



HH Amir receives Crown Prince



HH the Amir



HH the Crown Prince

KUWAIT CITY, July 28. (KUNA): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received Sunday His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah.

His Highness the Amir also received His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah.

His Highness the Amir received the First Deputy Prime Minister, Minister

of Defense and Interior Minister Sheikh Fahad Yousuf Saud Al-Sabah.

Meanwhile, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah received Sunday His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah.

His Highness the Crown Prince also received the First Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Defense and Interior Minister Sheikh Fahad Yousuf Saud Al-Sabah.

BOT system could generate KD 182.5 mln annually from parking fees

Smart parking initiative to solve Kuwait's gridlock

By Najeh Bilal Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, July 28: The government is currently attempting to solve the parking space problem in various commercial, investment, and residential areas.

Muhammad Zamani, an international expert in smart parking and modern technologies, said this initiative aims to address the traffic crisis in all governorates, exacerbated by the two million cars plying on the roads in the country, according to statistics given by the Central Statistical Administration.

In an interview with Al-Seyassah, Zamani said he

has obtained necessary approvals from the Public Authority for Industry for the study.

He added he is in discussions with the Council of Ministers, noting that the private sector is prepared to finance the project if the government does not wish to do so.

The Real Estate Association had previously estimated the cost of resolving the parking crisis at 7.1 billion dinars. However, Zamani's proposed project will not impose any financial burdens on the state but will support the budget by generating significant profits.

He said this can be done by using the Build-Operate-Transfer (BOT) system, creating 100,000

parking spaces with fees of up to 5 dinars per space per day in commercial areas and 1 dinar per day in residential areas, potentially saving half a million dinars per day and generating 182.5 million dinars annually.

The aim of the project is to diversify Kuwait's sources of income, improve Kuwait's urban appearance, increase economic activity, develop current public parking lots and address employment issues by involving Kuwaiti youth in managing parking facilities.

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Health, power under siege as Middle East heat soars

Kuwait Fire Force urges caution amid unstable weather

CAIRO, July 28, (Agencies): Intense heatwaves have continued to rage across the Middle East, with temperatures exceeding 50 degrees Celsius in some places, jeopardizing the health of the local population and straining the region's already overwhelmed power systems.

Kuwait was hit by a heatwave since last week, with the highest temper-

ature exceeding 50 degrees Celsius last Thursday, according to the Kuwait Meteorological Department. The country's historical record stands at 53.5 degrees Celsius.

Government experts have advised citizens to reduce outdoor activities, particularly during high-temperature periods in the midday and afternoon, avoid direct sunlight, ensure adequate hydration by drinking enough water, and be aware of the dangers of heatstroke and related illnesses.

Meanwhile, the government urged residents to conserve electricity to avert power grid overloads, which could lead to blackouts caused by heightened electricity usage.

On Sunday, the Kuwait Meteorology Department forecast very hot daytime weather with light to moderate northwesterly winds, occasionally becoming active at 15-50 km/h, with a chance of dust.

At night, the weather will be warm to hot, with northwesterly winds, light to moderate in speed, sometimes reaching 12-45 km/h, and some scattered clouds expected.

The anticipated maximum temperature is 47 degrees Celsius, while the minimum temperature will be 36 degrees Celsius.

The Public Relations and Media Department of the Kuwait Fire Force has urged citizens and residents to exercise caution due to the unstable weather conditions in the country. They emphasized that in case assistance is needed, do not hesitate to call the emergency number 112.

In Iran, a heatwave arriving a few days ago raised temperatures in most cities to near and above 40 degrees Celsius.

During the past 48 hours, the temperature in the Iranian capital Tehran rose to 40 degrees Celsius during the warmest hours.

In southern Iranian provinces, temperatures have approached 50 degrees Celsius since mid-July, with the southwestern Khuzestan Province reaching a staggering 54 degrees Celsius on Saturday.

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Opinion

When will we have a modern residency system like others?

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

THE saying "Back to square one" applies to the series of "residency law violators" that continues to dominate the headlines almost everyday, such that it has become the main concern of security services and the labor force, making it seem as if all solutions have disappeared.

While most countries worldwide managed to solve this problem decades ago and have in fact benefited from migrant workers to enhance their national product and push forward their economies, Kuwait is still stuck in the same place.

For example, a few years ago, daily wages for workers ranged between KD 5 and KD 7, while the wages for craftsmen ranged from KD 12 to KD 15. This played a crucial role in stimulating the construction sector, which is important for driving other sectors and boosting social and economic stability.

However, after ill-considered campaigns were held against violators, wages shot up such that they now range between KD 18 and KD 22 for a daily worker, and between KD 45 and KD 55 for a craftsman.

Thus, the purchasing power was higher in the past compared to today. This has negatively impacted the national GDP by increasing costs and driving up prices.

Studies have recorded a contraction in the local economy last year, indicating a decline in projects and activities that are crucial for economic stability. This is all because of the sponsorship system - a system that only Kuwait continues to implement due to the power of influential human traffickers in state institutions.

Corrupt individuals have exploited this to profit from selling residencies, amassing illicit fortunes at the expense of workers. Is it reasonable that renewing a domestic worker's residency costs KD 250 annually, without securing a job or a place of residence for them? They are just released into the street to find a source of livelihood, even if it is by robbing, trafficking or prostitution?

Is it reasonable that officials make deals with human traffickers, incite inspection campaigns to deport these oppressed individuals, and then bring in others, causing the price of a work visa to rise between KD 900 and KD 1,200? How will the one who paid this amount before arriving in the country manage to recover it if they do not secure a job opportunity?

There is a saying - Tell a wise person something unreasonable. If he believes it, he has no mind.

Based on this, we say that there can be no solution to this ongoing crisis, unless the state is the sponsor, and the sponsorship system is

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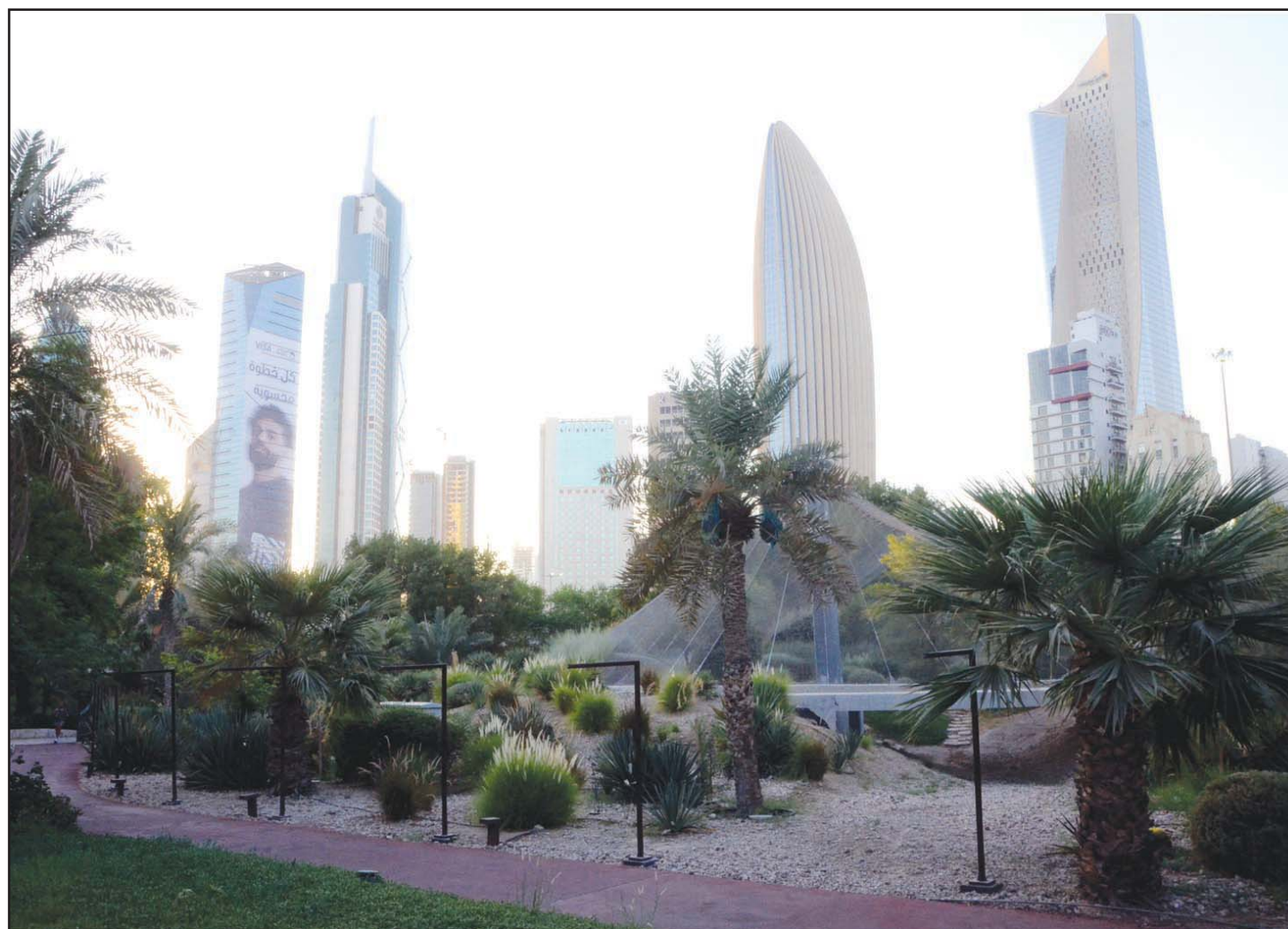
Day by Day

THE world around us is fast advancing as we contemplate to catch up with the train of development.

Earning money is beneficial, and many individuals see their wealth grow. However, the crucial aspect is how to spend that money wisely. Life is short. Opportunities do not knock on the door twice but prudent use of money can save time.

Stinginess, an enemy of both this era and mankind, is detrimental. Invest what you have and earn more. Many people die poor in spite of being rich, because they chose to live a stingy lifestyle. ... Yet tomorrow is another day.

Zahed Matar



Buildings shrouded in dust as seen from Al-Shaheed Park on Sunday. The Kuwait Meteorology Department predicted scorching temperatures with northwesterly winds up to 50 km/h, bringing dusty conditions.

Reserves climb to 105 billion barrels with Al-Noukhatha, Al-Durra

Noukhatha discovery boosts Kuwait oil reserves

By Najeh Bilal

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, July 28: A reliable source in the Ministry of Oil said Kuwait's oil reserves have risen from 101,500 to 104.7 billion barrels following the discovery of the Noukhatha offshore field, east of Failaka Island.

The new field is estimated to hold approximately 3.2 billion barrels of oil. Moreover, the Al-Durra field, which is shared between Kuwait and Saudi Arabia, has initial estimated reserves of at about 300 million barrels. This brings the total confirmed reserves to approximately 105 billion barrels.

The same source emphasized that the Kuwait Oil Company is working to maintain the efficiency of the Burgan field, which has a production capacity of 1.5 million barrels per

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Kuwait reports lower Hepa infection rates

By Marwa Al-Bahrawi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, July 28: The Assistant Undersecretary for Public Health Affairs at the Ministry of Health Dr. Munther Al-Hasawi says Kuwait has seen a significant decrease in infection rates for various types of Hepatitis viruses.

In a press statement issued on the sidelines of the celebration of World Hepatitis Day at the Yarmouk Health Center, he revealed that new cases of Hepatitis B viral infections have decreased by about 30 percent from 2015 until now.

He highlighted the aspiration to achieve a decrease in infections by 90 percent and deaths by 65 percent by the year 2030.

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Soil purification to be completed by 2027

Kuwait's army ensures safety of oil projects from mines, cluster bombs

By Najeh Bilal

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, July 28: Retired Major General Hamad Al-Surai' said Kuwait's oil projects are thoroughly protected against explosives, including mines and cluster bombs left behind by the Iraqi invaders following their ouster in February 1991.

Despite extensive demining efforts, some remnants still surface occasionally due to sifting sand or during rains.

Al-Surai' emphasized that the Kuwaiti army plays a crucial role in the removal of these explosives, ensuring that oil projects remain safe from these hazards.

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Photo by Mahmoud Jadeed

Ministry of Health (MoH) Assistant Undersecretary for Public Health Affairs, Dr. Munther Al-Hasawi, at Al-Yarmouk Health Center as Kuwait marks World Hepatitis Day on July 28, with the participation of 40 preventive health centers.

Al-Akhbar Channel launched in Kuwait

KUWAIT CITY, July 28, (KUNA): Kuwait's Ministry of Information launched, Sunday, Al-Akhbar (the News) Channel, as an emblem of Kuwaiti media, and a source for reliable news and accurate information, said a media official.

Ministry Assistant Undersecretary for news and political programs, Dr. Bader Al-Enezi told KUNA that the channel sets out to engage actively with local, regional and international affairs issues, in a manner corresponding to the state's policies.

The News Channel, explained Dr. Al-Enezi, is an official source for local news including state decisions and its positions, as it also serves as a connection point between nationals and officials.

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NewsWatch

KUWAIT CITY: In the name of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and the Al-Sabah family, the Amir Diwan extends its sincere appreciation to all brothers, citizens, and residents who participated in offering condolences for the passing of the late Sheikh Jaber Duajj Al-Ibrahim Al-Sabah. (KUNA)

KUWAIT CITY: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah sent a cable of condolences Sunday to Nepal President Ram Chandra Poudel, expressing sincere condolences over fatalities of the airplane crash, wishing speedy recovery for the injured. (KUNA)

PARIS: Kuwait's Minister of State for Youth Affairs Amthal Al-Huwaila emphasized on Saturday that Kuwaiti political leadership is backing Kuwait's athletes at Olympic Games 2024 currently held in France to raise the country's flag at international arenas.

Speaking to KUNA while attending the rowing and fencing competitions of Kuwait athletes, Al-Huwaila, also Minister of Social Affairs, Family and Childhood, expressed her pride for compatriots' participation in this event. (KUNA)



Al-Huwaila

Prayer Timings

Fajr 03:35 Asr 15:30
 Sunrise .. 05:05 Maghrib .. 18:43
 Zohr 11:54 Isha 20:10

Local

Expected weather for next 24 hrs:

By Day: Very hot and partly cloudy with moderate to fresh northwesterly wind, with speeds of 20-55 km/h causing rising dust.

By Night: Hot to rather hot and

Weather

partly cloudy with light to moderate northwesterly wind, with speeds of 10-35 km/h.

Station	Max Exp	Min Rec
Kuwait City	47	36
Kuwait Airport	47	36

Abdaly	47	31
Jahra	48	34
Salmiyah	43	35
Jal Aliyah	46	32
Nuwaisib	45	34
Wafra	48	34

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

Citizenship losers to lose their jobs too

Decree pulls nationality of one more person

KUWAIT CITY, July 28: The government agencies have completed the procedures to terminate the services of employees whose nationalities have been revoked, reports Al-Rai daily.

This is done after receiving the lists of persons from the Ministry of Interior and the Central Agency for Resolving the Situations of Illegal Residents (Bedoun), whose citizenships have been withdrawn.

One government institution has informed the Civil Service Commission that it had terminated the services of those who have been listed as having their Kuwaiti citizenship certificates withdrawn and removed their data from integrated systems. This is in addition to career progression certificates for those terminated.

In a related development, Decree No. 121 of 2024 has been issued, to withdraw the Kuwaiti citizenship from one person and those who acquired it on the strength of dependency and it has been published in the Official Gazette "Kuwait Alyawm." -- the decree cited the Constitution, the Amiri Order of May 10, and Article 2/13 of Amiri Decree No. 15 of 1995 regarding the Nationality Law, along with its amendments.

The decree was based on a proposal from the First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior and approved by the Council of Ministers.

Notably, Paragraph 2 of Article 13 of Amiri Decree No. 15 of 1995 regarding the Kuwaiti Nationality Law allows for the revocation of citizenship if an individual, within fifteen years of being granted Kuwaiti citizenship, is convicted of a crime against honor or trust as per the provisions of Articles 3, 4, 5, 7, and 8 of the law.



PM Diwan photo
His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, in company of Foreign Minister Abdullah Al-Yahya meets the senior officials.

HH PM receives senior officials at Seif Palace

His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, in the presence of Foreign Minister Abdullah Al-Yahya, received Sunday at Seif Palace Secretary General of the Asian Cooperation Dialogue Ambassador Nasser Al-Mutairi, Head of GCC Mission to EU Ambassador Fahad Al-Jimaz,

and Head of GCC Intellectual Property Training Center Musaed Al-Kulaib on their appointment to new posts.

Head of the Prime Minister's Diwan Abdulaziz Al-Dakhil attended the meeting. (KUNA)

Info staff get 1 month to upload degrees on site

By Mohammad Al-Musleh

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, July 28: As part of the government's efforts to deal with forged certificates, and following the lead of the Ministry of Education and Kuwait University, the Ministry of Information has started examining its employees' academic certificates that they obtained after high school.

The ministry has given all employees - both Kuwaiti and non-Kuwaiti - in all its sectors one month to upload their certificates to its website.

Employees holding academic qualifications above high school from January 1, 2000 to the present are required to upload their certificates.

In a circular, Undersecretary of the Ministry of Information Dr. Nasser Al-Muhaisen referenced a letter from the Head of the Civil Service Commission (CSC). This letter includes a reference to the letter sent by the Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs, and Minister of State for National Assembly Affairs concerning the final report of the committee tasked with studying and evaluating the work of the Ministry of Higher Education and CSC regarding the equivalency of academic certificates beyond secondary school.

In addition to this, the Ministry of Information has requested a list with names and other details of all employees who hold academic qualifications above secondary school, obtained from January 1, 2000 to the present. These employees must visit the ministry's official website to verify and authenticate their certificates using the "My Identity" application. They are required to upload a scanned copy of their academic certificates, which must be issued by government educational institutions in Kuwait.

For certifications obtained outside Kuwait, employees should upload them along with the equivalency issued by the Ministry of Higher Education. This must be completed within a month from the date of the notice.

The ministry stressed that if employees fail to provide the required documentation within the specified period, they will bear full responsibility for any related procedures taken by the concerned authorities regarding their qualifications.

5 firms offered tender

DGCA seeks extension of T4 building for one year

By Mohammad Al-Musleh

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, July 28: The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) has submitted a request to extend the contract for the Terminal Four (T4) support building for one year with Incheon International Airport Corporation in South Korea at a cost of KD10.8 million.

Sources informed the newspaper that the Central Agency for Public Tenders (CAPT) has approved the request for a second extension from Aug 15, 2024 to Aug 14, 2025.

Meanwhile, the DGCA on Sunday offered a tender for the operation, management and improvement of services at the T4 passenger building to five international companies after obtaining approval from CAPT. These companies include Turkey's TAV, Indian company GMR, German company Fraport, Irish company Dublin and South Korean company Incheon.

Sources said the deadline for submitting bids (closing date) will be on Sept 1; adding that the preliminary meeting to discuss inquiries will be on Aug 11, while the field visit to the project site is scheduled for Aug 12.



Photo by Samer Shaqir

Kuwait witnessed prevailing dust throughout the day on Sunday, July 28, with temperatures hovering around mid-forties on the Celsius scale.

Progress made in applying AML laws and regulations

KUWAIT CITY, July 28: Inquiries and clarifications have been sought by companies listed on the Boursa Kuwait regarding violations related to anti-money laundering (AML) and terrorist financing activities, reports Al-Jarida daily.

The Disciplinary Board of the Capital Markets Authority has imposed penalties on several companies for breaches of AML regulations.

There has been notable progress in implementing AML laws and regulations, with ongoing cooperation among all relevant parties. The Authority aims to support sustainable development in the financial market by providing diverse investment alternatives and reinforcing the framework for combating financial crimes.

The violations include failure to provide annual reports to the Capital Markets Authority, inadequate verification of transactions that are classified as large or unusual, companies that failed to accurately determine the source and value of client income and wealth and did not update customer data as required.

Other Voices

Teaching science of ignorance

By Ahmad alsarraf

Professor Muhammad Al-Rubaie explains that agnotology, or the science of ignorance, examines deliberate actions aimed at spreading misinformation and creating confusion to influence public opinion, garner support, sell products, damage reputations, and more. Coined by Robert Proctor and linguist Ian Boal in 1995, this field is crucial for understanding how misinformation shapes public perception and decision-making.



alsarraf

The significance of agnotology lies in its ability to reveal the dangers of false information, which can lead to poor decisions.

Understanding these mechanisms helps individuals protect themselves from misinformation, although this is challenging.

Ignorance has its own evolving map influenced by politics and interests. We live in an era of pervasive ignorance, where the truth struggles to penetrate the overwhelming noise from media and social media.

Ignorance proliferates when the truth is misunderstood and special interest groups — such as states, political parties, or corporations — actively create confusion on specific topics. Comprehending political ignorance is essential for a more accurate understanding of the world.

Agnotology highlights the complexity of ignorance and its formation based on political contexts and interests.

The widespread ignorance in society exacerbates the issue, as exemplified by the rapid spread of misinformation, such as a false claim about coriander causing cancer, which quickly becomes perceived as scientific fact. Social media platforms amplify this noise, making it difficult for facts to be heard.

Historians and philosophers often view ignorance as a void that expands to absorb knowledge. However, ignorance is more intricate, with a distinct and shifting political geography, and serves as an indicator of the politics of knowledge.

Ignorance is not merely the absence of knowledge but manifests in various forms: intentional ignorance from ne-

glect, rejection, or fear; unintentional ignorance from lack of education, opportunity, or cultural constraints; and selective ignorance driven by bias, ideology, or a desire to maintain power.

Censorship, disinformation, and targeted education demonstrate how ignorance is utilized in social and political contexts. Understanding ignorance is essential for designing effective policies to increase knowledge and reduce disparities. It also promotes critical thinking and helps build more equitable societies.

To combat ignorance, steps must be taken, such as promoting quality education, supporting independent journalism, encouraging public debates, and fighting discrimination.

Knowledge is not only a tool to counter ignorance but also the foundation for building more creative and prosperous societies. It illuminates paths toward a better future, rather than merely filling a void.

Examples of misinformation include:

- Questioning the scientific opinions of experts, with regard to climate or public health, or the efficiency of medicines and vaccines, environmental pollution, or nuclear safety or public health, with the aim of confusing the public and making it unable to properly assess risks.
- Promoting conspiracy theories that aim to cast doubt on scientific motives or results.

- Using false or misleading scientific terms to create an incorrect impression, such as attributing the matter to non-existent science, and manipulating language to hide important information.
- Using emotional suggestions instead of facts, arousing feelings of fear or anger in the audience, making it more vulnerable to being affected by misleading messages.
- Spreading misleading government information to give it credibility, even if it is false, while restricting freedom of expression and the press.
- Using ignorantism or misinformation to spread hatred and tribal and sectarian violence.

To combat political disinformation requires the nation to be critically aware of the information we consume, to believe only reliable sources, and to be skeptical and critical of the claims of others.

In addition to this, it is important to support independent journalism and civic organizations working to combat disinformation.

The case papers said a Kuwaiti woman legally married to the first defendant and with whom she has children. The document said the wife and her husband applied for housing care and received a plot.

They completed all necessary procedures and conditions for obtaining the ownership document but the husband obstructed the completion of the ownership procedures without legal justification, because he wanted to deny the wife her rightful share of the plot.

The court ruled in favor of the wife, affirming her right to secure the ownership document independently of her husband's consent.

This verdict underscores the importance of legal protection for women's property rights and also ensures fair access to housing and property ownership.

According to the weekly statistics, the number of minors arrested in just the last seven days during the intensive campaigns held by the Operations Department was. This is a large number considering the short period of time.

Minors driving without licenses is a "time bomb" that could explode at any moment, putting road users at risk of fatal accidents and serious injuries.

The statistics also revealed that the number of detainees during the first week of July was about 17 minors, followed by 14 minors in the second week. The phenomenon index rose in the third week to 69 minors and reached its peak in the fourth and final week of the month, recording the arrest of 83 minors.

UK envoy: Kuwait plays leading role in int'l support for UNRWA

KUWAIT CITY, July 28: British Ambassador to Kuwait Belinda Lewis praised Kuwait's role in building support for the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), reports Al-Anba daily.

Lewis said: "I would like to acknowledge Kuwait's leadership in building support for UNRWA within the international community, as the United Kingdom (UK) joined 117 United Nations (UN) member states in signing the statement led by Kuwait, along with Jordan and Slovenia, at the UNRWA pledging conference in New York on July 12."

The Ambassador made the statement after the UK announced on July 19 that it would resume funding for UNRWA and pledged new funds worth GBP21 million to support its work in Gaza, West Bank and the region as a whole.

The announcement came a week after the 2024 UNRWA Pledging Conference, during which the UK joined 117 UN members -- led by Kuwait, Jordan

and Slovenia -- in signing a joint statement reaffirming their shared support for UNRWA.

Meanwhile, British Foreign Secretary David Lammy reiterated his call for an immediate ceasefire to end the suffering of civilians, and for unfettered access to aid for the people of Gaza.

He said: The UK's funding for UNRWA is one element of a wider package of support we provide through a range of humanitarian organizations; including the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), United Nations World Food Programme (WFP), Egyptian Red Crescent Society, British Red Cross and the British Charity, the latter of which has set up field hospitals in Mawasi and Deir Al-Balah as part of the largest humanitarian operation in its 30-year history.

"Working together with the Kuwait Red Crescent Society (KRCS) and the David Nott Foundation, the UK has funded and provided specialist training for Kuwaiti doctors in Gaza. The UK government is pressing for greater and faster access to aid in Gaza, supporting efforts to broker an immediate ceasefire, and has pledged GBP15 million in financial support for the Palestinian Authority," Lammy concluded.



Lewis

Court landmark ruling ensures women get their share of rights

KUWAIT CITY, July 28: In a landmark verdict, the Court of First Instance has decided that a wife is entitled to obtain a document of ownership for a residential plot shared equally with her husband, without requiring his signature, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

This decision is seen as a significant victory for women's rights in Kuwait.

The case was filed by a Kuwait lawyer Mohammad Safar on behalf of his client. The lawsuit challenged several officials, including the Director General of the Public Authority for Housing Welfare, the Undersecretary of the Ministry of Justice for Real Estate Registration and Documentation, and the legal representative of the Kuwait Municipality.

The case papers said a Kuwaiti woman legally married to the first defendant and with whom she has children. The document said the wife and her husband applied for housing care and received a plot.

They completed all necessary procedures and conditions for obtaining the ownership document but the husband obstructed the completion of the ownership procedures without legal justification, because he wanted to deny the wife her rightful share of the plot.

The court ruled in favor of the wife, affirming her right to secure the ownership document independently of her husband's consent.

This verdict underscores the importance of legal protection for women's property rights and also ensures fair access to housing and property ownership.

