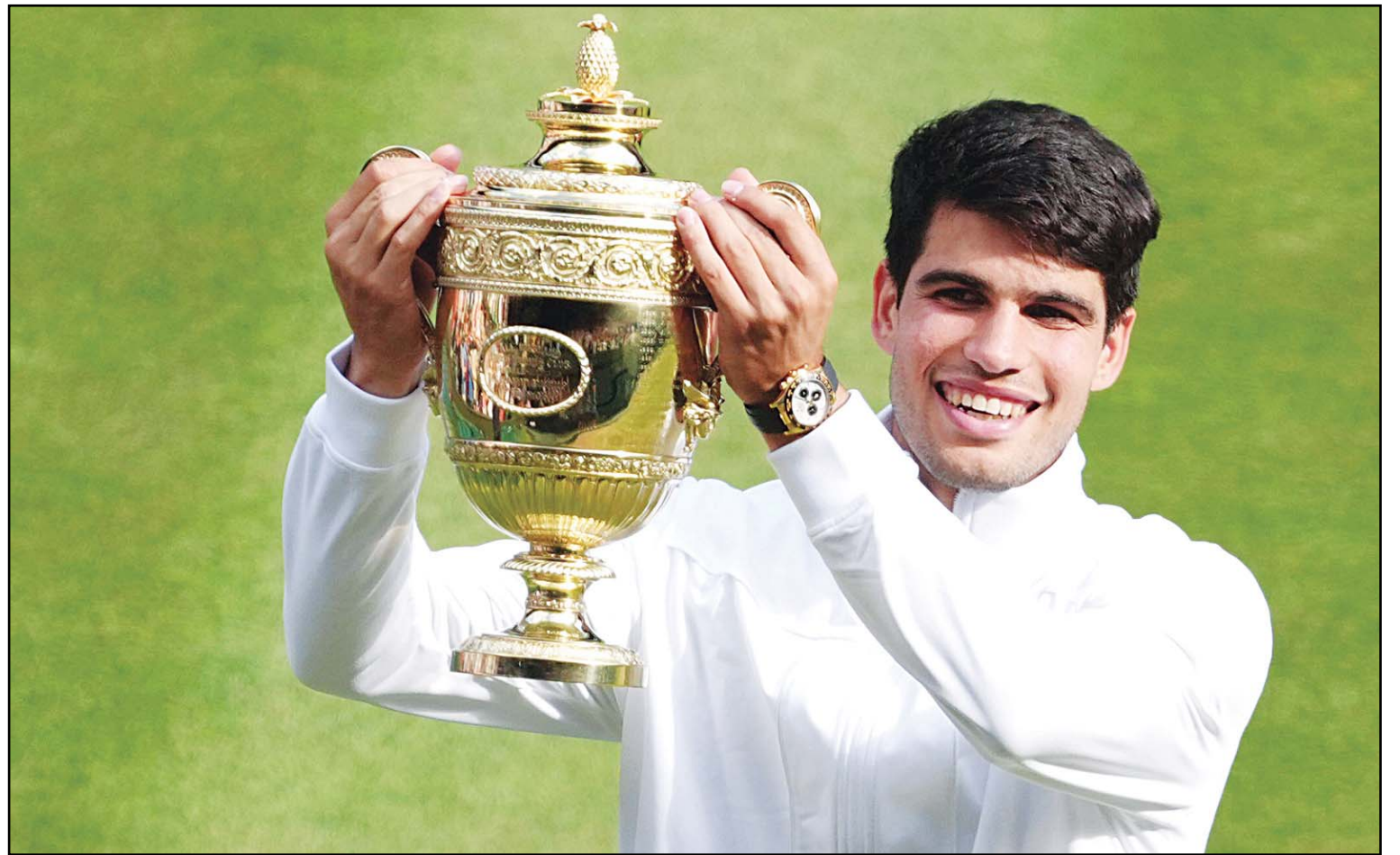
TENNIS

It was only when Alcaraz was right on the brink of victory that things finally became a tad more intriguing, as some spectators offered chants of Djokovic's two-syllable nickname - "No-le! No-le!" - while others replied with choruses of "Let's go, Carlos! Let's go!"