'Lives at risk'

Minors driving, time bomb set to explode

By Munif Naif

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, July 28: The roads in Kuwait have become increasingly dangerous due to the exacerbation of minors driving without licenses.

In July alone, traffic police apprehended 183 minors who were driving vehicles without licenses - an average of 6 minors per day. All of these cases have been referred to the Public Prosecution.

According to the weekly statistics, the number of minors arrested in just the last seven days during the intensive campaigns held by the Operations Department was. This is a large number considering the short period of time.

Minors driving without licenses is a "time bomb" that could explode at any moment, putting road users at risk of fatal accidents and serious injuries.

The statistics also revealed that the number of detainees during the first week of July was about 17 minors, followed by 14 minors in the second week. The phenomenon index rose in the third week to 69 minors and reached its peak in the fourth and final week of the month, recording the arrest of 83 minors.

Rape victim kills Asian

'Lust for money blinded me'



Police detained delivery bikers in various raids. Inset: Al-Khadda

Cars, bikes seized in crackdown

Drugs, phones, weapons found in surprise Mol raid of Prison 3

KUWAIT CITY, July 28: The Operations Sector, led by Assistant Undersecretary of the Ministry of Interior, Major General Yousef Al-Khudah, through the General Traffic Department, has intensified its campaigns to enforce traffic control and coordination. From July 20 to 26, traffic officers issued 43,098 various traffic violations, reports Al-Anba daily. They also referred 83 juveniles to the Juvenile Prosecution for driving without licenses, and 93 vehicles were sent to the impound garage for serious violations, such as illegal tinting or not meeting security and safety requirements. Additionally, 56 motorcycles were impounded for not adhering to the motorcycle ban from 11 am to 4 pm.

During this period, 36 violators were referred to the Traffic Department for serious offenses. Traffic police also seized 46 vehicles wanted by the judiciary and a vehicle registered as stolen. Furthermore, 7 violators of residence laws, 4 expatriates registered for fraud, and 10 people wanted for arrest were apprehended.

Last week, traffic police dealt with 1,247 accidents, 212 of which resulted in deaths or injuries. The weekly statistics showed the following violations issued by various traffic departments:

Operations Department: 116 violations
Expressway Police: 9,458 violations
Capital Traffic Police: 5,458 violations
Hawalli Traffic Police: 5,296 violations
Farwaniya Traffic Police: 7,092 violations
Ahmadi Traffic Police: 3,047 violations
Jahra Traffic Police: 4,513 violations
Mubarak Al-Kabeer Governorate Traffic Police: 4,578 violations
Tasks Police: 424 violations
Prison No. 3 Inspection Yields Major



Drugs, cell phones, chargers found in prison swoop.

Contraband Discovery

An inspection campaign at Prison No. 3 led to the discovery of hidden caches within the wards, containing a significant amount of contraband. Items found included mobile phones, narcotics, narcotic pills, drug paraphernalia, knives, sticks, machetes, mobile phone headsets, and chargers.

The Ministry of Interior has pledged to continue conducting almost daily surprise security campaigns through the General Administration of Correctional Institutions, in cooperation with the General Administration of Special Forces. These efforts aim to purge prisons of contraband, prevent chaos, and stop the promotion of illegal items and negative practices among prisoners.

KUWAIT CITY, July 28: The Public Prosecution has detained an unidentified Asian in connection with the murder of another Asian, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The daily said the incident happened in Farwaniya and the victim allegedly died on multiple knife-stab wounds.

The motive behind the murder is believed to be rape. Sources said the victim raped the suspect, filmed the act and then began to blackmail him and threatened to publish the clip in the social media if the latter did not give in to his whims and desires.

The Public Prosecution said it inspected the scene of the incident, interrogated the case and handed over the case to the General Department of Criminal Evidence has been assigned to the case.

The investigation is ongoing, with procedures being completed to determine the full details of the case.

'Lust for money ...': In a shocking confession, an expatriate who embezzled 98 thousand dinars from a travel company pleaded, "The lust for money and the significant returns of the company I worked for blinded me from good behavior. Yes, I embezzled 98 thousand dinars, but do not destroy my future and do not refer me to the judiciary." His plea followed the conclusion of an investigation in which he explicitly admitted to the crime, reports Al-Anba daily.

A security source revealed that the legal representative of the travel company filed a report with the police, stating that a financial audit uncovered the embezzlement of nearly 100 thousand dinars. The audit identified the culprit as an employee born in 1984.

Upon summoning the suspect, he confessed to embezzling the money by making travel reservations for the company's clients, sending them fraudulent bank links, and seizing the funds. He disclosed that he deposited the embezzled money into his TikTok account to avoid detection.

The expatriate admitted to embezzling a total of 98,886 dinars over the past period. Once he realized his criminal activities had been exposed, he attempted to sell his TikTok account.

Despite his plea for leniency, he did not offer a plan to compensate the company he betrayed. The detectives' report confirmed that the accused committed the embezzlement by issuing travel tickets, sending bank links, taking cash from clients, and depositing the money in his TikTok account. The report also noted his attempt to sell the account.

Ignoring the expatriate's weak appeals, the detectives referred the case to the judiciary. Any potential settlement between the company and the expatriate would be managed through the Public Prosecution or during judicial proceedings.

Breaching borders in boot: A security source, informed that officers at the Salmi border crossing recently detained an illegal resident who had left the country unlawfully last January, reports Al-Anba daily.

The security authorities in Saudi Arabia reported that they had stopped a Gulf vehicle and, upon inspection, discovered a person hiding in the trunk. The individual, born in 1984, was attempting to enter the country.

Upon further investigation, the Salmi border crossing officers discovered that the vehicle in question had left the country on January 13 through their checkpoint. Records confirmed that the resident was under a travel ban. Authorities will conduct an investigation to determine how the individual managed to exit the country illegally.

Arab duo with drugs: Two Arab expatriates were arrested in Jleeb Al-Shuyoukh in possession of Shabu (methamphetamine) that were packed in small sachets, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

According to a security source, police officers were patrolling Jleeb Al-Shuyoukh when they suspected two expatriates who were not behaving in a normal manner. They immediately stopped the expatriates and searched them as a precautionary step only to find small sachets containing a substance suspected to be "Shabu" in their possession.

They were arrested and referred with the seized items to the concerned authorities.

Gov't will tighten control on subsidized food items

By Fares Al-Abdan

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, July 28: As per the directive of Minister of Social, Family and Childhood Affairs and Minister of State for Youth Affairs Dr. Amthar Al-Huwailah, the Social Affairs Ministry will soon tighten control over subsidized food supplies to guarantee that they are distributed only to the deserving through the creation of a new oversight mechanism.

This measure is part of the reform efforts aimed at combating corruption, stopping wastage, controlling subsidies and granting them only to the deserving, especially the food supplies.

Sources told the newspaper that the new mechanism will accurately control the process of transporting subsidized food supplies to the distribution centers and branches in cooperative societies throughout the country, with emphasis on rationalizing spending. Sources said Al-Huwailah stressed the importance of this file and the need to follow it up diligently to ensure that subsidies are delivered only to those who deserve them, while punishing violators.

Sources pointed out that the new mechanism, which the ministry is working on in cooperation with the Union of Consumers Cooperative Societies, ensures accuracy and complete transparency for cooperatives, the public and regulatory authorities.

Sources revealed the mechanism includes some proposals, most notably the installation of surveillance cameras and tracking devices in vehicles transporting subsidized food supplies from the time they leave the warehouses until they reach the cooperative societies.

Sources stated that each cooperative should sign contracts with the appropriate delivery companies to monitor the receipt and delivery of subsidized food supplies, indicating the cooperatives bear full responsibility for controlling and monitoring the delivery process.

Sources added the new mechanism shall obligate the subsidized food distribution branches in cooperatives not to close the screens that allow citizens to view the goods and know their availability, emphasizing that whoever closes them will be held accountable.

Sources disclosed the other proposals include the annual rotation of officials in the distribution branches to ensure transparency and to create a hidden barcode on each item that carries the data of the beneficiary to determine the source of the food supplies that are being sold or smuggled.

Sources said the ministry is studying other proposals like the monthly inventory of subsidized food supplies, list of items, development of subsidized food supplies distribution centers, and preparing them to better serve beneficiaries.

diwaniya ديوانية

A DIGEST OF PUBLIC OPINION

Are you really prepared for opening new front in area?

"ONE hundred thousand soldiers are now close to the Lebanese border, planted by the occupying entity, and Arab sources confirm that war is imminent. What about the latest military and political developments in the Arab region?" columnist **Fakhri Hashim Al-Sayed Rajab** wrote for **Al-Qabas** daily.

"Preparations for an imminent military operation are underway, with official statements from Al Arabiya channel reporting that the entity state has deployed fifty thousand additional fighters to the Syrian-Lebanese border from the Golan side and towards southern Lebanon, bringing the total number of fighters to one hundred thousand.



Fakhri Rajab

"A notable development is the deployment of an advanced balloon espionage system. Previously positioned at the tri-border area between Syria, Lebanon, and the occupied territories with Jordan, where the largest intelligence platform in the region is located, it was able to monitor approximately 70 percent of the Syrian interior and about 60 kilometers inside Lebanese territory.

"This system has now been moved to the far north, indicating preparations for various scenarios, potentially signaling the prelude to a battle.

"The US destroyer Eisenhower has also moved to the Mediterranean, suggesting potential intervention, although no official statements have been made regarding this.

"Lebanese officials have emphasized that they do not desire war, linking the situation to internal developments in the occupied territories. They have expressed hope that an agreement with the entity state could avert conflict, but the situation remains volatile.

"The entity state aims to secure the border, eliminate threats, and ensure the safety of the southern Syrian-Lebanese region. This effort has significant economic implications, particularly concerning an alternative trade route from India through the oceans to the occupied territories, poised to become a new global trade line replacing China.

"Additionally, securing the region is crucial for safeguarding gas investments and creating a favorable investment climate for new trade and oil lines. This strategic project has been considered for at least half a century.

"The possibility of escalation is evident from recent strikes on Latakia, Baniyas, and even the heart of Damascus in Syria, despite Syrian army resistance. The regional situation remains unstable, with clear mobilization goals suggesting that the international community might not spare Lebanon from conflict, as southern Syria appears to be the real target.

"A significant question remains: Can the occupying army, already exhausted, carry out this operation? Will Tel Aviv withstand the resistance missiles? Numerous uncertainties persist regarding the entity's military capabilities."

Also:

"Not long ago, I wrote about how police officers continue to violate the rights of individuals, particularly expatriates, by conducting unjustified and legally baseless searches," columnist **Abdul Latif Al-Duaji**, wrote for **Al-Jarida** daily.

"The Ministry of Interior exacerbates this issue by proudly publicizing these violations in newspapers. One politically active individual, who claims to work for the "good" of this country, criticized my stance. He went so far as to urge the Interior Ministry to persist in these vio-

lations and confront expatriates, who, for some reason, have irritated him.

"Recently, the Court of Cassation acquitted a citizen of drug possession because his father -- not a policeman -- searched his room without permission.

"This ruling is a triumph for personal rights by the Kuwaiti judiciary, upholding the dignity and independence of individuals, even against their own parents. It clearly reflects the advancement of our democratic system and societal development, highlighting our judiciary's commendable role in protecting individual rights against public authorities, whether official or popular.

"Some might see this ruling as contradictory or an affront to our heritage and traditions, which historically grant public authorities, including parents, absolute and perpetual control over individuals and their social activities.

"These are remnants of an outdated inheritance from past societies and primitive traditions that no longer suit contemporary life. Today's "capitalist" societies are individualistic, enhancing the status and rights of individuals and clearly diminishing the powers of ancient institutions like tribes, families, churches, and even the state.

"In our country, the rights and dignity of individuals are often violated, sometimes in good faith or due to a blatant ignorance of legal and constitutional rights.

"Many of us, including the aforementioned politician, are still living in the illusions of the past, dominated by outdated ideas and beliefs, where discrimination and persecution of the powerless are rampant.

"However, we are fortunate to have a judiciary that recognizes and is committed to preserving these rights, as evidenced by the recent ruling of the Court of Cassation."

"It seems that a workshop is underway within state ministries and agencies, where neglected projects are being revisited. Projects that had gathered dust and were plagued by errors are now being addressed and corrected after years of being forgotten in drawers. The time has come to reopen and review these files," columnist **Iqbal Al-Ahmad** wrote for **Al-Qabas** daily.

"Among these files are social issues and deep-seated problems within our demographic structure, as well as various work programs in all state ministries. These files have been neglected and covered by cobwebs, preventing any progress in addressing and resolving them.

"There appears to be a large workshop underway, as evidenced by our media and newspapers, highlighting the beginning of efforts to address various issues, neglects, postponements, and disruptions. While I am not in a position to discuss their causes, it is clear that this is a difficult period for us. We need to concentrate on the days ahead.

"Many are happy about this workshop but those who were eager for quicker results have expressed dissatisfaction. In my opinion, this may be a reason for their increased frustration and their feeling of the lack of seriousness of the current administration. The new administration is known for its commitment to implementing the law and fulfilling the hopes we all had at the start of this era. Additionally, there is resistance from some individuals and groups who benefit from the continuation of the current problems.

"Such extensive work, amendments, and developments require patience and open-mindedness from us as citizens, because superficial and quick solutions will not be effective.

— Compiled by PFX Fernandes and Mahmoud Attiyeh

Aug 9 deadline set to apply for police training courses

KUWAIT CITY, July 28: The Education and Training Affairs Sector of the Ministry of Interior is inviting applicants to register for police training courses, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The applications are now being accepted for the non-commissioned officer cadet course, Batch 2, which will commence on August 9. This course will qualify candidates for the rank of officer deputy.

The applicants must be Kuwaiti citizens born of Kuwaiti parents; they should possess a good conduct record and reputation; must not have been previously convicted of any felony or misdemeanor involving dishonor or dishonesty; must not have been dismissed from government service by a court ruling or final disciplinary decision and must be medically and physically fit.

This is addition to passing the general culture, abilities, and psychological evaluation tests. A minimum score of 60% is necessary to pass each test.

Moreover, the applicants must have an academic qualification of at least two years of post-high school, with the certificate validated by Kuwaiti authorities and must be at least 18 years old and not older than 28 years. The daily added the selection will be done by means of lottery system if the number of qualified applicants exceeds available positions.

The daily quoting the sources said the course duration is one year, divided into two semesters; the graduates will be awarded a diploma in police sciences and will be appointed to the rank of undersecretary officer in the police force.

During the course, students will receive a monthly stipend of 300 dinars and the accepted students must sign two pledges -- one to repay the stipends if they resign or are dismissed for reasons within their control, and another to commit to a five-year service in the police force.

The Ministry has also announced the following courses non-Commissioned Officer Cadet Course, Batch 2 for the rank of first sergeant; non-Commissioned Officer Course, Batch 2 for the rank of sergeant, with specializations in special forces and police training management and Corporal Course, Batch 42 and Policeman Course, Batch 95 with specializations in special forces.

Not fit to be mother: court

Woman loses custody of children for using sorcery on ex-husband

By Jaber Al-Hamoud

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, July 28: The Court of Appeals cancelled a mother's custody of her four children after discovering that she used sorcery on the father of her children after their separation.

The father's lawyer, Attorney Hawra l-Habib, confirmed in court that keeping the children under the care of their mother is very important to nourish them with her tenderness and good upbringing, but the defendant is not fit to be a nanny or a mother, because she used sorcery on her ex-husband. She added this was proven after the sorcerer herself informed the ex-husband by

sending him an audio and video clip of the performance of sorcery on him for the benefit of his ex-wife.

Al-Habib added, fortunately for my client, the sorcerer disagreed with his ex-wife over the payment for performing sorcery, which prompted her to inform my client and send him audio and video messages about his ex-wife and her chanting and performing humiliating rituals, which are considered a form of polytheism.

After reviewing the case papers, listening to the witnesses and proving that the mother used sorcery; the court decided that she is no longer capable of taking care of her children, so her custody was revoked in favor of the father.

Bayoumi's hike in pay rejected

By Mohammad Al-Musleh

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, July 28: The appearance of Egyptian artist Bayoumi Foud has sparked controversy on social media following news about an increase in his salary after Kuwait TV announced a new program for him titled "Bayoumi's Coffee," which is set to air soon as part of the channel's updated program schedule.

In a press statement, the Ministry of Information denied all false information circulating on social media about the costs of its contract with the artist.

It stressed that the numbers and data being circulated are inaccurate, clarifying that all program acquisition procedures are subject to the supervision of the relevant state authorities.

The ministry confirmed that it has taken legal action against those who spread false information.

It called on everyone to verify the accuracy and credibility of information by consulting its official sources.

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Arab Center conducts in-depth study on global education 'privatization' policies

Survey to shape reforms

KUWAIT CITY, July 28: The Arab Center for Educational Research for the Gulf States is undertaking a comprehensive study to assess global education privatization policies, reports Al-Jarida daily.

The aim of this evaluation is to understand the educational, social, and economic impacts of these policies and determine the most suitable approaches for the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries.

Dr. Muhammad Al-Sharika, the center's director, said the center is currently distributing a questionnaire to collect insights from educational planning officials on the existing privatization policies.

This questionnaire is a key component of a broader study designed to explore global education privatization models and their potential benefits for member states.

This will focus on identifying prominent global models of education privatization, analyzing the resulting educational, social, and economic consequences and recommending appropriate policies for GCC countries based on their specific educational, economic, and social contexts.

Dr. Al-Sharika emphasized that the questionnaire will collect opinions and suggestions from educational experts on privatization mechanisms.

This feedback will inform the development of a program to evaluate and adapt global privatization policies for GCC member states.

The study aims to monitor modern trends and models in education privatization, assess the current state of privatization policies in GCC countries and develop tailored policies and models based on international best practices.

Additionally, the study will provide insights into the economic impact of education privatization, helping member states optimize investments, allocate resources, and foster public-private partnerships. It also aims to enhance the quality of education by integrating successful privatization strategies and improving coordination among member states.

Dr. Al-Sharika highlighted that the program's results will facilitate better-informed decision-making regarding education privatization and enable continuous policy evaluation. The ultimate goal is to improve educational outcomes and ensure that privatization efforts align with the unique needs of each member state.



Group photo during the refresher courses for inspectors.

MoCI holds refresher courses for inspectors

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

KUWAIT CITY, July 28: The Ministry of Commerce and Industry recently concluded a series of refresher courses for commercial control inspectors which lasted over two weeks and were attended by the Director of the Commercial Control Department, Faisal Al-Ansari, and the Director of Emergency, Hamed Al-Dhafiri.

The four courses dealt with car rentals and fish

auctions; counterfeit goods and precious metals decisions; counterfeit oils and car parts decisions and types of commercial fraud and fish regulation decisions.

Al-Ansari commended the Administrative Development and Training Department for its dedication to improving the skills of inspectors both sexes.

The training, the sources said, will enhance the quality of services and ensure inspectors are well-prepared to handle a range of commercial issues.

CITRA extends 'deadline' for Hidden Client project tender

KUWAIT CITY, July 28: The Communications and Information Technology Regulatory Authority (CITRA) has extended the deadline for floating the public tender related to the Hidden Client project from July 30 to August 6, reports Al-Jarida daily.

In a statement published in the Kuwait Gazette, CITRA announced that the preliminary meeting for public tender No. 4 for the 2024/2025 fiscal year concluded with the issuance of the decision to extend the deadline.

KAC introduces meal allowance

By Najeh Bilal
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, July 28: The Kuwait Airways Corporation has announced a new initiative to enhance employee benefits. The Kuwaiti Board of Directors, chaired by Abdul Mohsen Al-Faqan, has decided to grant a meal allowance to engineers working in shifts.

This move aligns with the company's commitment to ensuring fairness and equal treatment for its national

Local SMEs encouraged

MoH floats tender for 18 cars with drivers for survey project

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

KUWAIT CITY, July 28: The Ministry of Health has floated a tender for renting 18 cars with drivers for the National Population Survey Project.

This tender, published in the Official Gazette, invites companies to submit tenders and the documents can be obtained from the Ministry's website. The fee is 75 Kuwaiti dinars.

The Undersecretary of the ministry Dr. Abdul Rahman Al-Mutairi said the closing date for tender is Aug 12, 10 pm with a validity of 90 days from the closing date; the location is Ministry of Health's General Office in the Sulaibikhat area.

The initial guarantee is 2 percent of the bid value, valid throughout the bid validity period; priority will be given to owners of small and medium enterprises affiliated with the National Fund for Small and Medium Enterprise Development.

This initiative reflects the Ministry's commitment to supporting local businesses while ensuring the efficient execution of the National Population Survey Project.

New projects span

CAPT extends date of submission of tenders

By Mohammed Ghanem
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, July 28: The Central Agency for Public Tenders said the date for submission of 12 tenders under the Maintenance Engineering Sector and 6 tenders under the General Authority for Roads and Land Transport has been extended.

The Al-Seyassah daily said all 18 tenders are related to road repairs and the initial deadline was July 22.

The Ministry of Public Works will carry out a technical study on these tenders, following which the best bidder will be awarded contracts.

This process aims at ensuring quality work and adherence to contractual timelines. The focus of these tenders is on roads repair and address the issue of flying gravel.

The daily added, each governorate will receive two contracts for internal road maintenance, including residential areas, public squares and asphalt paving.

Moreover, six contracts will deal with expressways and will be managed by the Public Authority for Roads and Land Transport (PART). The duration of these contracts are three years from the date of signing.

In another development, the envelopes containing bids for the Medical City project in Sabah Al-Ahmad City were opened last Monday. The three bids have been forwarded to the Ministry of Public Works for review and recommendations within 30 days.

This step marks progress in the development of the Medical City project, aiming to ensure the best bid is selected for quality and efficiency.

Fostering job security and fairness

Union commends Minister Al-Omar's initiative on allowance disbursement

KUWAIT CITY, July 28: Nasser Al-Azmi, head of the Ministry of Communications Workers Union, commended the efforts of Minister of Commerce and Industry and Minister of State for Communications Affairs, Omar Al-Omar, in streamlining the procedures for disbursing delayed allowances to eligible employees, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

Al-Azmi stated that the union has demanded the timely monthly payment of allowances (location, shift, and food) to eligible employees, ensuring that this serves both the interests of the ministry's work and its employees.

He also called for the filling of vacant supervisory positions approved by the Civil Service Bureau and the Audit Bureau within the ministry's organizational structure to achieve stability and job security.

The Minister confirmed that the list of controls and conditions for filling supervisory positions in the Ministry will be finalized within the next two weeks, pending approval from the Civil Service Bureau.

Once approved, an official announcement will be made for those interested in these positions.

Al-Azmi praised the Minister's warm reception of the Syndicate's Board of Directors delegation and his understanding of the role of union work.

He highlighted the Minister's communication with all Ministry employees and his efforts to overcome obstacles to achieve justice and equality among employees.

He also acknowledged the effective role and strenuous efforts of the Undersecretary of the Ministry and the Assistant Undersecretaries in various sectors. Al-Azmi emphasized the Syndicate's commitment to preserving the rights of the Ministry's employees and assured that the Syndicate's door remains open to all.

Regional integration

Minister adds 14 new commercial activities

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

KUWAIT CITY, July 28: Minister of Commerce, Industry and Communications Affairs Omar Al-Omar issued a decision to include 14 commercial activities in the unified guide for classifying economic activities in Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries.

Decision No. 170/2024, which has been published in the Official Gazette, stipulates inclusion of these activities: repair, development and maintenance of ships, equipment, devices, military systems and their spare parts; aircraft, equipment, devices, military systems and their spare parts; military mechanisms, equipment, devices, systems and their spare parts; establishment and management of hospitals, medical centers and military health laboratories; wholesale of military equipment, fixed and mobile X-ray examination devices; explosive detection and disposal devices; electrical sensor wires for vital and border oil facilities; ships, equipment, devices and military systems; aircraft, military equipment and devices; security mechanisms, equipment, devices and systems; consultations; exercises and military training on land, sea and air.

The decision mandates all officials, each according to their specialization, to implement the decision from the date of its issuance and publication in the Official Gazette.



Al-Omar



File photo showing pearl divers equipping the dhows upon setting sail. KUNA photo

Stage set for 33rd Pearl Diving Season

KUWAIT CITY, July 28: The Marine Heritage Committee of the Kuwait Sea Sports Club is putting finishing touches for the 33rd Pearl Diving Season, which is set to kick off from August 10 to August 17, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

This year's trip, held under the patronage of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishaal Al-Ahmad, will feature four large diving dhows, which were donated by His

Highness the late Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad.

The committee said the registration deadline has ended and that the event is only for Kuwaitis who are aged 15 to 19 years.

The club's Secretary-General Khaled Al-Foudari, said this year's, what he termed 'expanded participation' comes in response to the enthusiasm shown by the Kuwaiti youth, despite the challenging climate.



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Crown Prince, PM extend wishes

Amir congratulates Peru on Nat'l Day

KUWAIT CITY, July 28, (KUNA): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah sent Sunday a cable of congratulations to the President of Peru, Dina Boluarte, on the occasion of Peru's national day. In his message, His Highness wished the President good health and expressed hopes for continued progress and prosperity for the people of Peru.

Similarly, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah sent a congratulatory cable to President Boluarte, extending his best wishes for her well-being.

Additionally, His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah also conveyed his congratulations to President Boluarte, commemorating Peru's national day.

Project approval streamlined

Ahmadi's Fire Force enforces strict regulations to ensure public safety

KUWAIT CITY, July 28: Brigadier Mohsen Al-Qudaihi, Director of the Ahmadi Governorate Prevention Department in the General Fire Force, emphasized the importance of employers adhering to fire safety regulations to protect lives and property, reports Al-Rai daily.

Al-Qudaihi highlighted the department's commitment to enforcing these requirements without exception to ensure public safety.

He outlined the sector's ongoing efforts to provide safety equipment and install sprinklers in venues such as wedding halls, school halls, and clubs.

Al-Qudaihi also warned against the dangers of illegal storage practices in basements, which pose significant fire hazards.

The key achievements of the prevention sector in Ahmadi for the first half of 2024, he said, include conducting 2,690 facility inspections, issuing 270 violation notices, and closing 57 facilities for non-compliance with fire safety regulations and requirements.

The sector has also streamlined project approval processes, reducing transaction completion times to 48 hours.

Al-Qudaihi called on families to educate children and domestic workers on fire safety procedures and encouraged the public to report violations through the fire department's website or contact channels.



Brigadier-General Mohsen Al-Qudaihi

He reiterated the need for compliance with fire safety regulations to prevent dangerous storage practices in basements, which have been identified as significant fire risks.

Moreover, Al-Qudaihi highlighted the sector's progress in digital transformation, aiming to eliminate paper transactions by early next year, and the introduction of 200 new inspectors to bolster the inspection force across all governorates.

He also urged residents to install smoke detectors and fire extinguishers in their homes and to use original electrical materials to prevent fires.

CAPT receiving bids for Sabah Al-Ahmad Medical City project

KUWAIT CITY, July 28: The Central Agency for Public Tenders is looking for local consulting firm which will be required to provide the design and licensing work for the Medical City project in Sabah Al-Ahmad Residential Area, reports Al-Jarida daily.

The contract will also include supervision of the project's implementation.

Until now CAPT has received three bids and these bids have been forwarded to the Ministry of Public Works for study and provide the necessary recommendations within 30 days.

Moreover, CAPT has also announced the opening of bids for 18 road repair projects. These projects cover comprehensive maintenance

work across the six governorates of the country.

The scope includes major road repairs and maintenance for highway works under the Public Authority for Roads and Land Transport (PART).

The repairs will address infrastructure services such as sewage networks, stormwater drainage, telecommunication lines, street lighting, and landscaping.

Specific areas targeted for maintenance include the First Ring Road, intersections of the Third, Fourth, and Fifth Ring Roads, King Faisal Road, as well as the Sixth and Seventh Ring Roads, King Fahd Road, Fahaheel Road, Subiya Road, Abdali and Jahra, and Al-Salmi Road.

Some locations in the Gulf have seen the heat index reach 60 to 65 degrees Celsius.

Owing to the continuation of the unprecedented high temperatures, the Iranian government has announced that all state centers, organizations and banks shut down on Sunday in a bid to protect the citizens' health and manage domestic energy consumption, the official news agency IRNA reported on Saturday.

Elsewhere, Iraq has been suffering from scorching heat, with several Iraqi provinces, including Dhi Qar, Maysan, Basra, and Muthanna, witnessing a record temperature of over 50 degrees Celsius in recent days.

"It feels like everything is boiling when I go out. I can fry a raw egg outdoors in a few minutes," Hassan, a Baghdad citizen, told Xinhua. "We try to reduce unnecessary outings, but there are frequent power outages at home, which is really unbearable."

Temperatures in the Iraqi capital of Baghdad hovered around 45 degrees Celsius this week.

During the peak period of electricity consumption in summer, Iraq's already worn-out power grid has managed to deal with an expanding power gap, further aggravating the shortage of electricity in the country.

Late June, Iraqi Prime Minister Mohammed Shia' al-Sudani directed official working hours in public offices to be reduced by one hour through the summer in consideration of the high temperatures experienced throughout the country.

According to the Turkish State Meteorological Service, Türkiye experienced its hottest June in the last 53 years with the average temperature across the country was 25.4 degrees Celsius, 3.6 degrees above the June average from 1991 to 2020.

The highest temperature, reaching 47.8 degrees Celsius, was recorded in the southeastern province of Sanliurfa on June 20, according to the statistics.

Egypt is witnessing an intense heat wave since Monday, according to the Egyptian Meteorological Authority, with maximum temperatures reaching

When will

Continued from Page 1

completely abolished, as is the case in neighboring Gulf countries such as the United Arab Emirates and Saudi Arabia, as well as in most countries worldwide.

If a visitor obtains a visa, and finds work, he is granted residency, but he leaves after the expiry of the visa period.

We recognize that His Excellency the First Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Interior, and Minister of Defense Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousef possesses considerable wisdom, humanity, and logic.

Therefore, we say to him, "Encouraging investment and urban renaissance in the country. All projects cannot be achieved with slogans, but by working according to what is practiced in neighboring countries."

In this regard, we have a real example. Kuwait's national product last year reached USD 161 billion, while that of the UAE had reached USD 504 billion. Despite the fact that the sister country has about nine million residents, these people did not affect the 1.6 million Emirati citizens and did not take their rights from them. Everyone works to serve the country.

This message is also directed at the Council of Ministers, urging them to work towards abolishing the sponsorship system – a system often viewed as a stigma. Instead, the state should assume the role of sponsor, implementing a visit system for individuals coming for tourism, visits, or work. This change would add significant value to the national product.

Health, power

Continued from Page 1

The heat index, also known as the apparent temperature, is what the temperature feels like to the human body when relative humidity is combined with the air temperature.

Political consultations promote closer Kuwait-India ties: Ambassador Swaika

No new deals, but enhanced cooperation discussed

KUWAIT CITY, July 28: Indian Ambassador to Kuwait Dr. Adarsh Swaika confirmed that "the Indian community residing in Kuwait -- almost one million according to statistics for the year 2023, including skilled and technical workers, doctors, engineers, nurses, accountants and domestic workers," reports Al-Rai daily.

In a statement to the daily, Swaika affirmed that these Indians entered Kuwait as per the procedures and agreements between the two countries.

He also clarified that "the Kuwaiti Ministry of Interior's campaigns against those who committed violations is a purely internal procedure. I believe all countries follow the same procedure in dealing with violators of their residency system. We respect the law and the procedures of the Kuwaiti Ministry of Interior. For us, what matters is the close relationship between Kuwait and India."

He praised the results of the sixth round of political consultations between the two countries, adding that "Joint Secretary for Gulf Affairs at the Ministry of External Affairs Asim Mahajan headed the Indian delegation. The meetings with Assistant Foreign Minister for Asian Affairs Ambassador Samih Jawhar Hayat were fruitful."

He revealed that "Mahajan met with Kuwaiti government officials and they had serious discussions on many issues related to relations between our countries. Both sides fully understand the progress of our bilateral relations in all fields."

He explained "the two sides did not sign new cooperation agreements, but we conducted a comprehensive review of bilateral relations and exchanged views on regional and international issues of mutual interest. We felt great satisfaction over the growth of our traditionally strong bilateral relations. We agreed to enhance cooperation in various



Dr. Adarsh Swaika, Indian Ambassador to Kuwait.

Authorities emphasize compliance with new ad regulations

92 violations targeted, 50 warnings issued in Capital market crackdown

KUWAIT CITY, July 28: The Public Relations Department in Kuwait Municipality announced that the Audit and Follow-up Department in the Municipal Services Sector at the Capital Governorate Municipality branch carried out inspection tours in markets and shops to ensure strict compliance with the municipal rules and regulations, reports Al-Anba daily.

Deputy Director General of the Control and Inspection Sector and Director of the Audit and Follow-up Department in the Municipal Ser-

VICES Sector at the Capital Governorate Dr. Nasser Al-Rashidi said these field tours resulted in the issuance of citations for 92 violations; such as not renewing the advertisement permit, not maintaining the advertisement, placing an introductory advertisement for the activity without a license, adding an introductory advertisement for the activity without a license, and using spaces without a license. This is in addition to the issuance of 17 reconciliation orders and 50 warnings for review and to emphasize the need to fulfill the re-

quirements in accordance with the municipal rules and regulations, he revealed.

Al-Rashidi urged the owners of commercial establishments and shops to ensure the validity of licenses for all activities related to shops, advertisements and markets to avoid legal problems, considering the issuance of the new advertisement regulations that stipulate harsher penalties and higher fines to prevent the repetition of violations and deter others from committing violations in the interest of the public.

'Law applies to everyone without discrimination'

Municipality to address building, safety violations

KUWAIT CITY, July 28: In his first statement after being appointed as head of the central team affiliated with the Director General of the Municipality, Yousef Al-Fajji announced that a number of priorities had been set for the team to carry out during the coming period, and they relate to "cleanliness, building violations, encroachments on state property, security and safety," reports Al-Rai daily.

Al-Fajji told Al-Rai that the team "will currently focus, in addition to what is required to be implemented, on the existing illegal canopies in investment and commercial areas, especially those adjacent to electricity transformers and the walls of government buildings."

He added that among the directives of the Minister of Municipality, Noura Al-Mishaan, is "to complete

work on the files of reopening the basements used as warehouses, and to open the existing and rented hangars in the investment housing."

Al-Fajji revealed that a well-thought-out plan has been completed to pursue violators, and that it will be in coordination with the relevant state authorities, specifically the Ministry of Interior, "which we will resort to on an ongoing basis to provide security support to the team during its field campaigns."

He pointed out that the team will include 35 members, whose role is to inspect and tour various regions to follow up on complaints received by the Director General's Office. 11 main members have been approved in the central team, and 24 sub-members from the governorate branches.

Al-Fajji explained that the director of the gover-

norate branch will nominate 4 employees from 4 different departments to join the central team. They will perform their assigned tasks from their offices, which is to follow up on the central team's complaints, immediately.

He stressed that he will deal with the public according to the law and regulations without any exception or discrimination, and this will be proven through the reports that will be submitted from the sub-teams to the central team, as they will include pictures and videos to confirm the violation, and also to exclude any kind of malice in the work.

Al-Fajji concluded that "the team will hold a weekly meeting to follow up on its work and distribute complaints according to the specialization of each team member."

Kuwait reports

Continued from Page 1

Dr. Al-Hassawi attributed this significant decrease in Hepatitis infections in Kuwait to the high rates of coverage with basic vaccinations, including the Hepatitis B vaccination, which is given to all newborns on the first day of birth in the public and private sectors.

He explained that the coverage rate for this dose in Kuwait is 99 percent, which is one of the highest rates globally.

The State of Kuwait was one of the pioneering countries in this field, as the vaccination was introduced for the first time for newborns since the beginning of 1990 before it was introduced in most countries of the world.

Kuwait is working to ensure all health workers, dialysis patients and other groups of people who are most vulnerable to infection are vaccinated through an integrated health plan to prevent infection for these groups, and follow a policy of conducting advanced laboratory tests to detect the virus carriers in the blood of the groups that are most vulnerable to infection.

It has also set in place policies to examine those coming to the country for the first time, blood donors, health workers, pregnant women, dialysis patients and other groups most vulnerable to infection, as well as conduct routine premarital examinations.

Dr. Al-Hassawi revealed that viral hepatitis still affects more than 300 million people around the world, and causes more than one million deaths annually, despite being a preventable disease.

He said, "The world celebrates World Hepatitis Day on July 28 every year. This day is considered a good opportunity to raise awareness about this disease and celebrate the great achievements that have been made in this regard, especially what has been discovered in the field of prevention. A single vaccine has been discovered to prevent Hepatitis virus A and B, as

well as a treatment for Hepatitis viruses of types C and D.

Kuwait's army

Continued from Page 1

In related news, sources told the Al-Seyassah daily that the Kuwait Oil Company is set to complete its comprehensive soil purification and rehabilitation efforts by 2027.

The company has been actively surveying and clearing areas of land where there is a potential for oil exploration, particularly around the oil wells in the Burgan area.

This ongoing effort aims to address the risks posed by mines left from the invasion, which have previously resulted in fatalities among shepherds due to mine explosions.

The oil sources, requesting anonymity, said the Kuwait Oil Company is committed to prioritizing security and safety.

Recently, the Central Agency for Public Tenders approved a tender for a significant project involving security and safety improvements.

This project, valued at 15.8 million dinars, encompasses enhancements to the supervisory control system and the collection of Jurassic data in northern Kuwait, underscoring the company's dedication to maintaining high safety standards in its operations.

Noukhatha discovery

Continued from Page 1

day while at the same time focusing its efforts on preventing the production from declining and continuously improving the field's output.

The Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) is also working to boost the country's production capacity to over 3 million barrels per day by 2025. This goal is achievable through intensified production efforts, ongoing field exploration, and leveraging national expertise.

Kuwait's plan to increase produc-

Hawally removes unauthorized ads

KUWAIT CITY, July 28: Inspection teams from the Hawally Municipality's Audit and Follow-Up Department held campaigns to inspect advertisement licenses, reports Al-Shahed daily.

These campaigns resulted in the issuance of 25 citations for various violations including the non-renewal of advertisement licenses, failure to maintain licenses of advertisements, installing advertisements without a license, and occupying space without proper authorization.

During the campaigns, 41 violating advertisements were removed, and ten warnings were issued.

Authorities emphasize compliance with new ad regulations

requirements in accordance with the municipal rules and regulations, he revealed.

Al-Rashidi urged the owners of commercial establishments and shops to ensure the validity of licenses for all activities related to shops, advertisements and markets to avoid legal problems, considering the issuance of the new advertisement regulations that stipulate harsher penalties and higher fines to prevent the repetition of violations and deter others from committing violations in the interest of the public.

'Law applies to everyone without discrimination'

Municipality to address building, safety violations

KUWAIT CITY, July 28: In his first statement after being appointed as head of the central team affiliated with the Director General of the Municipality, Yousef Al-Fajji announced that a number of priorities had been set for the team to carry out during the coming period, and they relate to "cleanliness, building violations, encroachments on state property, security and safety," reports Al-Rai daily.

Al-Fajji told Al-Rai that the team "will currently focus, in addition to what is required to be implemented, on the existing illegal canopies in investment and commercial areas, especially those adjacent to electricity transformers and the walls of government buildings."

He added that among the directives of the Minister of Municipality, Noura Al-Mishaan, is "to complete

work on the files of reopening the basements used as warehouses, and to open the existing and rented hangars in the investment housing."

Al-Fajji revealed that a well-thought-out plan has been completed to pursue violators, and that it will be in coordination with the relevant state authorities, specifically the Ministry of Interior, "which we will resort to on an ongoing basis to provide security support to the team during its field campaigns."

He pointed out that the team will include 35 members, whose role is to inspect and tour various regions to follow up on complaints received by the Director General's Office. 11 main members have been approved in the central team, and 24 sub-members from the governorate branches.

Al-Fajji explained that the director of the gover-

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Al-Fajji concluded that "the team will hold a weekly meeting to follow up on its work and distribute complaints according to the specialization of each team member."

Smart parking

Continued from Page 1

A notable aspect of the project is the plan to use vacant state-owned land for parking management and to employ a hydraulic system in the Shuwaikh Industrial Area workshops.

These workshops can then be converted into multi-storey car parks with demountable and reassembled structures within 10 days, operated with solar energy systems to reduce power loads.

Additionally, he proposed converting car parks into technological elevators relying on a hydraulic lifting system, allowing one workshop to rise to four floors.

This innovative approach aims to alleviate the chronic traffic congestion in the area and improve overall infrastructure.

Zamani highlighted that the hydraulic system for car lifts is particularly advantageous for workshops. It offers several benefits including the system designed to prevent electric shocks, enhancing user safety; quick operation, with a car being lifted in about 80 seconds and descending in under a minute and handling vehicles weighing up to 2 tons.

World News Roundup

Europe

Polish journo suspended

Hungary's PM Orban warns of EU's demise

BAILE TUSNAD, Romania, July 28, (AP): Hungary's nationalist Prime Minister **Viktor Orban** said on Saturday that the European Union was sliding toward oblivion in a rambling anti-Western speech in which he warned of a new, Asia-oriented "world order" while throwing his support for Donald Trump's US presidential bid.

"Europe has given up defending its own interests," Orban said in Baile Tusnad, a majority-ethnic Hungarian town in central Romania. "All Europe is doing today is following the US's pro-Democrat foreign policy unconditionally ... even at the cost of self-destruction."

"A change is coming that has not been seen for 500 years. What we are facing is in fact a world order change," he added, citing China, India, Pakistan and Indonesia as becoming the "dominant center" of the world.

Orban also alleged that the US was behind the 2022 explosions that damaged the Nord Stream gas pipelines built to carry gas from Russia to Germany, calling it "an act of terrorism carried out at the obvious direction of the Americans." He didn't offer any evidence to back up the claim.

The far-right leader's remarks come amid growing criticism from his European partners after he embarked on rogue "peace mission" trips to Moscow and Beijing earlier this month aimed at brokering an end to Russia's war in Ukraine. Orban is widely considered to have the warmest relations with the Kremlin among all EU leaders.



Orban

Enshrined

On Ukraine, Orban cast doubt on the war-torn country becoming either a member of NATO or the EU. "We Europeans do not have the money for it. Ukraine will revert to the position of a buffer state," he said, adding that international security guarantees "will be enshrined in an agreement between the US and Russia."

Throughout Russia's full-scale war in Ukraine, Orban has broken with other EU leaders by refusing to provide Kyiv with weapons to defend against Russian forces and has routinely delayed, watered down, or blocked efforts to send financial aid to Kyiv and impose sanctions on Moscow.

Orban typically uses the annual Tuszanyos Summer University platform in Romania to indicate the ideological direction of his national government and to deride the standards of the EU bloc, which Hungary joined in 2004.

Hungary currently holds the EU's rotating presidency, during which Orban has made a Trumpian vow to "Make Europe Great Again" and has openly endorsed Trump's candidacy in this year's U.S. presidential election. Orban visited Trump twice this year at the former president's beachside compound in Mar-a-Lago.

Prevent

Orban said Saturday that Trump's bid for re-election aims "to pull the American people back from a post-nationalist liberal state to a nation-state" and reshaped a slew of conservative tropes that Trump is being penalized unfairly to prevent his electoral bid.

"That is why they want to put him in prison. That's why they want to take away his assets. And if that doesn't work, that's why they want to kill him," Orban said, referring to an assassination attempt on Trump at a Pennsylvania rally this month.

US ambassador to Hungary, David Pressman, responded to Orban's comments on Saturday in a post on the social media platform X, saying that such rhetoric "risks changing Hungary's relationship with America."

Orban's remarks on Saturday aren't the first time he's used the festival in Transylvania to stir controversy. In 2014, Orban declared for the first time his intentions to build an "illiberal state" in Hungary, and in 2022, he sparked international outrage after he railed against Europe becoming a "mixed race" society. He doubled down on his long-held anti-immigration stance on Saturday, saying it is not an answer to his country's aging population.

Also:

WARSAW, Poland: The Polish state broadcaster on Saturday suspended a television journalist who, during the Olympic Games opening ceremony, reacted to a performance of **John Lennon's** "Imagine" by saying it was a "vision of communism."

TVP, the broadcaster, issued a statement Saturday saying that the journalist and sports commentator, **Przemyslaw Babiartz**, would not be allowed to comment on air anymore during this summer's Games.

Lennon's song asks to imagine no heaven or hell, no countries, and no possessions.

"This is a vision of communism, unfortunately," Babiartz said during the grand opening ceremony along the Seine River in **Paris** on Friday evening - comments that immediately triggered controversy for those watching in Poland.

TVP said in its statement announcing his suspension: "Mutual understanding, tolerance, reconciliation - these are not only the basic ideas of the Olympics, they are also the foundation of the standards that guide the new Polish Television. There is no consent to violate them." State media has been an ideological battleground in Poland for years. It was used as a mouthpiece by the right-wing populists who governed Poland from 2015-23.

TALLINN, Estonia: Watching the Paris Olympics will be difficult for most people in Russia - and in the view of its media, it's not really worth the effort.

Only 15 Russian citizens will be competing in the Games and, in principle, they won't be representing Russia. Because Russia and neighboring Belarus were banned from fielding national teams because of the war in Ukraine, Russian and Belarusian athletes approved to compete will be doing so as neutrals.

Russians have been intense Olympics fans since the days when the Soviet Union's sports prowess was nicknamed "The Big Red Machine." But with so few of their countrymen competing, Russia's state TV channels aren't broadcasting any of the events. Russians may find feeds online, but could need a virtual private network to circumvent the country's block of some channels.

The last time the Olympics weren't on TV in Russia - which has won the second-largest number of medals, counting the Soviet era - was in 1984, when the Soviet Union boycotted the Summer Olympics in Los Angeles.



US Vice President Kamala Harris delivers remarks at a campaign event in Pittsfield, Mass., on July 27. (AP)

Politics

'Gen Z feels the Kamalove'

Groups hope Harris to energize young voters

CHICAGO, July 28, (AP): "Brats for Harris." "We need a Kamalanomemnon." "Gen Z feels the Kamalove."

In the days since President Joe Biden exited the presidential race and endorsed Vice President Kamala Harris, Gen Z voters jumped to social media to share coconut tree and "brat summer" memes - reflecting a stark shift in tone for a generation that's voiced feeling left behind by the Democratic Party.

Youth-led progressive organizations have warned for months that Biden had a problem with young voters, pleading with the president to work more closely with them to refocus on the issues most important to younger generations or risk losing their votes. With Biden out of the race, many of these young leaders are now hoping Harris can overcome his faltering support among Gen Z and harness a new explosion of energy among young voters.

Since last Sunday, statements have poured out from youth-led organizations across the country, including in Arizona, Wisconsin, Michigan, California, Minnesota, North Carolina and Pennsylvania, as leaders thanked Biden for stepping aside and celebrated the opportunity to organize around a new candidate. On Friday, a coalition of 17 youth-led groups endorsed Harris.

"This changes everything," said Zo Tobi, director of communication for the Movement Voter Project, a national progressive funding group focusing on youth-led organizations, when he heard the news that Biden was dropping out of the race and endorsing Harris. "The world as it is suddenly shifted into the world as it could be."

Decisive

As the campaign enters a new phase, both Harris and her Republican rival, Donald Trump, are delivering messages aimed at younger voters who could prove decisive in some of the most hotly contested states.

Harris recorded a brief video message shown Saturday at a conference of Gen Z activists and elected officials in Atlanta.

"We know young voters will be key, and we know your vote cannot be taken for granted," Harris told the

gathering, highlighting her support for gun safety, abortion rights and action to combat climate change.

Eve Levenson, the national youth engagement director for Harris' campaign, attended the conference in Atlanta, and she praised young voters across the country for their response to the vice president's elevation to likely nominee.

"As amazing as it is to see the tremendous youth enthusiasm online, what has been even more incredible is how that online energy has already translated into a tangible desire to take action and get involved with our campaign," she said, citing new voter registrations, small donations from young voters and student requests to help start campus-based campaign organizations.

Trump, in his own address Friday in Florida to a conference on faith hosted by Turning Point USA, derided Harris as an "incompetent" and a "far left" vice president. He vowed to champion religious Americans' causes in a second White House term.

Focuses

"With your vote, I will defend religious liberty in all of its forms," Trump told the conservative group that focuses on high school, college and university campuses. "I will protect Christians in our schools and our military and our government and our workplaces and our hospitals, in our public square and I will also protect other religions."

John Della Volpe, director of polling at the Harvard Kennedy School Institute of Politics, who has worked with Biden, said the "white-hot energy" among young people is something he hasn't seen since former President Barack Obama's campaign. While there's little reliable polling so far, he described the dynamic as "a combination of the hopefulness we saw with Obama and the urgency and fight we saw after the Parkland shooting."

In many ways, it was the first time many young people felt heard and felt like their actions could have an impact on politics, he and several young leaders said.

"It's reset this election in profound

ways," he said. "People, especially young people, for so long, for so many important reasons have been despondent about politics, despondent about the direction of the country. It's weighed on them. And then they wake up the next morning, and it seems like everything's changed."

About 6 in 10 adults under 30 voted for Biden in 2020, according to AP VoteCast, but his ratings with the group have dipped substantially since then, with only about a quarter of the group saying they had a favorable opinion of him in the most recent AP-NORC poll, conducted before Biden withdrew from the race.

That poll, along with polls from The New York Times/Siena and from CNN that were conducted after Biden dropped out, suggest that Harris starts off with somewhat better favorable ratings than Biden among young adults.

Lifted

Sunjay Muralitharan, vice president of College Democrats of America, said it felt like a weight was lifted off his chest when Harris entered the race.

Despite monthly coalition calls between youth-led groups and the Biden campaign, Muralitharan spent months worrying about how Biden would fare among young voters as he watched young people leave organizations such as the College Democrats and Young Democrats to join more leftist groups.

College Democrats issued statements and social media posts encouraging the party to prioritize young people and to change course on the war in Gaza and have "worked tirelessly to get College Dems programming" at the Democratic National Convention in Chicago later this summer. But they received limited outreach in return, Muralitharan said.

A Harris campaign represents an opportunity to move in a new direction, he said. The vice president has shown her vocal support for issues important to young voters such as climate change and reproductive rights, Muralitharan said, adding that she may also be able to change course and distance herself from Biden's approach to the war in Gaza.



People in folk costumes pose for photos during the folk festival 'Mittelalter-Spektakel' at Munchenwiler Castle in the Lake Murten region in Switzerland on July 27. The folk festival was held from Friday to Sunday at Munchenwiler Castle. Various activities, fairs, and folk performances featuring the Middle Ages were organized during the festival. (Xinhua)



Strzok



Evers

America

Firefighters battle NCalif blaze: Thousands of firefighters battling a wildfire in Northern California received some help from the weather Saturday hours after it exploded in size, scorching an area greater than the size of Los Angeles. The blaze was one of several tearing through the western United States and Canada, fueled by wind and heat.

Cooler temperatures and an increase in humidity could help slow the Park Fire, the largest this year in California. Its intensity and dramatic spread led fire officials to make unenviable comparisons to the monstrous Camp Fire, which burned out of control in nearby Paradise in 2018, killing 85 people and torching 11,000 homes.

Paradise again was near the danger zone. The entire town was under an evacuation warning, one of several communities in Butte County. Evacuation orders were also issued in Plumas, Tehama and Shasta counties. An evacuation warning calls for people to prepare to evacuate and await instructions, while an evacuation order means to leave immediately. Temperatures are expected to be cooler than average through the middle of next week, but "that doesn't mean that fires that are existing will go away," said Marc Chenard, a meteorologist at the National Weather Service Weather Prediction Center in College Park, Maryland. (AP)

'Take away Wisconsin gov power': Wisconsin Republicans are asking voters to take away the governor's power to unilaterally spend federal money, a reaction to the billions of dollars that flowed into the state during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Democratic Gov **Tony Evers** was free to spend most of that money as he pleased, directing most of it toward small businesses and economic development, angering Republicans who argued the Legislature should have oversight.

That's what would happen under a pair of related constitutional amendments up for voter approval in the Aug. 13 primary election. The changes would apply to Evers and all future governors and cover any federal money to the state that comes without specific spending requirements, often in response to disasters or other emergencies.

Democrats and other opponents are mobilizing against the amendments, calling

them a legislative power grab that would hamstring governors' ability to quickly respond to a future natural disaster, economic crisis or health emergency. (AP)

Adams issues emergency order: New York City's mayor issued an emergency order Saturday suspending parts of a new law intended to ban solitary confinement in local jails a day before it was to take effect, citing concerns for the safety of staff and detainees.

Mayor Eric Adams declared a state of emergency and signed an order that suspended parts of the law that set a four-hour



Russian President Vladimir Putin, (center), Russian Defense Minister Andrei Belousov, (left), and Russian Navy Commander-in-Chief Admiral Alexander Moiseyev arrive to watch the main naval parade marking Russian Navy Day in St Petersburg, Russia, on July 28. (AP)

time limit on holding prisoners who pose safety concerns in "de-escalation confinement" and limit the use of restraints on prisoners while they are transported to courts or within jails. The four-hour limit could only be exceeded only in "exceptional circumstances." In those circumstances, prisoners would be released from de-escalation confinement "as soon as practicable" and when they no longer pose an imminent risk of serious injury to themselves or others, according to the mayor's order. (AP)

Ex-FBI officials settle lawsuits: Two former FBI officials settled lawsuits with the Justice Department on Friday, resolving claims that their privacy rights were violated when the department leaked to the news media text messages that they had sent one another that disparaged former president Donald Trump.