Alcaraz was up 5-4, 40-love in the third set when the occasion got the better of him. He frittered away his first championship point with a double-fault, beginning a run of five mistakes by him that donated points - and that game - to Djokovic. There was a backhand that went awry. A forehand volley. A forehand. Another forehand. That was the only time all match that Djokovic broke Alcaraz.

Suddenly, it was 5-all. Suddenly, Alcaraz appeared rattled. Suddenly, Djokovic could hope.

But in the ensuing tiebreaker, Alcaraz earned his fourth match point and stayed cool as can be this time. Soon he was climbing through the stands to hug his coach, Juan Carlos Ferrero, and others.



Carlos Alcaraz celebrates with The Gentlemen's Singles Trophy after victory over Novak Djokovic in the Gentlemen's Singles final at the Wimbledon tennis championships. (AP)

'We don't know the team's status'

Madloul urges authorities to address Jahra Club's dire straits

By Khaled El Anzi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, July 14: Abdulaziz Madloul, the director of the Jahra team, has issued a heartfelt plea to Dr. Amthal Al-Huwaila, the Minister of

Social Affairs, Family and Childhood Affairs, and the Minister of State for Youth Affairs. He urged her to address the ongoing issues facing the Jahra Club.

Madloul emphasized, "We need her to pay a little attention to what is happening at the Jahra Club. We ask her to visit the Jahra Club Center and observe how the team is training and preparing for the new season."

He highlighted the incomplete maintenance work, forcing the team to train in a temporary facility on artificial turf.

Additionally, Madloul sent a message to Bashar Abdullah, the acting Director General of the General Sports Authority, asking for his attention to the club's plight. He expressed hope that Bashar, a former player, would understand the players' circumstances and the challenges they face.

Madloul described the dire situation at the Al-Jahra Club, stating that he has until July 25 to submit the administrative, technical, and medical staff

SOCCER

lists to the Al-Itihad, which he cannot fulfill under current conditions. He and Mubarak Al-Jadaan, the head of the football apparatus, are personally striving to gather players and maintain training despite the challenges.

He revealed that the team wanted assistant coach Ahmed Hassan due to the departure of French coach Eric, who was forced to leave because of unpaid rent since last November. The team is currently training in a center affiliated with the Authority, lacking proper facilities, and players are changing in a nearby mosque.

Madloul added, "Until today, we do not know the team's status: whether it will participate in the league championship or not." He noted that the Kuwait Football Association set August 5 as the deadline to determine the team's participation in local competitions. This uncertainty stems from the lack of approval signatures from the authority and a case filed by a player against the club with FIFA, resulting in a \$50,000 fine for Al-Jahra.

Madloul stressed that Al-Jahra is awaiting a suitable resolution and that it doesn't matter who leads the club's board of directors. "We want stability,



A file photo of Al-Jahra players celebrating.

Kuwait Club beat Amed FK

Barhama, Khafi join Al-Qadisiya for an intensive training in Cairo



Al-Qadisiya players welcome the two new arrivals, Khafi and Barhama.

Hassan Musa

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, July 14: Al-Qadisiya's professional players, the Moroccan duo Mahdi Barhama and Ismail Khafi, joined the team's training recently and will depart with the "Yellow" delegation today to Cairo, Egypt, where it will conduct a preparatory camp there until the end of the month, featuring three friendly matches.

The "Yellow" team aims to meticulously prepare for the upcoming season, including participation in the Gulf Club Championship after a long hiatus. It will also kick off its local season against Kuwait on August 8 in the Zain Premier League.

To bolster their lineup, Al-Qadisiya has recruited four foreign players: Lib-

and we want to return to fulfilling our roles in the club and participating in local competitions, like the rest of the clubs," he concluded.

yan Mohamed Sula, Moroccans Mahdi Barhama and Ismail Khafi, and Nigerian Daniel Gebula. Meanwhile, the technical staff, led by coach Mohamed Al-Mashaan, is still reviewing several professional candidates for the defensive positions to finalize its foreign player contracts.