Peter Strzok, a former top counterintelligence agent who played a crucial role in the investigation into Russian election interference in 2016, settled his case for \$1.2 million. Lisa Page, an FBI lawyer who exchanged text messages with Strzok, also reached a separate settlement. Court records reviewed by The Associated Press show she is to be paid \$800,000.

The two had sued the Justice Department over a 2017 episode in which officials shared copies with reporters of text messages that they had sent each other, including ones that described Trump as an "idiot" and a "loathsome human" and that called the prospect of a Trump victory "terrifying." (AP)

Lat/Am

Venezuelans vote

Obrador downplays drug cartel violence

MEXICO CITY, July 28. (AP): Mexican President Andrés Manuel López Obrador thanked Guatemala for helping the nearly 600 Mexicans who have crossed into Guatemala to escape drug cartel violence, but also minimized the violence that drove them there.

In his first comments since the refugees fled earlier this week, the president went on to add that Mexico is a large country, and like many other parts of the world, "there are conflicts."

"Our (political) adversaries want to see that our government is unstable, that violence dominates and our country is being destroyed," he said. The National Guard would secure the area and the situation would soon be resolved, he said.

A Guatemalan government report said some 580 people had fled violence in the Mexican state of Chiapas, including men, women, children and elderly.

Families who crossed to the Guatemalan municipality of Cuilco said shootouts had forced them to flee and the cartels had made locals work checkpoints and used them as human shields while they battled their rivals.

Guatemalan President Bernardo Arévalo said Wednesday his administration would coordinate the humanitarian response though there was little sign of it yet. Arévalo said his administration was working with the local governments near the border to attend to the Mexicans, "who are escaping conflict between groups that is taking place on the Mexican side."

Still, that was more than came from the Mexican side, where authorities did not respond to requests for comment about the situation until Friday.

Two of Mexico's most powerful cartels from the northern states of Sinaloa and Jalisco have been battling for control of smuggling routes in the area of southern Mexico for more than a year causing multiple displacements. In June, some 5,000 people were displaced by violence in another part of Chiapas after armed men set houses on fire in the town of Tila.

In September last year, Mexico's president conceded the cartels had cut off electrical power in some Chiapas towns near the border with Guatemala, and forbade government workers from coming into the largely rural area to fix power lines.

Also:

CARACAS, Venezuela: Polls have opened in Venezuela, where people are voting Sunday in a presidential election whose outcome will either lead to a seismic shift in politics or extend by six more years the policies that caused the world's worst peacetime economic collapse.

Whether it is President Nicolás Maduro who is chosen, or his main opponent, retired diplomat Edmundo González, the election will have ripple effects throughout the Americas. Government opponents and supporters alike have signaled their interest in joining the exodus of 7.7 million Venezuelans who have already left their homes for opportunities abroad should Maduro win another term.

Polls open at 6 a.m. local time. The number of eligible voters is estimated to be around 17 million.

Authorities set Sunday's election to coincide with what would have been the 70th birthday of former President Hugo Chávez, the revered leftist firebrand who died of cancer in 2013, leaving his Bolivarian revolution in the hands of Maduro. But Maduro and his United Socialist Party of Venezuela are more unpopular than ever among many voters who blame his policies for crushing wages, spurring hunger, crippling the oil industry and separating families due to migration.

Maduro, 61, is facing off against an opposition that has managed to line up behind a single candidate after years of intraparty divisions and election boycotts that torpedoed their ambitions to topple the ruling party.

González is representing a coalition of opposition parties after being selected in April as a last-minute stand-in for opposition powerhouse María Corina Machado, who was blocked by the Maduro-controlled Supreme Tribunal of Justice from running for any office for 15 years.

Machado, a former lawmaker, swept the opposition's October primary with over 90% of the vote. After she was blocked from joining the presidential race, she chose a college professor as her substitute on the ballot, but the National Electoral Council also barred her from registering. That's when González, a political newcomer, was chosen. Sunday's ballot also features eight other candidates challenging Maduro, but only González threatens Maduro's rule.

HAVANA: Three Russian warships arrived in Cuban waters on Saturday, Moscow's second such maritime voyage in as many months in a reflection of deepening ties between Russia and Cuba.

The naval group, consisting of a training ship, patrol frigate and refueling tanker, are expected to remain docked in Cuba's port of Havana until July 30. The arrival of the vessels comes mere weeks after another squadron of Russian warships, including a powerful nuclear-powered submarine, visited Havana as part of planned military exercises last month.

American officials closely tracked the mid-June military exercises, saying that the four-vessel group posed no real threat. At the time, experts described the warships' Caribbean tour as a symbolic show of strength in response to continued U.S. and Western support for Ukraine.

Cuban defense officials announced the latest port call earlier this week, calling the arrival of the Russian warships a "historical practice" and show of "friendship and collaboration." But neither government elaborated on the purpose of this latest deployment.

Cuba greeted the Baltic fleet on Saturday with a booming cannon salute. The docking of the flotilla has sparked a flurry of excitement among the general public, with Cubans strolling the port avenue to get a better glimpse of the warships Saturday and authorities saying interested visitors would be admitted on board the Russian training ship, called Smolny, on Sunday and Monday.

"It's a friendly thing. A bond between Russia and the Cubans," said 29-year-old onlooker Maydelis Perez, pointing the hulking warships out to her three children. "I'm taking a family outing."

Russia is a longtime ally of Venezuela and Cuba, and its warships and aircraft have periodically made forays into the Caribbean and docked in Havana. Though Cuba is not a key player in Russian foreign policy, experts say that Russia sees Cuba - with its port less than 100 miles (160 km) from Florida - as strategically important given its continued clout among developing nations.



An aerial drone photo taken on July 28, 2024 shows the landslide site in Yuelin Village of Shouyue Town in Hengyang City, central China's Hunan Province. (Xinhua)

Mudslide kills 15 near tourist site in China as rains from Gaemi drench region

Fifteen people were killed after a mudslide hit a homestay house in a tourist area in southeastern China on Sunday as heavy rains from what remained of a tropical storm drenched the region, state media said.

Elsewhere in China, a delivery person on a scooter was killed Saturday after being hit by a falling tree in Shanghai, apparently because of storm-related winds, according to The Paper, a digital news outlet. The deaths were the first in China that appear

linked to Typhoon Gaemi, which weakened to a tropical storm after making landfall on Thursday. Before reaching China, the typhoon intensified monsoon rains in the Philippines, leaving at least 34 dead, and swept across the island of Taiwan, where the death toll has risen to 10, authorities said late Saturday.

The mudslide struck the homestay house after 8 a.m. and trapped 21 people in Yuelin, a village under the jurisdiction of Hengyang city in Hunan

province, state broadcaster CCTV said in a series of online reports. About 30 centimeters (12 inches) of rain was recorded in the area over a 24-hour period.

Six injured people were rescued and taken to a hospital for treatment, the official Xinhua News Agency said.

The one-story house offered food and accommodation near Hengshan, a mountain in a scenic area where tourists come on weekends to escape the summer heat, a report by The Paper said. (AP)

Asia

Japan-US talks focus on bolstering army cooperation

China and Italy sign three-year action plan

BEIJING, July 28. (AP): Italy and China signed a three-year action plan on Sunday to implement past agreements and experiment with new forms of cooperation, Italy's Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni said on an official visit to the Chinese capital.

Meloni is trying to reset relations with China as fears of a trade war with the European Union are interwoven with continued interest in attracting Chinese investment in auto manufacturing and other sectors.

"We certainly have a lot of work to do and I am convinced that this work can be useful in such a complex phase on a global level, and also important at a multilateral level," she said in remarks at the start of a meeting with Chinese Premier Li Qiang.

Her five-day visit comes several months after Italy dropped out of China's Belt and Road Initiative, a signature policy of Chinese leader Xi Jinping to build power and transportation infrastructure around the world to stimulate global trade while also deepening China's ties with other nations.

Italy's decision to join in 2019 appeared to be a political coup for China, giving it an inroad into Western Europe and a symbolic boost in a then-raging trade war with the United States. But Italy says the promised economic benefits didn't materialize, and its membership created friction with other Western European governments and the United States.

Still, Italy remains keen to pursue an otherwise strong economic relationship with China. Stellantis, a major automaker that includes Italy's Fiat, announced in May that it had formed a joint venture with Leapmotor, a Chinese electric car startup, to begin selling EVs in Europe.

Also:

TOKYO: Japanese and US defense chiefs and top diplomats agreed to further bolster their military cooperation by upgrading the command and control of US forces in the East Asian country and strengthening American-licensed missile production there, describing the rising threat from China as "the greatest strategic challenge."

Secretary of State Antony Blinken and Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin joined their Japanese counterparts, Yoko Kamikawa and Minoru Ki-hara, at the Japan-US Security Consulta-

Cargo of oil starts to leak from tanker that sank in Manila Bay - Philippines

MANILA, Philippines, July 28. (AP): The cargo of industrial fuel oil on a tanker that sank in stormy weather in Manila Bay has started to leak in small amounts, the Philippine coast guard said Saturday.

Authorities were scrambling to start a delicate undersea operation to siphon off the highly toxic shipment from the sunken vessel, which has remained intact, to avert a major environmental crisis.

The 65-meter (213-foot) tanker Terra Nova sank carrying about 1.4 million liters (370,000 gallons) of industrial fuel oil stored in watertight tanks when it got lashed by huge waves, apparently developed engine trouble then took on water after leaving Bataan province west of Manila for a domestic trip.

The crew struggled to steer the tanker back to port but it sank early Thursday. Sixteen crewmembers were rescued but one drowned, coast guard spokesperson Rear

Adm. Armando Balilo said.

Divers have reached the tanker, which the coast guard earlier said is lying at a relatively shallow depth of 34 meters (111 feet), and saw small amounts of the cargo leaking out of a valve of one of a number of separate compartments, although the tanks were intact.

An oil slick near the rough sea-waters where the tanker sank off Bataan province's Limay town has now lengthened to 12-14 kilometers (7-9 miles), Balilo said, citing an aerial inspection. But, he added, the slick is not highly viscous and not deeply black in color, indicating there is still no major leak.

The leaking oil may have come both from the small tank that powered the ship's engine and from the tanker's cargo, he said.

"It's really an oil spill now," Balilo said. "The amount is minimal and manageable and, hopefully, it will stay that way until we can start the siphoning."

Committee in Tokyo, known as "2+2" security talks where they reaffirmed their bilateral alliance following President Joe Biden's withdrawal from the November presidential race.

Japan is home to more than 50,000 US troops, but the commander of the US Forces Japan headquartered in Yokota in the western suburbs of Tokyo, tasked with managing their bases, has no commanding authority. Instead, instructions come from the US Indo-Pacific Command in Hawaii. The plans will give the USFJ greater capability while still reporting to INDOPACOM.

The command upgrade "will be the most significant change to the US Forces Japan since its creation and one of the strongest improvements in our military ties with Japan in 70 years," Austin said.

BEIJING: Lawmakers from at least six countries say Chinese diplomats are pressuring them not to attend a China-focused summit in Taiwan, in what they describe as efforts to isolate the

self-governed island.

Politicians in Bolivia, Colombia, Slovakia, North Macedonia, Bosnia and one other Asian country that declined to be named say they are getting texts, calls and urgent requests for meetings that would conflict with their plans to travel to Taipei, the island's capital. China vehemently defends its claim to Taiwan and views it as its own territory to be annexed by force if necessary.

The summit begins Monday and is being held by the Inter-Parliamentary Alliance on China, or IPAC, a group of hundreds of lawmakers from 35 countries concerned about how democracies approach Beijing. IPAC has long faced pressure from the Chinese government: some members have been sanctioned by Beijing, and in 2021 the group was targeted by Chinese state-sponsored hackers, according to a U.S. indictment unsealed earlier this year.

But Luke de Pulford, the alliance's director, says the pressure from Chinese officials the past few days has been unprecedented.

forces to provide emergency support to victims of the landslides in southern Ethiopia amid widespread calls for precautionary measures to avert possible further disasters.

According to local authorities, the first landslide incident struck the village of Kencho Shacha Gozdi in the country's southern district of Geze Gofa on Sunday night after hours of

heavy rains. The second landslide happened Monday morning and buried an unknown number of local community members who gathered at the scene for rescue efforts.

The death toll from the landslides has risen to 257 and could reach up to 500. More than 15,500 people were affected by the landslides, including at least 1,320 children under the age of five and 5,293 pregnant and nursing mothers, according to the latest situation update by the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA).

Following the tragic accident, the Ethiopian government and its humanitarian partners are currently conducting search and rescue operations as well as providing emergency humanitarian support to the affected communities.

"I have never witnessed such a scale of tragedy, with hundreds of people weeping and crying out in grief for their loved ones," an eyewitness told Xinhua on Friday. "Many have lost multiple relatives and family members. Funeral processions are currently taking place, with victims mostly being interred in mass graves."

UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres said on Thursday that UN agencies are dispatching food, nutrition, health, and other critical supplies to help the affected people.

"I am deeply saddened by the loss of more than 200 lives in the south of Ethiopia following landslides triggered by heavy rains," the UN chief said on X, formerly Twitter. (Xinhua)



US Secretary of State Antony Blinken, (left), and Japanese Foreign Minister Yoko Kamikawa shake hands before their bilateral meeting at the Foreign Ministry's Iikura guesthouse in Tokyo on July 28. (AP)



Tuluka



Kamba

Africa

9 dead in DRC stampede: At least nine people, including two women, have been confirmed dead in a stampede during a concert held Saturday in Kinshasa, capital of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), said DRC Health Minister Roger Kamba.

According to the minister, several serious injuries were also reported in the accident that occurred during musician Mike Kalam-bayi's concert at the Stade des Martyrs.

On the instruction of DRC Prime Minister Judith Suminwa Tuluka, a crisis meeting has been called for following the tragedy, the DRC Interior Ministry said late Saturday.

With its 80,000 seats, the Stade des Martyrs is one of the largest stadiums in the country. Security sources said that the stadium was over capacity when the stampede occurred.

The Kinshasa municipal government announced late Saturday the launch of an investigation into the incident. (Xinhua)

Inmates granted release in DRC: A total of 1,284 inmates at Makala Central Prison in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), will be granted conditional release to ease the prison's overcrowding, DRC State Minister for Justice Constant Mutamba announced Saturday.

The inmates will be released in groups of about 400 per week, said Mutamba, who approved the release of the first 421 inmates on Saturday from the country's largest prison, located in the DRC's capital Kinshasa.

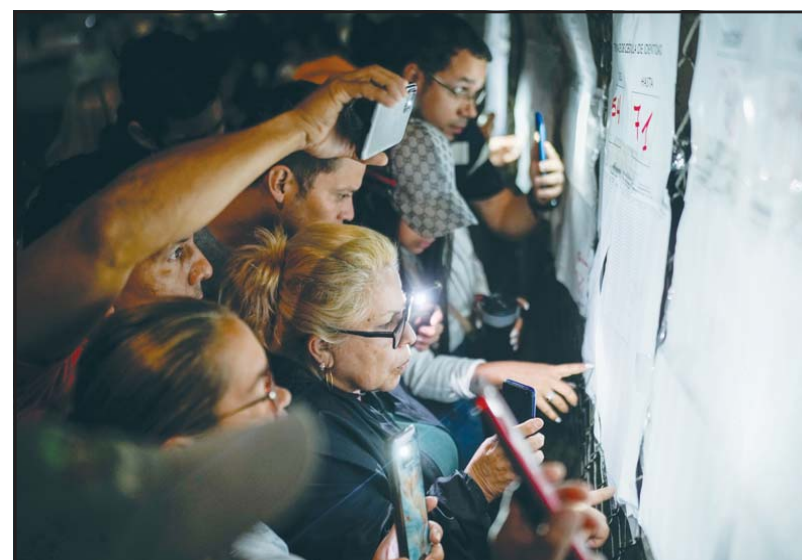
A decongestion commission was set up to examine the cases of prisoners eligible for conditional release. Prisoners arrested for embezzlement of public funds will not be eligible, said the minister.

The first 421 prisoners released had served at least three-quarters of their sentence and were deemed to behave well during their incarceration. The release is part of a series of measures aimed at improving detention conditions and reforming the DRC's prison system. (Xinhua)

Benin terrorist attack kills 12: Twelve people were killed in a terrorist attack in the W National Park in north Benin overnight Thursday to Friday, the park management said Saturday.

A total of 12 people were killed by a group of unidentified armed individuals near the Mekrou River in the park, according to a statement issued by African Parks, a non-profit group that manages the park. (Xinhua)

Ethiopia provides aid: The Ethiopian government and aid agencies have joined



Voters look at electoral lists prior to the opening of the polls for presidential elections in Caracas, Venezuela on July 28. The people of Venezuela are voting Sunday in a presidential election whose outcome will either lead to a seismic shift in politics or extend by six more years the policies that caused the world's worst peacetime economic collapse. (AP)

SAUDI	- Tadawul	Change +149.22	Closing pts 12,175.43	EGYPT	- EGX 30	Change -54.25	Closing pts 29,036.32
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Business

Investors react to US inflation slowdown

Gold loses its glitter for second week despite modest recovery

KUWAIT CITY, July 28: Gold has lost its luster for the second week in a row, despite a modest recovery on Friday, reports Al-Seyassah daily. The August gold futures rose by 1.15% or \$27.50, reaching \$2,381 per ounce in Friday's trading session, but this rebound was not sufficient to counteract the overall weekly loss of 0.75%, continuing the yellow metal's downward trend. The recovery in gold prices on Friday was driven by investors reacting to recent U.S. economic data, which

indicated a slowdown in inflationary pressures. According to Fawad Razaqada, a market analyst at Forex.com, mixed and weak economic data from the U.S. suggested easing inflation and reduced economic activity, which could pave the way for the Federal Reserve to implement interest rate cuts later this year. The Federal Reserve is expected to announce interest rate reductions in its upcoming meetings, starting in September.

Lower interest rates generally decrease the cost of holding non-yielding assets like gold, which can support higher gold prices. The US Commerce Department's Bureau of Economic Analysis reported that the personal consumption expenditures (PCE) price index rose by 0.1% last month, following a period of unchanged figures in May. This data contributed to a decline in the 10-year Treasury yield, reaching a one-week low, and further influenced gold market dynamics.

New regulations for listed companies effective Jan 1, 2025

CMA decision amends governance provisions

By Marwa Al-Bahrawi
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff
KUWAIT CITY, July 28: The Capital Markets Authority (CMA) issued a decision to exempt listed companies subject to the supervision of the Insurance Regulatory Unit from the provisions of Article 15 (Corporate Governance) of the Executive Regulations of the CMA Law. The decision issued by Chairman of the Board of Commissioners at CMA Prof. Dr. Ahmed Abdul Rahman Al-Malham consists of three articles. Article One of the decision stipulates amending Article One (Definitions) and Article 15 (Corporate Governance) of CMA Law No. 7/2010 and the regulation on securities activities, its executive regulations and their amendments. This

decision shall take effect on Jan 1, 2025. In a related development, Director of the Supervision Sector at CMA Ziad Al-Fulajj issued three administrative decisions including two decisions to renew the license for the securities activities of KIF Investment and Al-Sharq Brokerage companies, and a third decision to grant the special marketing license for a collective investment system established outside the State of Kuwait to Kuwait Financial Center Company to market the shares of MKZ UKG 1 Limited. The resolution stipulates that Kuwait Financial Center Company shall be licensed to market 12,000 shares of MKZ UK G1 Limited for private marketing within the State of Kuwait and established in Jersey, and that the offer price is GBP1,000 per share and that the shares which will be market-

ed within the State of Kuwait will be offered to professional clients. This will be according to Article One (Definitions) of the executive regulations of Law No. 7/2010 and the regulation on securities activities and its executive regulations and their amendments, indicating the entity that receives subscription requests is the Kuwait Financial Centre Company. The resolution specifies the duration of the license as one year, renewable annually from the date of issuance of the CMA license certificate and after paying the prescribed fees within one month from the date of issuance of the resolution. In the event of failure to pay within the specified period, the certificate shall be considered null and void. The resolution shall be implemented from the date of its issuance.

Bank boosts legal reserve by KD 2 mln

CBK increases legal and optional reserves

By Marwa Al-Bahrawi
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff
KUWAIT CITY, July 28: The Central Bank of Kuwait recently issued a decision to increase the legal reserve of its register and the optional reserve by about four percent according to its final

financial statement for the fiscal year ending Dec 31, 2023. The decision stipulates increasing the legal reserve by KD2 million -- from KD45.3 million to KD47.3 million, as well as the optional reserve by KD2 million -- from KD149.5 million to KD151.5 million.

Eurozone faces economic stagnation, PMI drops to 50.1

US economic growth accelerates, GDP up 2.8% in Q2

By National Bank of Kuwait
North America

US Existing Home Sales
US existing home sales fell in June, where the latest figure shows a drop from 4.11 million homes sold in May down to 3.89M, lower than the expected 3.99M figure. The June figure comes following a 0.7% drop in May, which was considered the lowest reading for the figure since February. Meanwhile, median home prices rose 4.1% y/y reaching USD 426K. Declines were seen in all four major US regions, where sales weakened in all parts of the US except for the West which remained unchanged.

Flash Manufacturing and Services PMI

US Business Activity surged in July, where the US saw a significant acceleration in business activity, with the S&P Global Flash US Composite PMI rising to 55.0, its highest in 27 months. The Services Business Activity Index increased to 56.0, while the Manufacturing PMI Index slipped to 49.5 down from 51.6 in June, marking a six-month low. Employment growth continued for the second month although at a slower rate, driven by stronger service sector performance. Despite this growth, business confidence dipped due to political uncertainties and inflation concerns. Input prices rose at a slower rate, indicating some easing of inflationary pressures.

US Advance GDP q/q

Real gross domestic product in the US increased at an annual rate of 2.8% in the second quarter of the year, up from 1.4% in the first quarter. The increase reflected a rise in consumer spending, which was seen in both services and goods. In services, the leading contributors to the increase were healthcare, housing, utilities, and recreation services. Where in goods, motor vehicles and parts, recreational goods, and household equipment were the biggest contributors to the increase. Personal income increased \$237.6 billion, compared to \$396.8 billion. Disposable personal income rose \$186.3 billion, marking a 3.6% increase compared to 4.8% the previous quarter. While personal saving as a percentage of disposable income was 3.5%, compared to 3.8% in the first quarter.

Core PCE Index

In June 2024, personal consumption expenditures (PCE) increased by \$57.6 billion, or 0.3%, reflecting a rise in consumer spending on both goods and services. The PCE price index, which measures inflation, rose by 0.1% from the previous month and 2.5% year-over-year. Excluding food and energy, the core PCE price index increased by 0.2% monthly and 2.6% annually. Personal income in the US increased by \$50.4 billion, or 0.2%, driven by gains in compensation and personal current transfer receipts.

The US Dollar index closed the week at 104.32.

Bank of Canada Monetary Policy Decision

In its July 2024 meeting, the Bank of Canada cut its key interest rate by 25 basis points to 4.5%, following a similar cut in June. This decision was influenced by excess supply in

Highlights
■ US manufacturing and services PMI at 49.5 and 56.0 respectively
■ US PCE index m/m increases 0.1%, core PCE increases 0.2% m/m
■ US advance GDP increases 2.8% q/q, beating previous quarter 1.4% increase
■ Bank of Canada cuts interest rates to 4.5%
■ Eurozone composite PMI drops to 50.1, services and manufacturing PMI at 51.9 and 45.6 respectively
■ United Kingdom composite PMI rises to 52.7, services and manufacturing at 52.4 and 51.8 respectively
■ Japan core CPI rose by 2.2% y/y, slightly higher than previous 2.1% increase
■ Peoples Bank of China delivers 10 bps cut, reducing the 1-year and 5-year prime loan rates to 3.35% and 3.85% respectively

the economy, which has helped slow inflation, and signs of moderation in the labor market. The central bank believes that lower interest rates will help reduce mortgage and shelter costs, major drivers of inflation. The Governing Council expects CPI inflation to decrease in the latter half of the year due to base effects for gasoline prices and to stabilize at 2% in 2025. The USD/CAD currency pair closed the week at 1.3833.

Eurozone

Eurozone Consumer Confidence
The Eurozone consumer confidence indicator increased by 1.0pp in the euro area to -13.0, from -14.0 the previous month. The figure shows further progress towards reaching its long-term average of around -11, and comes following the ECB decision to hold rates unchanged in its latest meeting as inflation proved to be more resistant.

Eurozone Flash Manufacturing and Service PMI

The Eurozone's economic recovery decelerated in July, with the HCOB Flash Eurozone Composite PMI dropping to 50.1, down from 50.9, marking a five-month low. The Services PMI fell to 51.9, down from 52.8, while the Manufacturing Output Index decreased to 45.3, from 46.1, indicating continued weakness in manufacturing. New orders fell for the second consecutive month, leading to a halt in employment growth. Business confidence dipped to a six-month low amid ongoing inflationary pressures. Despite some optimism, the data points to a challenging outlook for the Eurozone's economy.

The EUR/USD currency pair closed the week at 1.0857.

United Kingdom

UK Flash Manufacturing and Service PMI

In July 2024, the UK's private sector experienced significant growth, with the manufacturing and services PMI figures showing notable improvements. The Composite Output Index rose to 52.7, up from 52.3 in June, indicating solid expansion. The Services PMI climbed to 52.4, and the Manufacturing Output Index reached 54.4, marking a 29-month high. Manufacturing PMI also increased to 51.8, up from 50.9 in June. Employment growth accelerated, particularly in services, which saw the fastest increase in staffing in over a year. Despite ongoing inflationary pressures, business confidence improved, driven by expectations of stronger demand and political stabil-

ity. This positive trend suggests a promising start to the second half of the year for the UK economy.

The GBP/USD currency pair closed the week at 1.2872.

Asia-Pacific

Tokyo Core CPI y/y

In July, core consumer prices in Japan rose by 2.2% y/y, matching markets forecasts and slightly accelerating from June's 2.1% increase. This marks the third consecutive month of rising inflation in Japan's capital. Excluding fresh food and fuel costs, inflation increased by 1.5% down from 1.8% in June. The figures come a week before the Bank of Japan's policy meeting, where markets are pricing in a 70% chance of a rate hike.

The USD/JPY currency pair closed the week at 153.72.

China 1-year and 5-year Loan Prime Rate

The People's Bank of China delivered a 10 basis points cut to key rates, taking the seven-day reverse repo rate to 1.7% from 1.8% previously, the one-year loan prime rate to 3.35% from 3.45%, and the five-year loan prime rate was lowered to 3.85% from 3.95%. The move took markets by surprise, especially since it was forecasted that rates would remain unchanged. The PBOC decision comes amid a period of weaker growth for the world's second largest economy.

Annual CPI came in at the lowest level since March rising just 0.2%. Meanwhile, consumer demand is muted while Chinese imports were weaker than expected. GDP growth also disappointed, increasing by 4.7% versus 5.1% expected. Policymakers in China previously introduced easing measures to boost consumer demand and the economy overall, delivering rate cuts, lowering downpayment requirements for real estate, and decreasing the reserve ratio requirements. It remains to be seen how much further authorities in China are willing to go to support the struggling economy, however it is expected that they will be more comfortable doing so once the Federal Reserve start cutting rates as they attempt to balance between supporting economic growth, and being mindful of interest rate differentials as the Yuan gets weaker.

The USD/CNY currency pair closed the week at 7.2502.

Kuwait

Kuwaiti Dinar USD/KWD closed last week at 0.30545.

Kuwait's oil discoveries promise economic boost

Non-oil sector grows despite overall economic contraction

By Najeh Bilal
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff
KUWAIT CITY, July 28: The latest Al-Shall Economic Weekly report delves into the implications of Kuwait's recent oil discoveries, highlighting both the potential benefits and risks associated with these new resources.

The report emphasizes that while ongoing oil discoveries and the revival of previously dormant oil fields are promising, the real challenge for Kuwait is ensuring these resources are managed wisely.

According to the report, Kuwait's continued oil discoveries are beneficial for two primary reasons:

- new reservoirs can alleviate the pressure on aging fields, which have struggled to meet production targets set by past strategies
- successful development of local exploration and infrastructure can boost production, manufacturing, and export capabilities.

The Nokhada field, although not a game-changer in terms of reserve size, holds significant potential for addressing future gas shortages.

The report underscores the crucial distinction between the "blessing" and "curse" of resource wealth. This dichotomy is vividly illustrated by the contrasting experiences of Norway and Venezuela.

Norway, with its modest oil reserves of around 7.6 billion barrels, has leveraged its oil wealth to build a sovereign fund now valued at approximately \$1.6 trillion.

By carefully managing its oil revenues and avoiding the pitfalls of the "Dutch disease" -- a term describing economic stagnation due to resource wealth -- Norway has ensured that its economy remains competitive and sustainable.

In contrast, Venezuela, with the world's largest conventional oil reserves of 303 billion barrels, has struggled with severe economic issues.

Overproduction totals 2.28 mln bpd in H1 2024

OPEC receives compensation plans from Iraq, Kazakhstan and Russia

VIENNA, July 28, (Xinhua): The Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) Secretariat said that it received compensation plans from Iraq, Kazakhstan and Russia for their overproduced oil volumes in the first half of 2024.

OPEC said in a statement that the combined overproduction from the three countries totaled 2.28 million barrels per day (bpd) during the period. Iraq overproduced 1.18 million bpd, Kazakhstan 620,000 bpd, and Russia 480,000 bpd.

Iraq and Kazakhstan will begin compensating for their overpro-

duced volumes this month, while Russia will start in October this year. The three countries will fully compensate for their overproduction by September 2025, with their respective compensation cuts varying from month to month.

In June, a meeting of oil ministers from OPEC and its allies, a group known as OPEC+, reiterated the importance of adhering to full conformity and the compensation mechanism. OPEC+ decided at the meeting to extend its current output cuts at least into the third quarter of this year.

Mismanagement of oil revenues, political corruption, and economic instability have led to widespread poverty and a deteriorating standard of living. The country's inability to effectively manage its resources has resulted in the classic symptoms of the "resource curse."

The report notes that Kuwait's challenge is to navigate the spectrum between these extremes. Despite recent discoveries and an approaching sovereign fund valuation nearing one trillion dinars, Kuwait's task is to use its resources judiciously to avoid past mistakes.

Effective resource management remains crucial for Kuwait to capitalize on its oil wealth without falling into the traps experienced by other nations.

The report also highlights recent economic performance data, noting a contraction in Kuwait's GDP for the first quarter of 2024. The Central Statistical Administration's figures reveal a 1.6% decrease in GDP at current prices compared to the same period in 2023, and a 2.7% decrease at real prices. The contraction is largely attributed to a 9.1% decline in the crude oil sector

at current prices.

Conversely, the non-oil sector grew by 4.9% at current prices and 4.7% at real prices. Despite this growth, the overall GDP for the first quarter amounted to approximately 12.369 billion dinars at current prices, down from 12.574 billion dinars in the first quarter of 2023, and 10.082 billion dinars at real prices, compared to 10.360 billion dinars the previous year.

The decline in the oil sector's value added reduced its contribution to GDP from 46.7% in the first quarter of 2023 to 43.2% in the first quarter of 2024.

The report indicates that the non-oil sector's relative contribution has increased, but much of this growth is attributed to the shrinking role of the oil sector.

This highlights the need for Kuwait to diversify its economy and enhance other economic drivers, given that oil revenues still finance 90% of public spending.

In summary, while Kuwait's new oil discoveries offer significant opportunities, the true test will be in how effectively these resources are managed to foster long-term economic stability and growth.

Oman to build 3.8 MTPA LNG train in Sur

MUSCAT, July 28, (KUNA): The Sultanate of Oman declared on Saturday the start of building a new liquefied natural gas train with a 3.8 million metric tons per annum (MTPA) at Qalhat Industrial Complex in the Wilayat of Sur, South A'Sharqiyah Governorate.

The official Oman News Agency quoted Minister of Energy and Minerals Salem Al-Ofi as saying that the inauguration of the new LNG train constitutes "an

additional axis to the Sultanate's strategy to maintain its status as a sustainable exporter of gas."

The ministry is seeking to overhaul the energy infrastructure and enhance resources to meet the mounting global demand for green energy and contribute to attaining economic diversification at the local level, minister Al-Ofi said.

He added that the new train would contribute to enhancing the annual out-

put of the LNG and derivatives, indicating that the operating phase would be by 2029.

(The LNG train is also known as a liquefaction unit. In the midstream oil and gas sector, a train consists of various components to process, purify, and convert natural gas to liquefied natural gas (LNG). It is called train because of the sequential arrangement of the equipment used to process and liquefy natural gas).

Rates - 28th July 2024

Currencies	Previous Week Levels				This Week's Expected Range		3-Month Forward
	Open	Low	High	Close	Minimum	Maximum	
EUR	1.0880	1.0824	1.0902	1.0857	1.0700	1.1000	1.0903
GBP	1.2908	1.2847	1.2942	1.2872	1.2800	1.2300	1.2880
JPY	157.44	151.93	157.61	153.72	151.00	155.00	151.65
CHF	0.8889	0.8775	0.8923	0.8836	0.8700	0.9000	0.8740

BYD among top-selling electric cars

Egypt sees growth in Chinese EVs on roads

CAIRO, July 28, (Xinhua): After years of using a gasoline-powered car, Poula Mounir, an electric vehicle (EV) seller in the Egyptian capital Cairo, decided to acquire a Chinese-made EV following a series of careful comparisons.

Currently driving a Chinese BYD Song L SUV, Mounir expressed admiration for the quality of Chinese EVs, noting that Chinese electric cars are distinct from European ones in terms of technology and battery quality.

"I noticed a big difference in terms of cost, maintenance, and efficiency," he told Xinhua, praising the batteries of BYD cars as his car has a range of over 600 kilometers on a single charge.

The Egyptian market is witnessing remarkable growth in the number of electric cars, with many Chinese-made EVs traveling on Egyptian roads.

From BYD and Geely to ZEEKR and NIO, Chinese manufacturers provide various models of electric cars that are gaining global popularity among Egyptians, Mounir told Xinhua.

In the first quarter of 2024, electric car sales witnessed a boom in Egypt with more than 1,419 electric vehicles licensed, nearly one-third of the number of electric cars licensed in the past three years, according to data from the Egyptian Compulsory Motor Insurance Pool.

The number of electric cars grew

from the beginning of July 2021 until the end of June 2024, bringing the total number of licensed electric vehicles to 7,213, with BYD as the second most-selling vehicle, according to the data.

"There is a growing demand for Chinese-made electric cars," Tamer Sabry, owner of an agency that sells EVs in Cairo, told Xinhua.

"In light of the difficult economic conditions in Egypt and the world, people tend to buy electric cars that are less expensive and have good quality at the same time," Sabry said, noting that customers could find all these characteristics in Chinese brands, making Chinese-made cars among the most popular ones in Egypt.

Event in partnership with Headspring and IE Business School

KFH kicks off Leadership Excellence Program

KUWAIT CITY, July 28: Kuwait Finance House (KFH) kicked off the 3rd edition of Leadership Excellence (BLE) Program in partnership with Headspring, the joint venture between IE Business School and the Financial Times, to support the learning and growth journey of KFH's leaders.

In his speech during the opening ceremony of the program, KFH Group Chief Human Resources and Transformation Officer, Zeyad Abdullah AlOmar, said "It is with great pleasure that I welcome you all today as we gather to inaugurate the Building Leadership Excellence Program in partnership with Headspring. This annual advanced training initiative brings together participants from KFH, AUB Bahrain, and KFH Turkey.

AlOmar added "In today's dynamic business landscape, effective, innovative, and inspiring leaders are in high demand. The Leadership Excellence Program is meticulously designed to meet this demand. It seamlessly integrates two essential components: the academic-oriented learning from IE Business School and the Financial Times' unique insights and practitioner-oriented approach. Through this program, you will engage in a diverse range of personal and professional activities, challenging yourselves, broadening your horizons, and acquiring the skills necessary to lead with confidence."

He continued "During the program, you will have the privilege of tapping into Headspring's extensive network of thought leaders, coaches, and world-class professors. I encourage you to fully leverage their expertise, ask questions, gain fresh perspectives, and embrace every learning opportunity."

AlOmar confirmed that for KFH to continue its global leading position as the largest Islamic bank in Kuwait and the world leading Islamic financial institution, the contributions of the BLE participants are essential to achieving the KFH Group's strategy and vision of being among the top 100 global banks, indicating this program is not merely a one-time event; it is part of a broader journey toward leadership excellence.

KFH Executive Manager Talent Management, Mohammed Al-Musalam

Meanwhile, KFH Executive Manager Talent Management, Mohammed Al-Musalam said: "We have witnessed an impressive performance and transformation from



Zeyad Abdullah AlOmar and Mohammed Al-Musalam with the participants.

the previous participants, and I am confident that the Leadership Excellence (BLE) Program will be a transformative journey for each one of you, providing an excellent opportunity to engage with your colleagues and solidify our unity as the "One" KFH Group."

Al-Musalam offered some pieces of advice to the BLE participants pointing out that leadership extends beyond decision-making and team management. It is about inspiring others, creating an environment where everyone feels valued and motivated, and setting an example through resilience and unwavering commitment to excellence.

"As you embark on this unique journey, I urge you to take it seriously and actively engage, seize networking and collaboration opportunities, remain open to new ideas, challenge existing practices, and be adaptable. Your investment in this program will yield substantial returns. I look forward to witnessing you all emerge as visionary leaders, propelling the



Zeyad Abdullah AlOmar

KFH Group to new heights", Al-Musalam concluded.

Bassém Banna, Headspring's Vice-President

Bassém Banna, Headspring's Vice-President of Corporate Partnerships for Middle East and Africa, said "Our partnership with KFH is more than just a collaboration; it is a convergence of shared values, goals, and dreams that we hold in the highest esteem and deeply cherish."

He added "Since 2019, we have embarked on a mission to cultivate and empower leaders who will shape the future of your organization. At Headspring, we are immensely proud of the remarkable progress we have achieved and the exceptional leaders we have nurtured through this program - together we have created an inspiring environment where innovative ideas flourish, advanced skills are honed, and future leaders are empowered to drive transformative change."

Banna said "KFH's commitment to excellence and innovation mirrors our own aspirations. The expertise and resources of KFH's HR and talent team have been instrumental in guiding the design, ensuring that it meets your internal opportunities and challenges. Throughout your learning journey, you will witness a rich mixture of learning experiences designed to challenge, inspire, and equip you with the tools needed to navigate the complexities of leadership."



Zeyad Abdullah AlOmar, Bassém Banna and Mohammed Al-Musalam

Zeyad Abdullah Al-Omar:
■ Program aims for visionary leaders propelling KFH Group to new heights

Mohammed Al-Musalam:
■ (BLE) program is a transformative journey and an excellent opportunity to solidify unity as "One" KFH Group.



BLE Alumni Panel

Some of the participants in the previous version of the program review their experiences.



Some of the participants.

Ghana to maintain strong monetary policy stance despite inflation ease

ACCRA, July 28, (Xinhua): Ghana's central bank on Friday announced that it would deepen its strong monetary policy stance despite the recent reductions in the inflation rate.

Ernest Addison, governor of the Bank of Ghana, reiterated the stance during a press briefing after the central bank's latest meeting of the monetary policy committee (MPC) to assess the economy.

Addison said despite the drop in inflation from 54.1 percent in December 2022 to 22.8 percent last month, there are still uncertainties in the outlook. He attributed the uncertainties on the path of inflation for the year to recent exchange rate pressures, increases in utility tariffs, and a surge in ex-pump fuel prices.

"Even though we expect inflation to remain within the target

range of between 13 percent and 17 percent this year, the risks are tilted slightly upward," said the governor.

Addison said the situation requires a strong monetary policy and fiscal consolidation efforts to achieve the end-year inflation target.

"Given these considerations, the MPC decided to maintain the policy rate at 29 percent," the governor announced.

Ghana, the world's second-largest cocoa producer and an exporter of fossil fuels, has been battling chronic economic challenges.

In May 2023, the West African country secured a three-year bailout package of 3 billion U.S. dollars from the International Monetary Fund to reduce inflation and currency depreciation and revive its economy.

Americans paying more for basics thanks to US' tariffs against China

Situation depicts the consequences of protectionist measures

NEW YORK, July 28, (Xinhua): An average U.S. household paid over 300 U.S. dollars more in 2023 due to Washington's tariffs targeting imports from China, mainly because of higher tax burdens and market efficiency losses, said a Tax Foundation research published in June based on actual revenue collection data.

The actual cost is even higher, the researchers said, because the estimate does not account for lower incomes as tariffs shrink output or the loss in consumer choice as people switch to alternatives that do not face tariffs.

This situation highlights the consequences of protectionist measures championed by Washington politicians. Intended to shield domestic industries, the tariffs have instead driven up prices on everyday items, from footwear to luggage.

Imposed

A suitcase sold at 100 U.S. dollars before Donald Trump's White House imposed the tariffs now goes for about 160 dollars, and a carry-on that was 425 dollars is now 700 dollars, said Tiffany Zarfas Williams, owner of a small, independent retailer store, according to a recent CNN report.

"The economics on tariffs are really clear that they're a tax increase that ultimately we pay," Erica York, senior economist and research manager with the Tax Foundation's Center for Federal Tax Policy, was quoted as saying by CNBC.

The Trump administration's tariffs on thousands of products, valued at around 380 billion dollars, were equivalent to nearly 80 billion dollars of new taxes on Americans in 2018 and 2019, amounting to one of the largest tax increases in decades, wrote York on a blog in June.

The Biden administration has kept many of the tariffs, on over 300 bil-

UK joins digital trade deal negotiated under the World Trade Organization

LONDON, July 28, (KUNA): The UK on Friday joined the first global digital trade agreement negotiated under the World Trade Organization. Department for Business and Trade announced in a statement.

After five years of negotiations, the UK and 90 other countries have finalized the E-Commerce Joint Initiative at the World Trade Organization (WTO), which will make trade faster, cheaper, fairer and more secure. It will help British businesses, workers and consumers seize the opportunities of global digital trade, which is estimated at £4 trillion.

Once implemented, the agreement will commit all participants to the digitalisation of customs documents and processes. This will in many cases end the need to print forms off and hand them over at customs, a slow, expensive and old-fashioned way of

working.

The signatories to this agreement will also commit to recognising e-documents and e-signatures, reducing the need for businesses to physically sign contracts and post them around the world.

Global adoption of digital customs systems, processes and documents would increase UK GDP by up to £24.2 billion in 2023 UK GDP terms. Even partial adoption could represent a significant boost to UK GDP.

It also commits signatories to putting in place legal safeguards against online fraudsters and misleading claims about products.

Business and Trade Secretary Jonathan Reynolds said: "We are proud to play our part in securing the first ever global digital trade agreement, cutting costs for business and delivering on this governments ambition to

deliver economic growth."

Britain is back and proudly playing her role as an outward looking trading nation. Global digital trade is already estimated by the OECD to be worth around £4 trillion and counting but no common set of global rules exist. This is a huge step forward in correcting that and ensuring British businesses feel the benefit.

Science Secretary Peter Kyle said: "This global agreement aims to help people use technology safely by protecting them from fraud, while driving economic growth through the digitalisation of trade so its faster and more secure."

We will leave no stone unturned in our work to share the benefits of technology and drive economic growth by working with partners around the world to achieve this."

The family-run shoe seller Deer Stags, headquartered in New York City, has been importing most of its products from China since the 1980s, said Rick Muskat, the company's president, in a CNN report.

The Trump administration imposed a 15-percent tariff on over half of footwear imported from China. The levy was later lowered to 7.5 percent upon implementation of the U.S.-China Phase One agreement in February 2020.

Raise

As Muskat found it hard to raise prices for the present product lines, he had to pass on the cost to new products, which are now additionally expensive.

"I developed a new style that never existed in our line before that's subject to the tariffs. So when we do our calculations and try to maintain our margins, those shoes ended up costing more than they would have had the tariff not been implemented," Muskat

said. Muskat hasn't changed suppliers because he found relocating production would not compensate for the cost.

U.S. companies "have absorbed much of the higher costs associated with the tariffs by earning lower margins on their sales," said a 2021 report by the International Monetary Fund.

The ripples spread up the supply chain, passing part of the additional cost of imported materials to finished goods assemblers and distributors in the United States.

Lance Rutenberg, chief executive of American Textile Company headquartered in Duquesne, Pennsylvania, sees its costs rising by millions of dollars each year for the imported Chinese materials it uses in pillows and bedding that are sold by U.S. brands such as Sealy and Tempur-Pedic.

With retail titans pressing the price down, importers took the blow and squeezed their profit margins.

What's On



NBK and Safat Home join forces for loyalty program.

Program is Kuwait's largest loyalty program with 1,000+ partner outlets across country

NBK ties up with Safat Home as new partner of NBK Rewards Program

KUWAIT CITY, July 28: National Bank of Kuwait (NBK) always strives to elevate customer banking experience by providing exclusive offers and rewards to complement its market-leading products and services. In this context, the Bank has signed a partnership agreement with Safat Home, a subsidiary of Alghanim Industries to be part of the Bank's loyalty program 'NBK Rewards Program'.

The signing ceremony took place on July 17th at NBK Headquarters and was attended by Mr. Mohammed Al-Othman, CEO-Consumer and Digital Banking at National Bank of Kuwait, Mr. Abdullah Al-Omar, Senior General Manager at Safat Home, and Mr. Mussab Ahmed, Vice President Finance and Group Controller and Treasurer at Alghanim Industries.

According to the offer presented by the NBK Rewards Program, NBK Customers will accumulate 5% in NBK Rewards on all their purchases from Safat Home when using any NBK Credit or Prepaid Card. The earned NBK Rewards can be used to pay for all or part of customers' shopping at all partici-

Al-Othman:

- This partnership underscores our constant endeavors to elevate customer banking experience by enhancing rewards and benefits
- We always seek to expand our partner network, leveraging our solid relationships with leading corporations across different sectors

patating outlets, instantly at the Point-of-Sale (POS) terminals, with a minimum balance of KD 5 in NBK Rewards for redemption.

Commenting on this, Al-Othman said, "We are happy with this partner-

ship with Safat Home, which underscores our constant endeavors to elevate customer banking experience by expanding the rewards and benefits provided to them, especially when using NBK Credit or Prepaid Cards for shopping at their favorite stores."

"We always seek to expand our NBK Rewards partner network, leveraging its solid relationships with leading corporations across different sectors to offer customers exclusive discounts and a unique shopping experience," he noted.

It is worth mentioning that the NBK Rewards Program is Kuwait's largest loyalty program with more than 1,000+ partner outlets across Kuwait. The program offers NBK Credit and Prepaid Cardholders guaranteed rewards at a variety of the best brands across several categories including Food and Beverages, Fashion and Beauty, Health and Wellness, Home and Auto, Travel and Hotels, Kids and Education, Entertainment, and others.

10 customers win 1,000 KD each in bank's draw

Warba Bank reveals winners of weekly 'Sunbula' account draw

KUWAIT CITY, July 28: Warba Bank - the best bank in banking services for the corporate sector and banking services for the investment sector in Kuwait - announced the winners of the weekly Sunbula draw. Warba Bank will continue to make draws for 10 weekly winners for the Sunbula account in the presence of a representative of the Ministry of Commerce and Industry and Warba Bank employees.

As for the lucky customers for the weekly Sunbula draw, 10 winners were chosen from Warba Bank's customers, each of whom received 1,000 Kuwaiti dinars. The Winners are Mr. Saud Abdulaziz Al-Awadhi, Mrs. Fawzia Abdulrahman Al-Safran, Mr. Abdul Latif Dhaidan Al-Waqit, Mrs. Maha Rashid Al-Anzi, Mr. Mohammed Fahad Al-Azmi, Mr. Hassan Mustafa Al-Nazer, Mrs. Hasina Mohammed Omar, Mrs. Dalal Mishal Al-Ruwach, Mr. Talal Kanaan Al-Otaibi, and Mr. Faisal Mohammed Al-Awadhi.

The Sunbula account is the perfect choice for all those who wish to save money and achieve great financial returns on their balances at the same time; in addition to multiple opportunities to win cash prizes throughout the year.

With regards to the conditions



Abdulaziz Al-Bekheet

for winning the Sunbula, Mr. Abdulaziz Soud Al-Bekheet - Director Region Retail Banking Group states: "Only 100 KD is required to enter the weekly Sunbula draws and other major draws, whereby the customer still gets one chance per every 10 KD in the account, and the chances are calculated according to the lowest balance in the account during a month. Therefore, a full month must have passed in the account to qualify for the weekly draw, and two full months for the

major draws to calculate the opportunities. There are no restrictions or limits for withdrawal and deposit, the higher the deposited amount, the greater the customer's 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.

Onavesham 2024 scheduled for Sept 20

Idukki Association Kuwait announces Onavesham 2024 Onam celebrations

KUWAIT CITY, July 28: Idukki Association Kuwait conducted a flyer opening ceremony of its upcoming Onam celebrations to be held in Salmiya ICSK School on September 20 from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. in collaboration with Joyalukas jewellery, presented by Phoenix Group. The program is named as "Onavesham 2024".

The flyer of the program was handed over by prominent social and charity worker Habibulla Mut-

tichoor to the program General convener Anish Prabhakaran at the function held at Abbasiya United Indian school at the presence of IAK President Abin Thomas, Women's forum chairperson Raji Shaji Mathew and other IAK leaders.

The Onam program shall be active with the participation of well-known artist Arun Guinness and the exciting performance of men, women and children of IAK. Traditional dances, music concerts and cultural

programs shall be part of the event.

Idukki Association Kuwait was founded in 2005. Its mission was to provide space for meetings of people who hail from Idukki district of Kerala. The association was actively involved in various cultural, social and charity activities since its formation. It enabled creative people to discover their voice and effectively attracted and united all the people and became a vehicle of culture and civilization.



ഇടുക്കി അസോസിയേഷൻ കൂടെയ്ക്ക് ഓണവേശം 2024 ഏയർ പ്രകാശനം

Flyer release ceremony.

Al-Tijari announces winner of Al Najma Account draw

KUWAIT CITY, July 28: Commercial Bank of Kuwait conducted the weekly draw for Al Najma Account on Sunday, July 28, 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 follow:

1. Al Najma weekly draw - the prize of 5,000/- Kuwaiti Dinars went to the winner Mr. Dawoud Samah Yaqoub Bo Al Banat.

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

The Bank revealed that Al Najma Account is available



Al Najma Account weekly draw.

to everyone, and anyone can open Al Najma Account through CBK mobile application in simple steps from anywhere and at any time.

The Conversation

Complexity of genetics in depression & anxiety disorders

Genetic influence on human psychology

By Jessica D. Ayers
Boise State University

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



As a species, humans like to think that we are fully in control of our decisions and behavior. But just below the surface, forces beyond our conscious control influence how we think and behave: our genes.

Since the 1950s, scientists have been studying the influences genes have on human health. This has led medical professionals, researchers and policymakers to advocate for the use of precision medicine to personalize diagnosis and treatment of diseases, leading to quicker improvements to patient well-being.

But the influence of genes on psychology has been overlooked.

My research addresses how genes influence human psychology and behavior. Here are some specific ways psychologists can use genetic conflict theory to better understand human behavior - and potentially advance the treatment of psychological issues.

Genetic conflict theory proposes that though our genes blend together to make us who we are, they retain markers indicating whether they came from mom or dad. These markers cause the genes to either cooperate or fight with one another as we grow and develop. Research in genetic conflict primarily focuses on pregnancy, since this is one of the few times in human development when the influence of different sets of genes can be clearly observed in one individual.

Typically, maternal and paternal genes have different ideal strategies for growth and development. While genes from mom and dad ultimately find ways to cooperate with one another that result in normal growth and development, these genes benefit by nudging fetal development to be slightly more in line with what's optimal for the parent they come from. Genes from mom try to keep mom healthy and with enough resources left for another pregnancy, while genes from dad benefit from the fetus taking all of mom's resources for itself.

When genes are not able to compromise, however, this can result in undesirable outcomes such as physical and mental deficits for the baby or even miscarriage.

While genetic conflict is a normal occurrence, its influence has largely been overlooked in psychology. One reason is because researchers assume that genetic cooperation is necessary for the health and well-being of the individual. Another reason is because most human traits are controlled by many genes. For example, height is determined by a combination of 10,000 genetic variants, and skin color is deter-

mined by more than 150 genes.

The complex nature of psychology and behavior makes it hard to pinpoint the unique influence of a single gene, let alone which parent it came from. Take, for example, depression. Not only is the likelihood of developing depression influenced by 200 different genes, it is also affected by environmental inputs such as childhood maltreatment and stressful life events. Researchers have also studied similar complex interactions for stress- and anxiety-related disorders.

When researchers study genetic conflict, they have typically focused on its link to disease, unintentionally documenting the influence of genetic conflict on psychology.