Al-Arabi announced that its Algerian professional, Sofiane Bouchard, has been granted special leave to return to his home country following the end of the season in Algeria. The club also issued a statement cautioning against the spread of rumors and false news, threatening legal action if necessary.

SOCCER

Bouchard recently concluded his loan to CS Belouizdad in Algeria and is expected to rejoin Al-Arabi soon. He is one of four Al-Arabi professionals, along with compatriot Ahmed Khalidi, Moroccan Hamza Khaba, and Nigerian Anayo Iweala. Al-Arabi is set to compete in the Asian Challenge Cup next season as the league runner-up.

In Turkey, Kuwait SC secured a 2-0 victory against Turkish team Amed FK in its first friendly match of its training camp. Goals were scored by Ali Hussein and Amr Abdel Fattah. Coach Nebojsa Jovicic utilized a broad roster, including Abdul Rahman Kamil, Youssef Nasser, Tunisian Yassin Al-Khanisi, and several others.

The "Al-Abyad" camp will continue until July 29, after which the team will return to Kuwait to prepare for its August 8 match against Al-Qadisiya in the Zain Premier League. Subsequently, it will travel to Manama on August 9 to face Al-Ahly of Bahrain on August 14 in the qualifying round for the AFC Champions League.

Kyriacou finishes stroke behind

Furie clinches 1st major title with late eagle at Evian Championship



Ayaka Furue of Japan kisses her trophy after winning the Evian Championship women's golf tournament, in Evian, eastern France. (AP)

EVIAN-LES-BAINS, France, July 14, (AP): Ayaka Furue of Japan made a late charge to win the Evian Championship with an eagle on the last hole to clinch her first major title on Sunday.

The 24-year-old Furue held her nerve with another clinical putt, having made three birdies in the previous four holes to finish on 19 under overall after posting a 6-under 65.

Furie placed one stroke ahead of Australian Stephanie Kyriacou (67), the overnight leader, and two ahead of Thailand's Patty Tavatanakit - who made a superb 63 to move into contention for her second major.

American Lauren Coughlin (69) finished four shots behind Furue in fourth place. Heading to the 18th hole Furue and Kyriacou were level at 17 under with Tavatanakit, who was already in the clubhouse.

Furie teed off well and found the fairway but Kyriacou's shot swerved left into the rough.

Furie found the green with her

second shot, giving her a championship shot and, moments later, she was doused with Champagne. Her previous best performance at a major was fourth at Evian in 2021.

The 23-year-old Kyriacou, who birdied the 18th, also secured her best result. Her previous best was a tie for seventh at the Women's British Open two years ago.

Tavatanakit won a major at the ANA Inspiration in 2021.

GOLF

Overnight, Kyriacou was one stroke ahead of Furue and Coughlin, who tied for third at the Chevron Championship for her best major result.

Coughlin birdied the ninth hole to move to 17 under and take a one-stroke lead from Kyriacou, who missed a straightforward birdie chance after appearing to be bothered by an insect.

But Kyriacou birdied the 15th to move level with Coughlin. Furue was gaining momentum now, sinking back-to-back birdies from the edge of the green on the 14th and 15th.

Her approach to the 16th hole gave her another birdie chance and she took it to stay one behind Kyriacou, who also birdied, and Tavatanakit, who eagled the 18th.

"I kept giving myself a lot of opportunities," Tavatanakit said. "I told myself to just trust myself and feel it."

Kyriacou and Coughlin struggled on the approach to the green on the 311-yard 17th hole and both bogeyed.

Furie almost made another brilliant long birdie, which would have given her the outright lead. Instead she went to the final hole level with Kyriacou and Tavatanakit.

Also, top-ranked American Nelly Korda tied for 26th in a group including 2018 champion Angela Stanford of the United States and 2022 winner Brooke Henderson of Canada.