Specifically, researchers have studied how extreme instances of genetic conflict - such as when the influence of one set of parental genes is fully expressed while the other set is completely silenced - are associated with changes in behavior by studying people who have Prader-Willi syndrome and Angelman syndrome.

Prader-Willi and Angelman syndromes are rare genetic disorders affecting about 1 in 10,000 to 30,000 and 1 in 12,000 to 20,000 people around the world, respectively. There is currently no long-term treatment available for either condition.

These syndromes develop in patients missing one copy of a gene on chromosome 15 that is needed for balanced growth and development. Someone who inherits only the version of the gene from their dad will develop Angelman syndrome, while someone who has only the version of the gene from their mom will develop Prader-Willi syndrome.

Physical hallmarks of Angelman syndrome include major developmental delays, intellectual disabilities, trouble moving, trouble eating and excessive smiling. Physical hallmarks of Prader-Willi syndrome include diminished muscle tone, feeding difficulties, hormone deficiencies, short stature and extreme overeating in childhood.

These syndromes represent one of the few instances where the influence of a single missing gene can be clearly observed. While both Angelman and Prader-Willi syndromes are associated with language, cognitive, eating and sleeping issues, they are also associated with clear differences in psychology and behavior.

For example, children with Angelman syndrome smile, laugh and generally want to engage in social interactions. These behaviors are associated with an increased ability to gain resources and investment from those around them.

Children with Prader-Willi syndrome, on the other hand, experience tantrums, anxiety and have difficulties in social situations. These behaviors are associated with increased hardships on mothers early in the individual's life, potentially delaying when their mother will have another child. This would therefore increase the child's access to resources such as food and parental attention. (AP)

Robert Downey returning to 'Avengers' films as a villain

SAN DIEGO, July 28, (AP): Marvel Studios returned to San Diego Comic-Con with dancing Deadpool variants and a choir for a panel that included news about the next two "Avengers" films and surprise guests, including Harrison Ford and Robert Downey Jr.

Downey is returning to Marvel's films, but not as Iron Man. He'll play the villain Victor Von Doom, or Doctor Doom, in at least one of the upcoming "Avengers" movies. Downey kicked off Marvel's movie successes in "Iron Man" and played the popular character in nine films, but on Saturday appeared wearing Dr. Doom's mask and a green cloak. "New mask, same task," Downey said to frenzied cheers.

The Russo brothers, who will be directing the movie featuring Downey, said his appearance in the film is "proof of the unimaginable possibilities in the Marvel multi-universe."

The reveal capped a jubilant return by Marvel to Comic-Con's Hall H. Marvel Studios President Kevin Feige kicked off the panel by saying that due to this weekend's success of "Deadpool & Wolverine," the sprawling Marvel Cinematic Universe had now topped \$30 billion in box-office earnings. In a nod to a scene in the movie, a choir sang Madonna's "Like a Prayer" before Feige spoke.

"Deadpool & Wolverine," released Thursday, has already broken one record and could shatter more in its opening weekend. Feige used Saturday's panel to chart the course ahead for the MCU, revealing Ford's character in the next "Captain America" film and revealing "Avengers: Secret Wars" and "Avengers: Doomsday" as the titles of the next two films in the epic superhero team-up series. "Doomsday" will hit theaters in 2026.

Feige said all the actors introduced Saturday would appear in the upcoming "Avengers" movies, which will be directed by Joe and Anthony Russo. The brothers guided the "Avengers" franchise through its sprawling storyline capped by "Avengers: Endgame" in 2019 that included the death of Downey's Tony Stark/Iron Man character.

"When we directed "Avengers: Endgame," Joe and I truly believed that it was the end of the road for us in the Marvel Cinematic Universe because we had put all of our passion, our love, our imagination into "The Winter Soldier," into "Civil War," into "Infinity War," climaxed all of it with "Avengers: Endgame," Anthony Russo said. "That four movie run was incredible and it left us creatively spent with all of our emotions on the film. In the time since, through a very special story, Joe and I have come to potentially see a road forward with you."

Convention

They called "Secret Wars" the "biggest story that Marvel Comics ever told," and Joe said it was the first comic book run he read as a child that made him "fall in love with comics."

Saturday's session comes after Marvel skipped the convention last year due to the Hollywood strikes, which prevented writers and actors from speaking on panels.

The cast of "Captain America: Brave New World" — Giancarlo Esposito, Tim Blake Nelson, Danny Ramirez and Anthony Mackie — joined the stage first and teased details about the upcoming film. Esposito revealed that he will be playing the villain, Seth Voelker, also known as Sidewinder.

When asked about what it was like to join a Marvel project, Esposito said it was a "dream come true."

"When your dreams come true and you get the call, you walk through the door," he continued. "I have a great deal of gratitude for all the fans who really had this dream come true, because it was fan casting that linked us together."

The cast then stepped aside to share a scene from the movie on the big screen, which revealed that President Thaddeus "Thunderbolt" Ross, played by Ford, is hoping to rebuild the Avengers with Mackie's Sam Wilson. It also showed Ford's character transform into the Red Hulk.

Ford joined the panel after fans were treated to clips from the movie and flexed his muscles to the roaring crowd. He also expressed excitement over his latest role, saying, "I am delighted, and proud to become a member of the Marvel Universe."

The cast and director of "Thunderbolts(asterisk)" also surprised fans with a short clip from the movie. Julia Louis-Dreyfus, Florence Pugh, Sebastian Stan and David Harbour (in full costume and speaking in character as the Red Guardian at first) stormed the stage and shared some more details about their characters.

Film

Variety



This image released by 20th Century Studios/Marvel Studios shows Ryan Reynolds as Deadpool/Wade Wilson, (left), and Hugh Jackman as Wolverine/Logan in a scene from 'Deadpool & Wolverine.' (AP)

Features

Film

Friendship fuels new Marvel movie on and off screen

'Deadpool & Wolverine' shakes up the MCU

LOS ANGELES, July 28, (AP): Shawn Levy is no novice when it comes to rumors around his projects. Years on "Stranger Things" taught him how to tune out the noise. Yet even he's found himself astonished by the sheer volume of speculation around "Deadpool & Wolverine."

"The rumors around this movie are overwhelming," Levy told The Associated Press earlier this year. "But so is the anticipation, which is a nice situation."

Anticipation might be an understatement for a movie that is poised to be the theatrical event of the summer, when it opened on Thursday.

The first trailer, which aired during the Super Bowl, was viewed a record 365 million times online in its first 24 hours. The second broke another record - for the most "F-bombs" in the MCU (six in less than three minutes).

Much of that excitement is because this film marks the first time Ryan Reynolds' foul-mouthed Deadpool/Wade Wilson and Hugh Jackman's Wolverine are being folded into Kevin Feige's Marvel Cinematic Universe. Both properties existed previously under the 21st Century Fox banner.

When Disney acquired the studio's film and TV assets in early 2019, Wolverine had already died in "Logan," a third "Deadpool" was in development and Marvel was still firmly in the PG-13 business, a rating that allows for only one F-bomb.

On a call with investors as the deal was going through, Walt Disney Company CEO Bob Iger was already reassuring people that a Disney Deadpool would remain R-rated. Soon after, Reynolds also posted a photo on social media showing his character with Mickey Mouse ears on a yellow school bus labeled "Disney." The meta humor, it seemed, was also firmly intact.

But what would the story be? Levy was announced as the film's director in early 2022, coming in as a fan of Reynolds' snarky tone and fourth wall breaking.

"There was no way I was going to reinvent a wheel, a tonal wheel, that works so beautifully," Levy said. "Both Disney and Marvel, up and down the food chain, empowered Ryan and I to make this movie exactly as we dreamed."

Things really started to really take shape when Jack-

man signed on that fall, however. It would mark the first time that the characters would be together in a movie since 2009's "X-Men Origins: Wolverine." In the years since, Reynolds and Jackman have staged a very tongue in cheek, very funny "feud" with one another on social media, dancing around the idea of sharing the big screen again.

The dream seemed to have died after "Logan" and Jackman's retirement as Wolverine. But death is never exactly final in the multiverse, and, they promised, this film would not interfere with "Logan."

"It's a really interesting duo," Levy said. "They're built for huge conflict with each other because they're so different individually. But that makes for a very interesting story, because the best two hander stories, whether it's 'Midnight Run' or '48 Hours' or 'Planes, Trains and Automobiles,' yes, it's littered with conflict. But it's ultimately about something more as well and that's what audiences will see."

Moments

The dynamic was also fueled by the real-life friendship between Levy, Jackman and Reynolds that goes back a decade off screen and includes films like "Free Guy" and "Real Steel."

"The real benefit of being friends off set is that you can try crazy stuff without fear of falling. Because some of it won't work and that will be momentarily embarrassing, but if you're among friends, it's okay to make a fool of yourself in the pursuit of something surprising and something unexpected," Levy said. "This movie is filled with moments, both comedic and character based, that we didn't expect and were the result of a freedom that came from being friends."

At the New York premiere Monday, Jackman and Reynolds were definitely in friend mode, praising one another with no snark.

"(Ryan's) exactly as you think," Jackman said. "An extraordinary man. Generous, humble brilliant and a great friend."

Reynolds added that Jackman was "someone who operated in a completely different way, did everything through the prism of genuine kindness, diligence, hard work. And that was modeled to me in 2008 when we

did our first movie together. And we've been best buddies ever since."

The Marvel multiverse has gotten a bit overwhelming in recent years for the more casual fans who may have seen most of the films but only dabbled in the Disney+ offerings that regularly introduce new concepts and characters that eventually find their way into the films. "Deadpool & Wolverine," for instance, uses the Time Variance Authority (TVA) - a major part of "Loki" but new to the movies - to help get Deadpool to the MCU. But Levy promises that enjoyment of "Deadpool & Wolverine" requires no bingeing or studying beforehand.

"I was a good student in school. I'll do my homework as an adult. But I am definitely not looking to do homework when I go to the movies," Levy said.

"I very much made this film with certainly a healthy respect and gratitude towards the rabid fan base that has peak fluency in the mythology and lore of these characters and this world. But I didn't want to presume that. This movie is built for entertainment, with no obligation to come prepared with prior research."

So, what about what's IN the film? Well, that's something that Levy won't really talk about. Until Monday's premiere, reporters were only allowed to see 40 minutes; Soon the floodgates will open and spoilers will take over social media.

But "Deadpool & Wolverine" hasn't needed to tease out plotlines to stoke enthusiasm. The fans are already there and ready, whether or not Taylor Swift is involved (by all accounts, she's not).

Marvel has had some Phase 5 bumps, with films like "The Marvels" underperforming financially and others underwhelming critics. And outside of the MCU, the industry is feeling the pains of so-called "superhero fatigue" that has sent DC back to the drawing boards to start anew. But "Deadpool & Wolverine" is not to be underestimated.

Critics have been largely positive too. AP's Krysta Fauria wrote in her review that the film "leans into its genre more than the franchise's first two movies." She cautions that the plot starts to feel a little aimless toward the end, but that, "The bloody but comedic final fight scene ... is enough to perk viewers back up for the last act, solidifying the film's identity as a fun, generally well-made summer movie."

SAN DIEGO: The "Dexter" universe is expanding, with every one's favorite serial killer coming back from the dead.

At San Diego Comic-Con, the "Dexter" team, led by showrunner Clyde Phillips, announced that audiences would see more of the character in "Dexter: Resurrection," a new sequel series. It will pick up where fellow franchise sequel "Dexter: New Blood" left off with its main character dead, prompting many fans to believe any future sequels would be impossible.

Michael C. Hall, who started playing the titular character in 2006, will reprise his role. He made a surprise appearance at the Comic-Con panel, shocking fans even before they heard the news of the new series. Phillips didn't disclose too many details, but somehow, the "Resurrection" will revive its lead.

The announcement came during the promotion of "Dexter: Original Sin," a prequel series that explores the character as a younger man, played by Patrick Gibson.

"This weekend there were a lot of surprises," Gibson said in an interview with The Associated Press. "They set up the characters in season one to have such rich inner life and so much complexity that even with eight seasons, there's so much more to explore."

At the panel, the creatives behind the franchise also announced that Hall is the narrator of the "Original Sin" series, where he will divulge the inner thoughts of young Dexter. The prequel series is set to release in December 2024 and "Dexter: Resurrection" will start filming in January for a summer 2025 release.

Fans at the packed venue Friday exploded with cheers when the panel made the surprise announcement.

"Original Sin" also stars Christian Slater, who said he was "obsessed" with the original series and was looking forward to exploring more of the story that the previous series didn't get to examine.

"To see Dexter becoming Dexter - it's really cool to see how Clyde Phillips has handled that and the writing is just so good and so rich, it's fun to do," Slater told to The Associated Press. (AP)

□ □ □

LOS ANGELES: Three members of the Nelons, a Gospel Music Association Hall of Fame quartet and the chairman of the board overseeing the Georgia Department of Corrections, were among seven people killed in a plane crash in Wyoming, according to a statement by a group member who was not aboard the aircraft.



Hall

Kelly

The Nelons co-founder, Kelly Nelson Clark, her husband Jason Clark, and their daughter, Amber Nelson Kistler died in the crash Friday afternoon, according to a statement from another daughter, Autumn Nelson Streetman. She is the fourth member of the Georgia-based quartet.

"Thank you for the prayers that

have been extended already to me, my husband, Jamie, and our soon-to-be-born baby boy, as well as Jason's parents, Dan and Linda Clark," Nelson Streetman said. "We appreciate your continued prayers, love and support as we navigate the coming days."

Also killed in the crash were Nelson Kistler's husband, Nathan Kis-

ler, family friend Melodi Hodges, and Larry and Melissa Haynie, according to Nelson Streetman.

There were no survivors. Larry Haynie was chairman of the Georgia Board of Corrections and was remembered for "a career of valued public service," according to a statement from Georgia Gov. Brian Kemp. (AP)

People & Places

Film

Tickets sell fast

'Twisters' strikes a chord in Oklahoma

MOORE, Okla., July 28, (Agencies): Grace Evans lived through one of the most powerful and deadly twisters in Oklahoma history: a roaring top-of-the-scale terror in 2013 that plowed through homes, tore through a school and killed 24 people in the small suburb of Moore.

A hospital and bowling alley were also destroyed. But not the movie theater next door - where almost a decade later, Evans and her teenage daughter this week felt no pause buying two tickets to a showing of the blockbuster "Twisters."

"I was looking for that element of excitement and I guess drama and danger," Evans said.

Her daughter also walked out a fan. "It was very realistic. I was definitely frightened," said Charis Evans, 15.

The smash success of "Twisters" has whipped up moviegoers in Oklahoma who are embracing the summer hit, including in towns scarred by deadly real-life tornadoes. Even long before it hit theaters, Oklahoma officials had rolled out the red carpet for makers of the film, authorizing what is likely to wind up being millions of dollars in incentives to film in the state.

In its opening weekend, the action-packed film starring **Daisy Edgar-Jones** and Glen Powell generated \$80.5 million from more than 4,150 theaters in North America. Some of the largest audiences have been in the tornado-prone Midwest.

The top-performing theater in the country on opening weekend was the Regal Warren in Moore, which screened the film in 10 of its 17 auditoriums on opening weekend from 9 a.m. to midnight. John Stephens, the theater's general manager, said many moviegoers mentioned wanting to see the film in a theater that survived a massive tornado.

Defiance

"The people who live in Tornado Alley have a certain defiance towards mother nature," he said, "almost like a passion to fight storms, which was depicted by the characters in 'Twisters.'"

Lee Isaac Chung, who directed the film, considered placing the movie in Oklahoma to be critically important.

"I told everyone this is something that we have to do. We can't just have blue screens," Chung told the AP earlier this year. "We've got to be out there on the roads with our pickup trucks and in the green environments where this story actually takes place."

The film was shot at locations across Oklahoma, with the studio taking advantage of a rebate incentive in which the state directly reimburses production companies for up to 30% of qualifying expenditures, including labor.

State officials said the exact amount of money Oklahoma spent on "Twisters" is still being calculated. But the film is exactly the kind of blockbuster Sooner State policymakers envisioned when they increased the amount available for the program in 2021 from \$8 million annually to \$30 million, said Jeanette Stanton, director of Oklahoma's Film and Music Office.

Among the major films and television series that took advantage of Oklahoma's film incentives in recent years were "Reagan" (\$6.1 million), "Killers of the Flower Moon" (\$12.4 million), and the television shows "Reservoir Dogs" (\$13 million) and "Tulsa King" (\$14.1 million).

Stanton said she's not surprised by the success of "Twisters," particularly in Oklahoma.

"You love seeing your state on the big screen, and I think for locals across the state, when they see that El Reno water tower falling down, they think: 'I know where that is!'" she said.

"It's almost as if Oklahoma was a character in the film," she added.

In the northeast Oklahoma community of Barnsdall, where two people were killed and more than 80 homes were destroyed by a tornado in May, Mayor Johnny Kelley said he expects most residents will embrace the film.

"Some will and some won't. Things affect people differently, you know?" said Kelley, who is a firefighter in nearby Bartlesville. "I really don't ever go to the movies or watch TV, but I might go see that one."

Also:

LOS ANGELES: Just in time for Olympics fever, Luca Guadagnino's sweaty, synth "Challengers" makes its streaming debut on MGM+ on Monday. Even if you missed it in theaters, it'd be hard not to be at least aware of it, what with the teasing photo of Zendaya, Mike Faist and Josh O'Connor perched suggestively on that bed and the ubiquitous "I Told Ya" T-shirt in paparazzi photos. For the few uninitiated, "Challengers" is set in the world of competitive tennis, where all three are rising stars until an injury forces Zendaya's character off the court. I wrote in my review that it's "a prickly treat, about fractured relationships, egos, infidelity and ambition" with "plenty of skin, sweat, close-ups of muscled thighs and smoldering looks of lust and hate in this deliriously over-the-top psychodrama." The Associated Press named it one of the best movies of 2024 thus far.

BEIJING: Chinese comedy "Successor" continued to top the daily box office chart on the Chinese mainland with a daily earning of 141.56 million yuan (about 19.86 million U.S. dollars) on Saturday, according to the China Movie Data Information Network.

Featuring comedy stars **Shen Teng** and **Ma Li** and directed by **Yan Fei** and **Peng Damo**, the film tells the story of a wealthy couple who deliberately fakes a challenging environment for their son in order to foster his personal growth.

The comedy contributed about 47 percent of the total box office revenue on Saturday and its accumulated sales since its debut has exceeded 2.1 billion yuan.

It was followed by American action movie "Deadpool & Wolverine," which raked in 60.24 million yuan on its second screening day.

Domestic production "The Traveller" came in third with 32.76 million yuan of box office sales on the day.

The total box office revenue of the Chinese mainland on Saturday stood at about 301 million yuan.



Mezzo-soprano Joyce DiDonato appears on April 8, 2024 at Ancient Olympia, Greece, during the recording of 'Eden in Olympia.' The film, directed by Olivier Simonnet, released on ARTE, ERT2 and Carnegie Hall+. (AP)

Music

Joyce DiDonato's film debuts amid Paris Games

'Eden in Olympia': musical climate call

NEW YORK, July 28, (AP): While much of the globe is focused on the Paris Olympics, a movie filmed from ancient Olympia starring mezzo-soprano Joyce DiDonato premiered this week that uses music to spark contemplation of creation and carnage.

"Eden in Olympia" opens by posing a pair of questions as day breaks over a river: "In the heart of Olympia, the sun ignites the flame and humanity joins as one. Here, music and nature together demonstrate the power of existing in a world that thrives in harmony and balance. Will we answer the call? Will we return to Eden?"

In a series of scenes set to music from Baroque to Mahler's "Rückert-Lieder" through "The First Morning of the World" by Academy Award-winner Rachel Portman, director Olivier Simonnet visualizes DiDonato's audio recording released two years ago, a call to action on climate change.

"I find it comforting to know that this isn't the first time we've been facing difficult things as a species on the planet, but we do have the power to set things right," DiDonato said this week. "You join hands and you raise your voices together. You create something harmonious. You appreciate the beauty. You say thank you to everything has been given to you."

Her first appearance is leaning against a leafy tree, wearing an earth-tone Zeus-Dione dress with a dreamlike gaze and holding branches. Children emerge from woods with looks of astonishment to Charles Ives' "The Unanswered Question," carrying paper lanterns as darkness turns to dawn.

DiDonato sets off across a field, silhouetted by streaks of sunlight, a drone camera shooting from overhead. She stops in temple ruins, surrounded by idyllic trees with pink and green leaves, as the soundtrack switches to Portman's 2022 composition.

Musicians gather, DiDonato sings as children bring her bougths but later walks away with tears after she collects flowers and is met with looks of disillusionment. At dusk, the musi-

cians play savagely during the dance of furies from Gluck's "Orfeo ed Euridice," wearing tiny flashlights on arms that made them resemble fireflies.

"The audience is aware that this is an ancient ground that that really gave birth to Olympic ideals and called up the best of humanity," DiDonato said. "I think that presence, that energetic presence in the show, is very strong."

DiDonato started to conceive "Eden" in 2019, and the recording with conductor Maxim Emelyanychev and Il Pomo d'Oro was released in 2022. It earned the 11th Grammy Award nomination for the 55-year-old singer, a three-time Grammy winner.

A subsequent tour included about four dozen concerts with more in South America and Europe scheduled this summer.

Performance

World Human Forum President Alexandra Mitsotaki and artistic/creative director Myrto Vounatsou suggested the film after hearing DiDonato's interview during an Athens performance in May 2023. Mitsotaki used her contacts to gain approval to film in Olympia a week ahead of the flame lighting on April 16.

Most of the vocal music was re-recorded the night before filming started. DiDonato arrived at 3:30 a.m. for makeup and shooting began two hours later at sunrise.

"It was a huge leap of faith because we were completely dependent on the weather," DiDonato said. "We filmed that all in two days and we were on such a tight schedule, and we couldn't afford to ever even go over 10 minutes on any scene, and we didn't."

Simonnet's 59-minute movie was released in Europe on ARTE last weekend, on Greece's ERT2 on Thursday and on Carnegie Hall+ on Friday.

"The story Joyce wanted to tell the audience in the theater was very, very connected with the texts of the songs," Simonnet said. "Of course you can read the meaning of the songs, talking

about harmony and peace and things like that. But, at the end of the day, maybe you can forget the meaning of the songs and just be comfortable and happy with what you see, the landscape, this beautiful singer."

Three children's choruses appear: the Children's Choir of the Greek National Opera, the Choeurs ECLATS choir from France and El Sistema Greece. DiDonato joins them in the uplifting "Seeds of Hope" and the Olympic anthem that closes the film, sung in Greek, French, and English.

"What is causing us to experience so much division, what is causing us not to be taking care of ourselves, of each other, of our planet? What is that disconnect within us as a society that is allowing this kind of destruction to happen?" she said. "I always turn to music when I'm looking for the big answers. Even if I don't find them, it certainly offers me comfort."

Also:

FRANCE: Snoop Dogg is seemingly everywhere during the Paris Olympics, but on Friday morning you could catch him carrying the Olympic torch ahead of the opening ceremony.

He was one of the final torch bearers of the Olympic flame, which was lit in April in Greece and slowly has journeyed toward Paris since. Snoop Dogg's leg was in Saint-Denis, a suburb of Paris.

In an interview earlier this week, the multihyphenate expressed gratitude toward the U.S. and France for the opportunity.

"I look at this as a prestigious honor and something I truly respect. I would have never dreamed of nothing like this," he said. "I'm going to be on my best behavior. I'm going to be on my best athleticism. I'll be able to breathe slow to walk fast and hold the torch with a smile on my face, because I realize how prestigious this event is."

Snoop Dogg is in Paris to help cover the Games for NBC, part of the US broadcaster's bet to boost ratings by infusing coverage with pop culture.



Barry Manilow performs on Saturday, July 27, in Chicago. (AP)



O'Connor



Williams

Variety

LONDON: A wax figure of **Sinéad O'Connor** that did not compare to how the late singer looked caused a minor meltdown among fans and family members, leading a **Dublin** museum on Friday to pull it from its collection.

The National Wax Museum Plus apologized to O'Connor's family and said it would immediately begin creating a more accurate representation of the singer best known for her 1990 cover of Prince's ballad "Nothing Compares 2 U."

John O'Connor said it was a "hideous" representation of his sister that looked like a cross between something in a department store window display and a 1960s sci-fi TV show that used electronic puppets.

"When I saw it online yesterday I was shocked," he told Irish broadcaster RTE. "I thought it looked something between a mannequin and something out of the 'Thunderbirds.'"

The museum had unveiled the figure Thursday in honor of the first anniversary of her death. O'Connor, 56, died in her London home of natural causes July 26, 2023.

O'Connor, who became a controversial figure after she tore up a photo of **Pope John Paul II** on Saturday Night Live in 1992, was considered a national treasure in Ireland, where she had started out performing on the streets of Dublin.

Fans filled the street of her former seaside hometown during a funeral procession in August following a private service attended by then-Irish Prime Minister **Leo Varadkar**, President **Michael Higgins** and musical luminaries such as **Bono** of U2 and **Bob Geldof** of the Boomtown Rats. (AP)

PARIS: If given the chance, **Pharrell Williams** would reintroduce arts competition into the Olympics, reviving a tradition that's been missing for nearly 80 years.

Williams is aiming to reinstate arts competitions back on the world's biggest sports stage, starting with raising awareness through his star-studded Louis Vuitton event Thursday in Paris. He passionately shared his goal to see the tradition revived by the Olympics in 2028 the night before the Games' opening ceremony.

"We get to remind people that at one point, the Olympics actually had the arts as a section that ran all these competitions," Williams before the event. "Sculpture, architecture, visual arts. The idea we get to put the arts back in. ... Why not take this moment to bring awareness?"

Art competitions first came into fruition at the 1912 Olympics in Stockholm with medals awarded in five categories: sculpture, literature, music, painting and architecture. However, the International Olympic Committee ended the competitions in the 1948 games. An attempt to bring it back

was denied four years later. (AP)

NAIROBI: The historic town of **Gedi** in the coastal region of **Kenya** has been inscribed on the World Heritage List by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the National Museums of Kenya (NMK) said on Saturday.

According to the NMK, this recognition underscores the historical and cultural

significance of Gedi, cementing its place as a vital part of Kenya's rich heritage and scenic attraction.

"We are deeply honored by this inscription, which highlights the importance of preserving and promoting our cultural heritage," **Mary Gikungu**, director general of the NMK, said in a statement released in the Kenyan capital of Nairobi.

"The recognition of Gedi as a World Heritage Site not only elevates its status on the

global stage but also reaffirms our commitment to safeguarding our national treasures for future generations," Gikungu added.

An archeological site that attracts hordes of tourists and anthropologists annually, Gedi town, which is now in ruins, showcases Swahili culture that thrived along the Indian Ocean coastline from the 13th to 17th centuries. (Xinhua)

ROME: Italy's ancient Roman Appian Way was admitted to the UNESCO World Heritage List on Saturday, becoming the country's 60th entry on the list.

At more than 800 kilometers (500 miles) long, the Appian Way, known as the "Queen of Roads," is the oldest and most important of the great roads built by the Ancient Romans from 312 B.C.

The Appian Way marked a revolution in road construction, quickly becoming the most important roadway connecting Rome with the southern part of the peninsula.

This strategic corridor ensured access in all weather conditions and allowed Roman legions swift and unchallenged conquests.

The bid for its inclusion in the UNESCO heritage list, prepared by Italy's Culture ministry, was declared successful during the 46th session of the World Heritage Committee, taking place in **New Delhi**.

Nowadays, the ancient Appian Way is not only a big open-air museum started in the 1800s, but also an immense green area, a place where Romans and tourists go for leisure time, biking, hiking and visiting monuments. The whole area is a protected archaeological park. (AP)



Actor Tom Cruise, (left), interacts with fans as he attends the women's artistic gymnastics qualification round at the 2024 Summer Olympics, Sunday, July 28, in Paris, France. (AP)

Life and death in the heat

What it feels like when temperatures soar to record highs

BENI MELLAL, Morocco, July 28, (AP): In the unrelenting heat of Morocco's Middle Atlas, people were sleeping on rooftops. Hanna Ouhbour needed refuge too, but she was outside a hospital waiting for her diabetic cousin who was in a room without air conditioning.

On Wednesday, there were 21 heat-related deaths at Beni Mellal's main hospital as temperatures spiked to 48.3 degrees (118.9 degrees Fahrenheit) in the region of 575,000 people, most lacking air conditioning.

"We don't have money and we don't have a choice," said Ouhbour, a 31-year-old unemployed woman from Kasba Tadla, an even warmer city that some experts say is among the hottest on Earth.

"The majority of the deaths were among people suffering from chronic diseases and the elderly, as the high temperatures contributed to the deterioration of their health condition and led to their death," Kamal Elyansli, the regional director of health, said in a statement.

This is life and death in the heat.

As the warming Earth sizzled through a week with four of the hottest days ever measured, the world focused on cold, hard numbers that showed the average daily temperature for the entire planet.

But the 17.16 degrees Celsius (62.8 degrees Fahrenheit) reading recorded on Monday doesn't convey how oppressively sticky any one particular place became at the peak of sunshine and humidity. The thermometer doesn't tell the story of warmth that just wouldn't go away at night so people could sleep.

The records are about statistics, keeping score. But people don't feel data. They feel the heat.

"We do not need any scientists to tell us what the temperature is outside as this is what our body tells us instantly," said Humayun Saeed, a 35-year-old roadside fruit seller in Pakistan's cultural capital of Lahore.

Saeed had to go to the hospital twice in June because of heat stroke.

"The situation is much better now, as it was not easy to work in May and June

because of the heat wave, but I have been avoiding the morning walk," Saeed said. "I may resume it in August when the temperature will go further down."

The heat was making Delia, a 38-year-old pregnant woman standing outside a Bucharest, Romania, train station, feel even more uncomfortable. Daytime was so hot she was drowsy. With no air conditioning at night, she considered sleeping in her car like a friend had.

"I've really noticed a very big increase in temperatures. I think it was the same for everyone. I felt it even more because I am pregnant," said Delia, who only provided her first name. "But I guess it wasn't just me. Really everyone felt this."

Self-described weather nerd Karin Bumbaco was in her element, but then it became just a little too much when Seattle had day after day of much warmer than normal heat.

Climate

"I love science. I love the weather. I have since I was a little kid," said Bumbaco, the deputy state climatologist for Washington. "It's sort of fun to see daily records get broken. ... But in recent years just living through it and actually feeling the heat has become just more miserable on a day-to-day basis."

"Like this recent stretch we've had. I wasn't sleeping very well. I don't have AC at my home," Bumbaco said. "I was watching the thermostat every morning be a little warmer than the previous warm morning. It was just building up the heat in the house and I just couldn't wait for it to be over."

For climate scientists around the world, what had been an academic exercise about climate change literally hit home.

"I've been analyzing these numbers from the cool of my office, but the heat has started to affect me as well, causing sleepless nights due to warmer urban temperatures," said Roxy Mathew Koll, a climate scientist at the Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology in Pune, Maharashtra, which normally has a relatively mild climate.

"My children return home from school during the peak hours exhausted," Koll said. "Last month one of my colleagues' mother died from heat stroke in north India."

Philip Mote, a climate scientist and dean of the graduate school at Oregon State University, had moved in junior high to California's Central Valley and its triple digit summer heat.

"I pretty quickly figured I didn't like a hot dry climate," Mote said. "And that's why I moved to the Northwest."

For decades, Mote worked on climate issues from the comfort of Oregon, where people feared that with global warming the Northwest "would be the last nice place to live in the US and everybody would move here and we'd have overpopulation."

But the region was hit by nasty fires in 2020 and a deadly heat wave in 2021, causing some people to flee what was supposed to be a climate haven.

In the second week of July, the temperature hit 104 degrees (40 Celsius). As a member of a masters' rowing club, Mote practices on the water Tuesdays and Thursdays evenings, but this week they decided to just float down the river in tubes.

In Boise, Idaho, tubing in the heat that has hovered between 99 and 108 degrees Fahrenheit (37 to 42 degrees Celsius) for 17 days has become so popular there's a 30-minute to an hour wait to get into the water, said John Tullius, general manager for Boise River Raft & Tube.

"I think it's been record numbers these last 10 days in a row," Tullius said, adding that he worries about his outdoor workers, especially the physical toll on those who pick up rafts at the end of the trek.

He erected special shade structure for them, added more workers to ease the load and urges them to hydrate.

In Denver's City Park, the swan-shaped pedal boat rental shop isn't that busy because it's beastly hot outside and those brave souls who do go out have to sit on hot fiberglass seats.

Digital vulnerability

Tech's grip on 'life' leads us into digital minefield

SAN FRANCISCO, July 28, (AP):

"Move fast and break things," a high-tech mantra popularized 20 years ago by Facebook founder Mark Zuckerberg, was supposed to be a rallying cry for game-changing innovation. It now seems more like an elegy for a society perched on a digital foundation too fragile to withstand a defective software program that was supposed to help protect computers - not crash them.

The worldwide technology meltdown caused by a flawed update installed earlier this month on computers running on Microsoft's dominant Windows software by cybersecurity specialist CrowdStrike was so serious that some affected businesses such as Delta Air Lines were still recovering from it days later.

It's a tell-tale moment - one that illustrates the digital pitfalls looming in a culture that takes the magic of technology for granted until it implodes into a horror show that exposes our ignorance and vulnerability.

"We are utterly dependent on systems that we don't even know exist until they break," said Paul Saffo, a Silicon Valley forecaster and historian. "We have become a little bit like Blanche DuBois in that scene from 'A Streetcar Named Desire,' where she says, 'I have always depended on the kindness of strangers.'"

The dependence - and extreme vulnerability - starts with the interconnections that bind our computers, phones and other devices. That usually makes life easier and more convenient, but it also means outages can have more far-reaching ripple effects, whether they are caused by a mistake like the one made by CrowdStrike or through the malicious intent of a hacker.

Questions

"It might be time to look at how the internet works and then question why the internet works this way. Because there is a lot of gum and shoelaces holding things together," said Gregory Falco, an assistant professor of engineering at Cornell University.

The risks are being amplified by the tightening control of a corporate coterie popularly known as "Big Tech": Microsoft, whose software runs most of the world's computers; Apple and Google, whose software powers virtually all of the world's smartphones; Amazon, which oversees data centers responsible for keeping websites running (another

key service provided by Microsoft and Google, too, in addition to its e-commerce bazaar); and Meta Platforms, the social networking hub that owns Facebook, Instagram and WhatsApp.

It's a highly concentrated empire with a few corridors open to a network of smaller companies such as CrowdStrike - a company with \$3 billion in annual revenue, a fraction of the nearly \$250 billion in annual sales that Microsoft reaps in. All of the key players still tend to put a higher priority on the pursuit of profit than a commitment to quality, said Isak Nti Asar, co-director of the cybersecurity and global policy program at Indiana University.

Innovation

"We have built a cult of innovation, a system that says, 'Get technology into people's hands as quick as possible and then fix it when you find out you have a problem,'" Nti Asar said. "We should be moving slower and demanding better technology instead of giving ourselves up to these feudal lords."

But is Big Tech to blame for that situation? Or is it 21st-century society that obviously allowed us to get to this point - consumers eagerly buying their next shiny devices while gleefully posting pictures online, and the seemingly overmatched lawmakers elected to impose safeguards?

"Everybody wants to point the blame somewhere else," Saffo said, "but I would say you better start looking in the mirror."

If our digital evolution seems to be headed in the wrong direction, should we change course? Or is that even possible at a juncture where some credit card companies charge their customers a fee if they prefer to have their monthly billing systems delivered to them through a US Postal Service that has become known as "snail mail" because it moves so slowly?

Remaining stuck in a different era worked out well for Southwest Airlines during the CrowdStrike snafu because its system is still running on Windows software from the 1990s. It's such antiquated technology that Southwest doesn't rely on CrowdStrike for security. That sword has another, less appealing edge, though: Behaving like a Luddite hobbled Southwest during the 2022 holiday travel season when thousands of its flights were canceled because its technology was unable to properly adjust crew schedules.

KUWAIT CITY, July 28: In an exclusive interview with Dr. Rajesh Rajan,

a senior cardiologist, insightful recommendations were shared regarding the low-carb, high-fat diet. Dr. Rajan highlighted the potential risks associated with following such dietary plans as per the published scientific data in the Journal of American College of Cardiology.

A recent study cohort from the UK Biobank, examined the impact of a low-carbohydrate, high-fat (LCHF) diet on cardiovascular health. The study found that individuals following an LCHF diet had higher levels of LDL cholesterol and apolipoprotein B, both of which are linked to an increased risk of major adverse cardiovascular events (MACE).

The study involved 1,525 participants, with 305 participants following an LCHF diet. The results showed that individuals on the LCHF diet had a 118% higher risk of MACE compared to those on a standard diet. Additionally, levels of LDL cholesterol, non-HDL cholesterol, and apolipoprotein B were higher in the LCHF group. It's important to note that a higher level of apolipoprotein B is associated with an increased risk of cardiovascular disease.

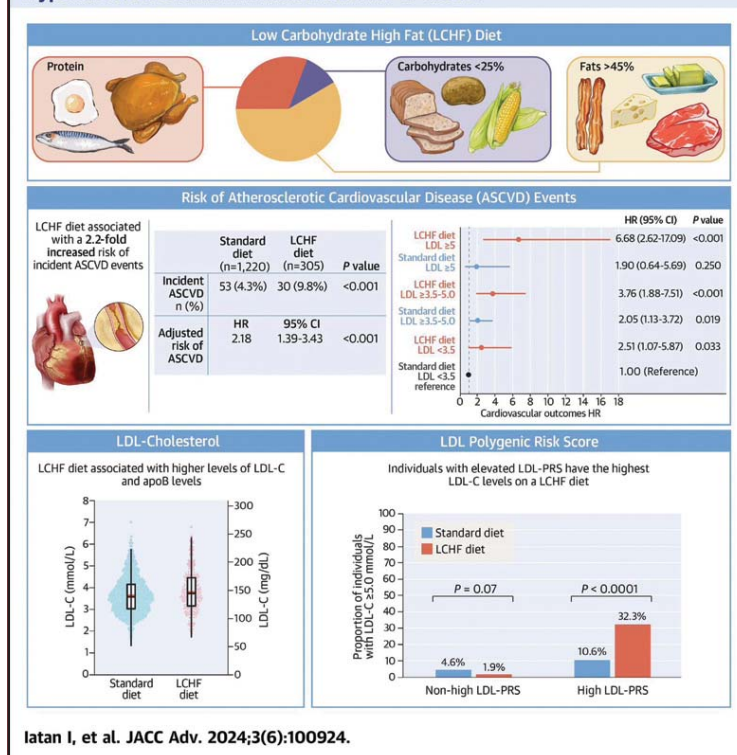
The study also revealed that the risk of MACE was higher in the LCHF group when individuals with diabetes were excluded. Subgroup analyses showed that the risk of MACE was 50% higher in the low-carbohydrate (LC) group and 105% higher in the very low carbohydrate (VLC) group.

The findings suggest that an LCHF diet may increase the risk of cardiovascular disease by raising levels of LDL cholesterol and apolipoprotein B. It's important to consider the nutrient composition of the diet, as a diet rich in saturated fats and dietary cholesterol can lead to a significant increase in LDL cholesterol and apolipoprotein B levels. Therefore, it is advisable to

Dr. Rajan on heart risks of LCHF diets

Low-carb, high-fat diet, heart health: What you need to know

CENTRAL ILLUSTRATION: Association of a LCHF Dietary Pattern With Hypercholesterolemia and Increased Risk of ASCVD



limit the intake of these nutrients and focus on sources of unsaturated fats, especially polyunsaturated fats, to optimize heart health.

It's important to note that this study has some limitations. The researchers relied on a single 24-hour dietary recall, which may not accurately represent the participants' usual diet. Additionally, the subgroup analysis had a small sample size, limiting the ability to detect significant differences in MACE risk between groups.

In conclusion, while an LCHF diet may have some benefits, it's crucial to consider its potential risks to cardiovascular health. Individuals considering a low-carbohydrate diet should be aware of the impact on LDL cholesterol and apolipoprotein B levels. It is advisable to consult with a healthcare professional or registered dietitian to ensure a balanced and heart-healthy

approach to nutrition.

Dr. Rajesh Rajan is a renowned Indian cardiologist at Al Amiri Hospital Kuwait and holds prestigious positions as the current President of the Association of MD Physicians and the Managing Editor of the esteemed Annals of Clinical Cardiology Journal by Wolters Kluwer. His contributions to the medical community are highly regarded, and he has been honored with Fellowships from esteemed institutions such as the Royal College of London, Edinburgh, Ireland, and Glasgow. Dr. Rajan's expertise and commitment to cardiovascular health are evident through his groundbreaking research and recognition as a Fellow of the American College of Cardiology, the European Society of Cardiology, American Society of Echocardiography, and the American Heart Association.

Drug test kits

AI transforms diabetes care

BEIJING, July 28, (Xinhua): A collaborative team of Chinese and Singaporean scientists has pioneered an artificial intelligence (AI) tool for primary diabetes care, which is the world's first multimodal large language model (LLM) tailored for managing this prevalent chronic disease.

It was estimated that over 500 million individuals globally were living with diabetes in 2021, predominantly in low and middle-income countries. These regions often face a shortage of trained primary care physicians and limited access to proper screening for diabetic retinopathy, a serious eye condition associated with diabetes.

Researchers from Tsinghua University, Shanghai Jiao Tong University and the National University of Singapore developed a GPT-4-like system that can provide personalized diabetes management guidance for primary care physicians.

The image-plus-language platform, known as DeepDR-LLM, is designed to harness the power of LLM and deep learning to provide a comprehensive solution for medical image diagnostics and the delivery of tailored treatment recommendations, according to the study published recently in the journal Nature Medicine.

Also:

SUVA: Fiji's Education Ministry is working with other ministries and departments to introduce drug testing kits in schools.

Education Minister **Aseri Radrodoro** said this will help mitigate drug issues in schools, where drugs have been a big topic, Fiji Broadcasting Corporation reported on Friday.

Over 3,000 drug-related cases involving students were recorded in Fiji in the past 12 months, according to the minister.

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Aspinall retains interim heavyweight title at UFC 304

Muhammad wins UFC welterweight crown

MANCHESTER, England, July 28, (AP) Tom Aspinall retained the UFC interim heavyweight championship with a punishing first-round knockout of Curtis Blaydes at UFC 304 on Saturday night, setting up the English fighter for a potential colossal matchup with division great Jon Jones.

Aspinall rocked Blaydes with a big right hand that sent the challenger to the canvas before he finished him off with a series of rights to the head that ended the fight at just 1 minute of the first round - and put a blockbuster heavyweight bout into focus.

The 31-year-old Aspinall challenged Jones to a unification bout. Jones, widely regarded as one of the best MMA fighters of all time, has been sidelined by torn pectoral tendon since his last fight in March 2023. His absence forced the need for an interim champion. There are still hiccups - among them, Jones has at least one more title defense on deck, and he must be cleared.

"Who wants to see Tom Aspinall vs. Jon Jones," Aspinall told a roaring crowd in Manchester in UFC's first trip to the city since 2016.

Aspinall (15-3) then looked straight into a camera and called out Jones.

"I just think I'm better than you," Aspinall said. "I know I can beat you in a fight."

The top heavyweight may be in doubt.

It's as clear as can be in the 170-pound division.

Belal Muhammad won the welterweight crown with a five-round unanimous decision victory against champion and Englishmen Leon Edwards.

Muhammad, an American fighter out of Illinois, relished beating up Edwards in his home country.

"It sounds like all the people booing have a lot of tears in their eyes," Muhammad said. "We've got a real champion in Chicago now."

His face bloodied, Muhammad (24-3) dropped to his knees moments after he remained unbeaten in his 11th straight fight and had the championship belt wrapped around his waist. He hasn't lost since 2019.

Edwards (22-4) defeated Kamaru Usman to win the belt in 2022 and had two successful title defenses.

All four fighters in the two title fights wore the new gold gloves introduced at UFC 302 designed to minimize eye pokes.

UFC ran the first live sporting event at Co-op Live, and the UK's only music-first arena was jammed with fight fans -- wildly enthusiastic despite the early start time. In order to accommodate the traditional 10 p.m. EDT pay-per-view start for an American audience, the main card's official start time was 3:33 a.m. in England.

The 304 card was headlined by two anticipated rematches.

Edwards and Muhammad fought to a no-contest in 2021, an unsatisfying result that sparked winning streaks for both fighters. Edwards reeled off four consecutive wins, while Muhammad won five straight.

Blaydes needed only 15 seconds to win in the first heavyweight contest when Aspinall suffered a knee injury.

"Now, I've got my revenge, thank God," Aspinall said.

Shields knocks out Lepage-Joanisse in 2nd round

DETROIT, July 28, (AP) Claressa Shields knocked out WBC heavyweight champion Vanessa Lepage-Joanisse early in the second round Saturday night, earning titles in a fourth and fifth division.

Shields, a two-time Olympic gold medalist, moved up two weight classes to fight at 175 pounds as a light heavyweight and also claimed Lepage-Joanisse's heavyweight belt. Her previous titles were at 154, 160 and 168 pounds.

She joined Roy Jones Jr. as the only two boxers in more than 100 years to win middleweight and heavyweight titles. That's another feat that makes her one of the greatest athletes of all time in any sport, according to Shields.

"What I've been able to do in my career, from the amateur to the pros, I'm definitely top five," Shield said. "If you want to put me up there next to Michael Jordan, Kobe (Bryant), Serena Williams, Muhammad Ali. I'm definitely

in that conversation."

Shields (15-0, 3 KOs) ended the first round with a series of combinations and started the second with more, barely breaking a sweat, and landed a flurry of shots that sent Lepage-Joanisse down for the third and final time 1:09 into the round.

BOXING

Lepage-Joanisse (22-3-1) was on defense from the start of her short night.

Shields boxed for the first time since defending her undisputed middleweight title with a lopsided unanimous decision over Maricela Comejo nearly 14 months ago.

In between bouts, she improved to 2-1 as a MMA fighter in February.

Shields gained 15 pounds, then lost five pounds, before weighing in at just under 175 pounds.

"I was able to eat a lot of pho," she

said. "Usually, I have to be careful with noodles in camp because of the carbs."

She sparred against men, including one who weighs 190 pounds, and made some changes to her strength and conditioning program.

"Looking at Vanessa in her fights, she pushed girls back because her legs are very strong," Shields said while promoting the fight during a visit to Detroit Lions training camp on Thursday, when Hulk Hogan also was there for a visit. "We made sure I have the power in my legs to push her back, and not get pushed back, and also really worked on the strength in my arms."

Shields won gold medals in the women's middleweight division at the 2012 and 2016 Olympics, making her the first boxer from the United States to win consecutive Olympic medals. She is the only American to win Olympic gold in boxing since 2004 and was named Sportsman of the Year by the Women's Sports Foundation last October.

Shields was a big enough name to draw boxing to Little Caesars Arena for the first time last year and did it again, headlining a card with up-and-coming fighters with seats sold out on the floor and a lower level that was mostly full.

Thomas Hearn, the revered fighter known as "The Hitman," watched from a front-row seat next to Jackie Kallen, who became the first female manager inducted into the International Boxing Hall of Fame.

Michel Rivera (26-1) of the Dominican Republic, ranked 30th at 140 pounds, won with a split decision against Hugo Alberto Roldan of Argentina.

Julian Smith improved to 9-2 with a split-decision victory over 34th-ranked super lightweight Shohjahon Ergashev (24-1) of Uzbekistan.

Smith, a deaf boxer from the Chicago area, hopes his performance shows hearing loss isn't an obstacle in the ring.

US stay alive with 4-1 victory over New Zealand in Oly men's soccer

Ukraine beat Morocco



Morocco's Achraf Hakimi, (left), and Ukraine's Oleksandr Martyniuk battle for the ball during the men's Group B soccer match between Morocco and Ukraine at Geoffroy-Guichard stadium during the 2024 Summer Olympics in Saint-Etienne, France. (AP)

MARSEILLE, France, July 28, (AP) Djordje Mihailovic converted a penalty as the United States pounced early in a 4-1 victory over New Zealand to stave off possible elimination at the Olympics.

A loss in Marseille could have ended the Americans' chance to advance to the knockout round for just the second time. The U.S. had lost to France in its Group A opener.

Mihailovic calmly hit the penalty in the eighth minute after Nathan Harriel was brought down in the box by Matthew Garbett.

Four minutes later, senior player Walker Zimmerman, a defender, made it 2-0 when he poked in a goal in a scramble in front of the net following a free kick.

SOCCER

"It's kind of do-or-die time," Zimmerman said. "We knew it would come down to the start that we would have, and to get an early goal just was huge. Kind of gave us confidence to really get into the tournament."

Gianluca Busio scored on a rebound at the half-hour mark and celebrated by dancing with teammate Kevin Paredes. Busio later left the game with what appeared to be a hamstring injury, but he said it was just a precaution.

Paxten Aaronson added a fourth goal for the United States in the 58th and New Zealand avoided the shutout with Jesse Randall's late goal.

"For me, the most important thing is that we get there," U.S. coach Marko

Sheikh Ahmad Al-Jaber praises Spanish Ambassador's efforts

KUWAIT CITY, July 28: Sheikh Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, President of the Arab Tennis Federation, commended Miguel Moro Aguilar, the Spanish Ambassador to Kuwait, for his distinguished efforts and significant role in fostering Kuwaiti-Spanish relations and strengthening the friendship between the two nations throughout his tenure.

In recognition of his contributions to sports and his tireless diplomatic efforts, Sheikh Ahmad Al-Jaber presented a commemorative shield to Ambassador Miguel during a visit to the embassy headquarters, marking the end of his term in Kuwait. Sheikh Ahmad expressed gratitude to Ambassador Miguel for his dedi-



Al Jaber presents a commemorative shield to the Spanish Ambassador.

cation to enhancing cooperation between the two friendly countries. He highlighted that Ambassador Miguel's tenure was marked by remarkable progress in Kuwaiti-Spanish relations across various sectors, including sports.

Ambassador Miguel, a tennis enthusiast, was a prominent supporter of Kuwaiti tennis, actively following its activities and helping overcome any difficulties faced by Kuwaiti players during their training trips to Spain. Sheikh Ahmad concluded by expressing his pride in the friendly relations and mutual trust shared with Ambassador Miguel, wishing him continued success in his future endeavors.

Mitrovic said. "In some games, everything goes on your side. Sometimes it just goes the other way. The game against France was a game of inches, and today we were good at the first two opportunities ... When you get in a game with 2-0 at the very beginning it's obvious it's a much easier game after that."

New Zealand's 2-1 opening victory over Guinea had put the team in a strong position to advance. The Oly Whites, as they are known, started the day second in the group to France.

The United States is set to play Guinea in its final group match Tues-

day in Saint-Etienne. New Zealand plays France in Marseille.

"I don't do the calculation. We never spoke about how we have to win, we have to tie," the coach said. "We want to maximize every day and we want to maximize every game. Today we spoke before the game that every second on the field matters, that every action matters. And what we have to do is go and execute all those seconds and actions on the field and let's see where that's going to take us."

New Zealand advanced to the quarterfinals of the Tokyo Games three years ago.

There was no reprieve for Morocco this time.

After the chaos and violence that marred the end of its 2-1 win over Argentina in the Olympic men's soccer tournament, Morocco conceded late again against Ukraine on Saturday - and this time the goal stood.

On Wednesday, Morocco fans rushed the field and threw bottles in protest when Cristian Medina appeared to score an equalizer in the 16th minute of stoppage time for Argentina - causing the game to be suspended for around two hours. That goal was later disallowed by VAR for offside.

Moroccan player top candidate

Kuwait Club eyes Abu Al-Fath to replace injured Sergio Vitor

By Hassan Musa

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, July 28: Moroccan professional Amin Abu Al-Fath has entered Kuwait Club's radar and is now a top candidate to replace Argentine professional Sergio Vitor, who suffered a cruciate ligament tear during the team's camp in Turkey last week.

Abu Al-Fath, born in 1997, previously played for Youssoufia Berrechid in Morocco and was recently close to signing with Al-Khaldiya in Bahrain, but negotiations fell through. He currently plays for the Moroccan club Wydad Athletic.

SOCCER

Kuwait Club's interest in Abu Al-Fath arises due to the prolonged absence of Vitor, who is expected to be sidelined for four to six months, with the potential for a longer recovery period if he does not respond well to treatment.

The Argentine player has left the camp and traveled to Barcelona to begin his treatment program.

Al-Arabi boost squad with Luka signing

Kuwait ready for Asian Championship

By Khaled El-Anzi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, July 28: Al-Arabi Club has signed Croatian Luka Stepanic (back right) to bolster the squad for the 2024-2025 season. Stepanic brings an impressive resume, having represented the Croatian national team and winning the bronze medal at the 2013 World Cup and the silver medal at the 2020 European Championship. He also participated in the 2015 World Cup and the 2016 Rio de Janeiro Olympics.

In addition to this key signing, the "Green Hand" management has renewed the contract of the team coach, Dr. Ahmed Foulad, along with his Tunisian assistant, Shawqi Al-Abed. The club also extended the contract of Tunisian professional Osama Jaziri for another season.

Meanwhile, Kuwait junior handball team has commenced its training camp in Slovenia to prepare for the upcoming Asian Championship in Shiraz, Iran, from September 3-14. The Blues will compete in Group Four alongside, Japan, China, and Jordan.

The junior team's training is led by Montenegrin coach Marko Matrinovic and his assistant Hussein Habib. The technical staff aims to arrange several friendly matches during the camp to finalize the team's lineup for the Asian Championship.

The delegation, headed by the Vice President of the Federation, Shabib Al-

Kuwait Club aims to swiftly finalize the signing of a new defender before the new season begins. The team faces two significant challenges: a play-off match to qualify for the Asian Champions League against Al-Ahli of Bahrain in Manama on August 14, and a crucial Zain Premier League opener against Al-Qadisiya on August 8.

Kuwait Club had contracted Vitor, who spent his last season with Al-Qadisiya.

Kuwait Club secured a 3-1 victory over Neom of Saudi Arabia in their final friendly match at the Turkish camp. Goals were scored by Fahad Al-Hajri, Youssef Nasser, and Mohammed Farih.

The Kuwait Club delegation is set to return from the Turkish camp this evening, with training set to resume tomorrow.

Kazma lost 2-3 to Smouha in a friendly match held at their camp in Egypt the day before yesterday. The Kazma delegation is expected to return from their external camp tomorrow, before resuming training for the Zain Premier League season.



Luka Stepanic

Hajri, includes the Director of National Teams, Faisal Saywan, and the Director of the National Team, Youssef Al-Shaheen.

Al-Shaheen emphasized the collective effort to raise Kuwait's name and flag in the Asian forum, commending the administrative and technical staff of the national team and the Handball Federation's members for their support.

The players are determined to bring joy to Kuwaiti fans and achieve positive results in the Asian Cup.

Nadal wins in Olympic singles

PARIS, July 28, (AP) Rafael Nadal made a last-minute decision to play singles at the Paris Olympics on Sunday and won his first-round match against Marton Fucsovics 6-1, 4-6, 6-4 to set up a blockbuster showdown against rival Novak Djokovic.

Nadal was greeted by a standing ovation from spectators, many of whom used cameras on their phones to capture the moment when he strode into Court Philippe Chatrier - the same stadium where he has captured his record 14 French Open titles.

There is a statue of Nadal outside the arena, and fans gathered around the steel structure Sunday morning, when it was still unclear whether he would be competing later.

Not only did the 38-year-old Spaniard play, but for stretches, particularly in the early going and in crunch time down the stretch, he played very much like a version of himself everyone is used to seeing: the sprinting, sliding, grunting star who owns 22 Grand Slam trophies in all and won Olympic gold medals for Spain in singles in 2008 and doubles in 2016.

Nigerian boxer tests positive for diuretic

Nigerian boxer Cynthia Ogunsemilore was removed from the Paris Olympics women's tournament after testing positive for a banned doping substance, the International Testing Agency said on Saturday.

The 22-year-old African Games lightweight champion tested positive for the diuretic furosemide in a sample taken on Thursday, the ITA said. Furosemide is a masking agent that can hide the presence of other drugs.

The ITA said Ogunsemilore is provision-

ally suspended and cannot take part in the Olympics.

She was due to compete Monday in the round of 16 as the fourth-seeded boxer in the women's 60-kilogram (132-pound) class. Ogunsemilore won the African Games title in her weight class last year and took bronze at the 2022 Commonwealth Games.

It is the second positive doping test announced at the Paris Olympics. Iraqi judoka Sajjad Sehen tested positive for two anabolic steroids, the ITA said Friday. (AP)



Kazakhstan's Gusman Kyrgyzbayev and Brazil's Willian Lima, (left), compete during their men - 66 kg semifinal round match in team judo competition at Champ-de-Mars Arena during the 2024 Summer Olympics in Paris, France. (AP)

Britain make a strong case for bronze

China surge past Japan in men's gymnastics qualifying

PARIS, July 28, (AP) - Longtime men's gymnastics rivals China and Japan appear headed for another tight finish at the Olympics.

The sport's two superpowers surged to the top of qualifying at Bercy Arena. China, seeking its fourth Olympic team title, posted a team total of 263.028. Japan, a seven-time Olympic champion, finished second at 260.594.

The five-man Chinese team, missing veteran Sun Wei after he was injured during training Thursday, used a series of spectacular routines on rings and parallel bars to stamp itself as the

favorite heading into Monday's final.

Japan, the reigning world champion, dealt with a couple of uncharacteristic mistakes by current world and Olympic gold medalist Daiki Hashimoto but still finished well clear of third-place Britain.

While the 22-year-old Hashimoto will get a chance to defend his title in the all-around, he won't on high bar - his signature event - after stumbling during his dismount. Hashimoto appeared to be dealing with right shoulder discomfort for much of the afternoon and was tended to by a Team Japan trainer shortly after finishing up on still rings though he said afterward he was not hurt.

Hashimoto is currently third in the all-around through two subdivisions at 85.064, behind teammate Shinnosuke Oka (86.865) and China's Zhang Boheng (88.597).

The scores will reset for the team finals, though the only real question is who will join China and Japan on the podium with defending champion Russia ineligible due to the war in Ukraine.

The Japanese settled for silver at home in Tokyo in 2021, losing to the Russians by just over a tenth of a point in a close final while China took bronze a little further back.

"It was frustrating," Japan's Kazuma Kaya said. "But we kept practicing every day for success today. Next time, in (the team final), I want the gold medal."

The gold isn't the only medal in question. Bronze is a toss-up, too, though Britain made a strong case by topping the first subdivision, a group that included the U.S. Ukraine overcame a nightmarish set on high bar to slip past the U.S. and into fourth at 253.893, dropping the Americans into fifth at 253.229.

Italy, Switzerland and Canada also advanced to the finals, with the Canadians claiming the eighth and final spot by less than a quarter of a point over Turkey.

The British insist they don't have any sort of rivalry with the U.S., even if the two programs have spent the better part of a decade jockeying for position at nearly every major international event.

Britain sent a very real if unspoken message: it is more than capable of grabbing a bronze to go with the one it somewhat unexpectedly won in London a dozen years ago.

Jake Jarman's 84.897 all-around total was just ahead of teammate Joe Fraser while Max Whitlock - in his fourth and final Games - fought off the jitters he knew would come to score a 15.133 on pommel horse and give Britain plenty of momentum.

"A lot of people have asked me that question in terms of 'How's it feel to be above the U.S.?' Whitlock said. "To be honest, you take it with a pinch of salt. I think it's really important to kind of just think about our job."

Russia's absence creates a medal opportunity for the U.S., Britain and Ukraine behind another duel between China and Japan for gold. Still, Whitlock downplayed the idea that if Russia was involved, a team medal for anyone outside the sport's Big Three would be out of the question.

"If they were in, you'd like to think that they'd be up near the top," Whitlock said. "So with them not, of course, there's a little bit of (a better opportunity to medal), but only a little bit."

The American men - hoping to repeat the bronze they won at the world championships last fall - weren't nearly as sharp in front of an audience that included U.S. First Lady Jill Biden, who clapped along with American star Frederick Richard's floor routine and posed for pictures with a somewhat subdued team afterward.



The French team pose with their gold medals after winning the men's gold medal Rugby Sevens match between France and Fiji at the 2024 Summer Olympics, in the Stade de France, in Saint-Denis, France. (AP)

Dupont stars, France end Fiji's dominance

Top seeds make 'winning' starts

South Africa win bronze

SAINT-DENIS, France, July 28, (AP) - In a seven-minute clinic that'll long define his legacy, Antoine Dupont scored two tries and created another to deliver a coveted gold medal for France and end two-time champion Fiji's Olympic dominance in rugby sevens.

One of the world's best rugby players, Dupont was saved for



South Africa's Tristan Leyds, right, is grabbed by his shirt by Australia's James Turner during the men's bronze medal Rugby Sevens match between South Africa and Australia at the 2024 Summer Olympics, in the Stade de France, in Saint-Denis, France. (AP)

He can return to the French XV as an Olympic champion, at least partly erasing the pain of his Rugby World Cup disappointment on home soil last year.

The French men didn't qualify for the previous Olympics in Tokyo, but can proudly boast France's first gold of the Paris Games. With Dupont on board, the French this season won their first title on the world sevens series circuit in almost two decades and added

victory in the series finale as well.

Fiji had never lost a rugby sevens game at the Olympics, taking a 17-game winning streak into the title decider, and was peaking for the biggest event as usual after an uncharacteristically inconsistent showing in the world series circuit.

A contest between Dupont and Jerry Tuwai, the two-time Olympic gold medalist and rugby sevens player of the decade, was pivotal.

The defending champions scored first and it was 7-7 when Dupont went onto the field just after halftime.

Almost immediately he took off down the left sideline on a long-range run deep into Fiji's, beating Tuwai's attempted tackle as he unloaded a pass to Aaron Grandidier Nkanang to give France a 14-7 lead.

His pair of late tries were just the icing for a raucous 69,000 capacity crowd. France's win captured the attention of the host nation, where rugby has long been a source of pride but also some hurt - the French have never won the Rugby World Cup in the 15-a-side format, the pinnacle event in the sport.

PARIS, July 28, (Xinhua) - China's Sun Yingsha and Wang Chuqin, the top seeds in the women's and men's singles table tennis at Paris 2024, began their singles campaign on Sunday at the South Paris Arena 4 with two victories.

Sun, a 23-year-old who won one gold medal and one silver medal at Tokyo 2020, left no chance for her opponent Giulia Takahashi of Brazil, wrapping the game up in four straight sets 11-3, 11-6, 11-6, 11-5 in about 30 minutes.

"Thanks to the mixed doubles match yesterday, I've been familiar with the games here. I feel I delivered a standard performance today," said Sun after the match.

On Saturday, Sun and Wang defeated an Egyptian pair in their mixed doubles debut of the Paris Games.

Sun expressed her gratitude for the support from Chinese fans in the stadium, "I'm grateful to those who had traveled from China to France to support us. We could feel it out there on

TABLE TENNIS

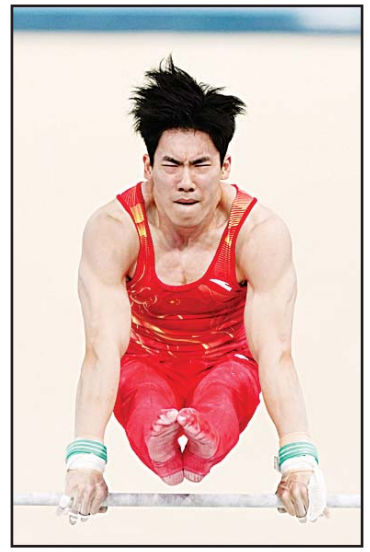
court, and it's really nice for us athletes to enjoy such nice atmosphere." Despite being beaten by the world No. 1, Takahashi felt content with her performance.

"I was so nervous before playing, especially facing Sun. But I'm so happy now, because I played well," she said. "I was afraid that I would be nervous and could not play what I know during the match. But I was relaxed, and it's amazing to be here." Sun is set to play Ni Xia Lian, a 61-year-old veteran representing Luxembourg, in the round of 32. "To be able to play Auntie Ni is something to be really happy about. It's not going to be an easy match though," said Sun.

"Auntie Ni is a role model for many of us younger Chinese table tennis players. She carries on a strong athletic spirit. I will well prepare for the next match and enjoy the game," she added.

Wang Chuqin, a 24-year-old Olympic debutant, lost the first set in his maiden Olympic singles match but quickly fought back to beat Wang Yang, representing Slovakia, 7-11, 11-3, 11-4, 11-9, 11-4, to reach the round of 32.

Wang Chuqin will then face Truls Moregard of Sweden, a 22-year-old who rallied to beat Cedric Nuytinck of Belgium in four straight sets on Saturday.



Boheng Zhang of China competes on the horizontal bar during a men's artistic gymnastics qualification round at the 2024 Summer Olympics in Paris, France. (AP)



India's Manu Bhaker poses for a photograph with her bronze medal after finishing third in the 10m air pistol women's final round at the 2024 Summer Olympics in Chateauroux, France. (AP)



Palestinian boxer Wasim Abusal, (blue), celebrates after defeating Sweden's Nebil Ibrahim in their men's 57 kg preliminary boxing match at the 2024 Summer Olympics in Paris, France. (AP)

Puerto Rico lose opener

South Sudan claim first ever Olympic victory

VILLENEUVE-D'ASCQ, France, July 28, (AP) - As South Sudan players jogged onto the court on Sunday amid cheers from fans waving the flag of their home nation, Nuni Omot slowed, stopped and pressed his hand to the Paris 2024 logo embossed across the surface.

He and his teammates were officially Olympians. Less than two hours

later, they were celebrating their country's first ever Olympic win.

Carlik Jones scored 19 points and South Sudan rallied in the second half to beat Puerto Rico 90-79 in the Paris Olympics opener for both teams on Sunday.

"We're not a secret anymore," South Sudan coach Royal Ivey said afterward.

It was the latest milestone for South Sudan, which is playing in its first Olympics after qualifying as Africa's top finisher in last year's World Cup. Marial Shayok added 15 points for South Sudan, which will next meet the

U.S. on Tuesday. Omot chipped in 12 points and six rebounds.

It was the culmination of a morning that began with officials playing the wrong national anthem for South Sudan before tipoff. But Omot said it only inspired them to play their best

basketball.

"It gave us fuel. It gave us fuel to the fire," Omot said. "Obviously, we felt disrespected when that happened. ... I feel like for us we've got to continue to show the world what we're capable of."



Wenyan Gabriel (right) of South Sudan shoots as George Condit IV of Puerto Rico defends in a men's basketball game at the 2024 Summer Olympics in Villeneuve-d'Ascq, France. (AP)

South Sudan nearly pulled off a stunning exhibition upset of the U.S. leading into the start of the Olympics. It showed that same scrappiness Sunday against a Puerto Rico team it lost to in last year's World Cup.

Puerto Rico led throughout the first half of the Group C matchup but was disrupted late in the second quarter after top scorer Jose Alvarado left late with an apparent sprained ankle. He returned early in the third quarter and finished with 26 points and five assists. Tremont Waters added 18 points.

South Sudan took control down the stretch, building as much as a 13-point lead with just over three minutes to play.

Alvarado was helped off the court by two trainers with 3.5 seconds left in the second quarter after he landed awkwardly following a basket by a teammate. Alvarado immediately grabbed his ankle.

He continued writhing in pain before being attended to and helped to the locker room. He was the most dominant player on the court for either side in the opening half, leading Puerto Rico with 19 points.



Jessica Fox of Australia competes in the women's kayak single finals during the canoe slalom at the 2024 Summer Olympics in Vaires-sur-Marne, France. (AP)

BASKETBALL



Lara Dashti swims during the women's 100-meter breaststroke at Paris Olympics.

Sports

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Al-Mudhaf targets podium finish in trap shooting

Al-Faqaan fails to qualify as Dashti sets a new personal record

Asian U-18 tournament kicks off

Kuwait begin Cup qualifiers campaign against Bahrain

KUWAIT CITY, July 28: The Asian U-18 Basketball Cup qualifiers for the Gulf region begin this evening, hosted by Kuwait until next Friday. Kuwait starts its journey at 7:30 pm against Bahrain, following the Saudi team's match against Oman at 5:00 pm.

Five Gulf teams are competing in the qualifiers: Saudi Arabia, Bah-

BASKETBALL

rain, Oman, Qatar, and Kuwait. The top two teams from these qualifiers will advance to the Asian finals in Amman, Jordan, from September 2 to 10.

All participating teams trained at the Federation Hall in the evening, while the morning was reserved for a photo session supervised by the Asian Federation. The Gulf teams have thoroughly prepared for the competition with external camps in various European countries. Kuwait and Qatar trained in Turkey, the Saudi team in Bosnia, and Bahrain held its camp in Serbia.

Kuwait and Bahrain game is expected to be highly competitive due to the similar technical levels of both teams. Kuwait aims to win its opening game to set the stage for qualification to the Asian Cup. However, the match will be challenging given the strong technical and physical ca-



Players hold their final session before Bahrain game.

pabilities of the Bahrain.

The Blues, coached by Bahraini Salman Ramadan, will rely on key players like Adel Al-Saeed, Talal Fahd, and brothers Hamza and Adam Asad. In the second match, the Saudi team appears to have an advantage over Oman due to a technical disparity between the teams.

Thamer Al-Shanfa, Secretary General of the Federation and Tournament Director, confirmed the readiness of the working committees for the tournament's launch. He ensured all preparations related to the tournament hall at Sheikh Saad Al-Abdullah Complex for Indoor Halls

were complete and all necessary arrangements for the participating delegations were in place to create the best possible environment for the tournament.

Al-Shanfa welcomed all delegations from the Gulf Cooperation Council countries and emphasized that all working committees are ready for today's launch. He anticipated the tournament would showcase high technical standards due to the balanced levels of the participating teams, expressing hope that our youth team would perform excellently and succeed in reaching the Asian finals.

PARIS, July 28, (KUNA): Kuwaiti rower Soaad Al-Faqaan did not advance to the decisive rounds of the 2024 Paris Olympics rowing competition, finishing fourth in the preliminary qualifiers for the women's solo race. Al-Faqaan recorded a time of 8:28.89 minutes in the play-off qualifiers. Paraguayan rower Alejandra Alonso Alderete led the qualifiers with a time of 7:57.14 minutes.

OLYMPICS

Al-Faqaan will now compete for a position in the final rankings, but she will not be in contention for medals. The rowing competitions took place at the Vayre-sur-Marne sea course.

Kuwait is participating in the Paris 2024 Olympics with nine athletes competing in six sports: archery, fencing, swimming, athletics, rowing, and sailing.

Kuwaiti swimming champion Lara Dashti set a new personal record on Sunday in the 100-meter breaststroke, finishing fifth in the preliminary heats at the Paris 2024 Olympics. Dashti recorded a time of 1:15.67 minutes in the event, held at the Olympic pool "La Defense Arena" in Paris, France. This marks her second participation in the Olympics, following her debut at the Tokyo 2020 Games.

Kuwait's National Team coach



Khaled Al-Mudhaf ready for action.



Soad Al-Faqaan

Ayman Al-Enezi confirmed that Dashti and swimmer Mohammad Al-Zubair's preparations were meticulously planned, involving training camps and intensive sessions. He stated that competing in the Olympics is a great honor and dream for athletes worldwide, praising both Dashti and Al-Zubair for their efforts and dedication.

Khaled Al-Mudhaf, is eager to earn a place among the medalists and raise the Kuwaiti flag on the podiums as he starts his journey today in the trap competition qualifiers at the Chateaux Shooting Center. The event begins at 10:30 am as part of the 33rd Olympic Games - Paris 2024, which will continue until August 11.

Shooting champions have always carried the hopes and aspirations of Kuwaiti fans in the Olympic Games, as the sport has brought all of Kuwait's achievements in Olympic history.

Khaled Al-Mudhaf, 46, is competing in the individual trap event. He secured the first qualification card for Kuwaiti shooting in Paris 2024 by earning third place and the bronze medal at the World Championship in Azerbaijan. This marks Al-Mudhaf's fourth Olympic appearance, following his participations in 2000, 2004, and 2016, where he achieved his best result by finishing fourth in the Sydney 2000 Olympics.

Titmus hands Ledecy another defeat, South Korea's Oh sets Olympic record

Ferrand-Prevot ends drought as India celebrates 1st medal

NANTERRE, France, July 28, (Agencies): It was billed as one of the most anticipated races of the Paris Olympics.

Ariane Titmus turned it into a blowout.

Titmus left Katie Ledecy in her wake on a raucous opening night at La Defense Arena, leading from start to finish to win the 400-meter freestyle.

Titmus, the Australian star known as "Terminator," handed Ledecy a second straight Olympic defeat in an event the American won at Rio de Janeiro in 2016.

With her fingernails painted Aussie yellow, Titmus strolled on deck with the confidence of a reigning champion, flashing a big smile and waving to the fans.

OLYMPICS

Titmus knew she was the swimmer to the beat, even with one of the greatest ever in the lane next to her.

Then, she went out and proved it.

Titmus actually faced her stiffest challenge from Canadian 17-year-old phenom Summer McIntosh but won comfortably in 3 minutes, 57.49 seconds.

McIntosh claimed the silver in 3:58.37. Ledecy wasn't even close, settling for bronze in 4:00.86.

Ledecy, 27, remains at six individual gold medals in her brilliant career, still the most of any female swimmer in Olympic history.

But, she couldn't find the speed to chase down Titmus.

The Australian women also claimed their fourth straight gold medal in the women's 4x100 freestyle relay to gain an early edge on their American rivals, but the U.S. capped the night on a high when Caeleb Dressel anchored the men's team to victory in the 4x100 free relay.

It was the eighth medal of Dressel's career - all of them gold. He won five of those at the Tokyo Games, and he could be setting up for another glittering haul in the City of Lights.

On deck after the medal ceremony, Dressel embraced his 5-month-old son, August, with tears streaming down his face. It was an especially satisfying moment for a generational swimmer who fell out of love with his sport after Tokyo, leading him to take an extended break.

Titmus, 23, now has three individual



LeBron James (center), of the United States and Filip Petrushev of Serbia, reach for a rebound at the 2024 Summer Olympics, Sunday, July 28, 2024, in Villeneuve-d'Ascq, France. (AP)

Olympic victories on her growing resume. She swept the 200 and 400 free in Tokyo and is favored to pull off the same double in Paris.

In the women's 4x100 free relay, the Australian quartet of Mollie O'Callaghan, Shayna Jack, Emma McKeon and Meg Harris set an Olympic record of 3:28.92.

The Americans - Kate Douglass, Gretchen Walsh, Torri Huske and Simone Manuel - rallied to take silver in 3:30.20. They edged China by a tenth of a second.

It was the first swimming medal for China, a country that has been embroiled in controversy after it was revealed that nearly two dozen swimmers tested positive for a banned substance ahead of the Tokyo Olympics but weren't sanctioned.

Two members of their bronze-winning team, Zhang Yufei and Yang Junxuan, were on that list.

In the men's relay, the two youngsters who beat Dressel at the U.S. trials in the 100 freestyle, Jack Alexy and Chris Guiliano, started things off for the Americans. Then it was Hunter

Armstrong turning the fastest leg of all to give Dressel a commanding lead to work with at the end.

He won going away in 3:09.28, pumping his fist and slapping hands with his teammates when he saw another No. 1 beside their names.

Australia, anchored by Kyle Chalmers, took the silver in 3:10.35, while the bronze went to Italy in 3:10.70.

Germany's Lukas Martens won the first swimming gold of these Games, knocking off three world champions in the men's 400 freestyle.

Martens set a blistering pace through the first 300 meters and held on at the end to touch in 3:41.78. The silver went to Elijah Winnington of Australia, the 2022 world champ, in 3:42.21. Reigning world champion Kim Woo-won of South Korea settled for bronze in 3:42.50.

South Korea's Oh Ye-jin set new Olympic record in the women's 10m air pistol event to win gold at the Paris Games.

Oh scored 243.2 points in the final, improving the Olympic record by 2.9 points. Her teammate Kim Ye-ji, who

notched up 241.3 points, also beat the previous record of 240.3 to grab silver. Manu Bhaker from India took the bronze with 221.7 points.

The two South Korean shooters were leading the rest of the finalists after the first stage and exchanged leads thereafter. An opening 9.4 in the penultimate series saw Kim drop to third, but she came back with a 10.5 to eliminate Bhaker by 0.1 point and book a one-one duel with compatriot Oh in the final series, where Oh excelled with a 10.0 and a 10.6 compared to two sub-10s by Kim.

India jumped to celebrations on Sunday when Manu Bhaker won a bronze medal in the women's 10m air pistol event at the Paris Olympics.

Hailing from India's northern state of Haryana, Bhaker became the country's first woman shooter to win an Olympic medal. South Korean shooter Oh Ye-jin set new Olympic record in the event to win gold and her teammate Kim Ye-ji grabbed silver.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi was among the first ones to congratulate Bhaker on the feat.

French mountain biker Pauline Ferrand-Prevot finally won the Olympic gold medal that she had been chasing for more than a decade on Sunday, while Haley Batten pounced when misfortune struck two of her biggest rivals to claim silver in the best finish ever for an American rider.

Ferrand-Prevot crossed the finish with her arms raised in triumph, a jubilant crowd of thousands breaking into a serenade for the new champion. She quickly dismounted and lifted her bike high above her head on the gravel finishing straight.

Ferrand-Prevot finished 2 minutes, 57 seconds ahead of Batten, who overtook Rio gold medalist Jenny Rissveds on the final lap. The Swedish rider was third in an emotional comeback after two years away spent working on her mental health.

Loana Lecomte, the other French favorite, was third midway through the race when she hit a stretch known as a rock garden. She went over the handlebars and landed hard amid the boulders in a brutal crash that ended her Olympic dream.

Russell leads Mercedes 1-2

SPA-FRANCORCHAMPS, Belgium, July 28, (AP): George Russell led a Mercedes one-two with Lewis Hamilton at the Belgian Grand Prix after pulling off an audacious one-stop strategy and keeping his teammate at bay to add to a thrilling Formula 1 season on Sunday.

Russell claimed his second win of the season and the third of the British driver's career after nursing his tires in expert fashion over the 44-lap race while all the rest of the top cars stopped twice.

"Amazing result, definitely didn't predict that this morning," Russell said. "But the race was awesome and the tires just felt great. I just kept saying 'I think we can do the one stop'."

MOTOR RACING

Hamilton finished ahead of McLaren's Oscar Piastri in third.

Points leader Max Verstappen crossed fifth behind Ferrari's Charles Leclerc after the three-time defending champion started from 11th following a 10-place grid penalty for using one too many engines in his Red Bull.

Lando Norris endured another poor start and finished sixth, allowing Verstappen to extend his championship lead to 78 points.

Russell was not expected to be in the mix for the win after he started from sixth. But he told his team that he felt confident that he could milk his tires for all they were worth and forego a second, time-consuming, pit stop.

That proved to be a brilliant decision.

Russell looked like he would be caught by Hamilton and other drivers on fresher tires. Instead, he defended his position over the nail-biting final laps with Piastri lurking in case the teammates clashed.

"We definitely didn't (expect this), so first of all, congratulations to George and to the team," Hamilton said. "I was trying to get closer, but George did a great job on going long on the tires. Every stint I had tires left but the team brought me in, unfortunately."

After Russell shouted for joy after the checkered flag, his team radio praised him as "the tire whisperer."

The 26-year-old driver shared any credit with his team for making that strategy call.

"It was a team effort, the strategists did a wonderful job. The car felt great and the pace was there. It's so well deserved for everybody," he said.

"Well done to Lewis, he did a great job controlling the race and if circumstances were different he could have won the race."