



## AMIR MOURNS VICTIMS OF TRAGIC BLAZE, URGES ACCOUNTABILITY

# 49 perish in Mangaf inferno



Photo by Rezk Tawfiq

Following the tragic early morning blaze on Wednesday, Kuwait Fire Force team conducted an inspection of the ground floor of the severely damaged building in Mangaf. The fire claimed the lives of 49 individuals.

■ Crackdown on building violations begins

■ Severe penalties await landlords

■ Kuwait Municipality suspends officials

■ Indian ambassador visits injured

By Inaas Awadh and Fares Al-Abdan  
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff and Agencies

**KUWAIT CITY, June 12:** His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah sent on Wednesday a cable of condolences to the families of the victims of the conflagration in an apartment building fire in Mangaf, which resulted in the death and injury of dozens.

His Highness expressed his sincere sorrow and deep sympathy to the families of the victims, and a fast recovery to the injured. His Highness directed officials to follow up to the causes of the fire outbreak and hold whomever responsible and accountable.

His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah also sent on Wednesday a cable of condolences to the families of the victims of the conflagration in an apartment building fire in Mangaf, which resulted in the death and injury of dozens.

His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah sent on Wednesday a cable of condolences to the families of the victims of the conflagration in an apartment building fire in Mangaf, which resulted in the death and injury of dozens. The death toll from a devastating fire that engulfed in a multi-story building in Al-Mangaf's southern district early on Wednesday has risen to 49, the Ministry of Interior announced.

Major General Nasser Abu-Slaib, the MoI Security Information Director, affirmed in a press release that the landlords of the burned building would be stiffly penalized. Personnel of the MoI's directorate general of criminal evidence are investigating the causes of the fire and identifying some victims.

His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah has ordered the relevant officials to instantly follow up on the tragic occurrence, seek to identify its causes and bring those responsible to account. Kuwaiti First Deputy Prime Minister, Defense Minister and Interior Minister Sheikh Fahad Yousef Saud Al-Sabah warned Wednesday that any building violation would be addressed without prior warning as of Thursday.

The minister gave the warning in the aftermath of a huge conflagration that killed at least 49 people and injured more than 50 others in an apartment building fire in Mangaf area in Kuwait's southern Ahmadi Governorate.

"As of tomorrow (Thursday), the Municipality and its teams will respond to all violations at all apartment buildings without prior warning," the minister told reporters while inspecting the fire site.

The owner of the blaze building will be kept in custody until investigations into the causes of the fire are over, the minister pointed out.

Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousef visited Al-Adan Hospital and Mubarak Hospital to inquire

about the health of those injured in the morning fire at a building in the Mangaf area.

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### 5 get nod for railway study

By Mohammed Ghanem  
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

**KUWAIT CITY, June 12:** The Public Authority for Roads and Land Transport has approved five out of 10 companies for the detailed study works and preparation of documents for the "first phase" of the railway project.

Following the completion of necessary procedures and approval of technical bids by the technical committee, the authority has requested the Central Agency for Public Tenders to open the financial envelopes for these companies.

Meanwhile, the decision regarding the excluded companies has been postponed by the agency at the Authority's request.

The excluded companies have sought the release of their initial deposits paid as insurance for their exclusion from the tender, based on the initial insurance control report, a matter that the Authority has communicated to the Tenders Agency as per the companies' request.

The project involves the study and engineering design of the Gulf Track railway and its facilities, spanning 111 km.

It encompasses the first phase of  
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Sheikh Fahad Yousef Saud Al-Sabah, Kuwait's First Deputy Prime Minister, Defense Minister, and Interior Minister, visits the site of the tragic fire where 49 lives were lost.



First Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Defense, and Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad Yousef Saud Al-Sabah visits Al-Adan Hospital and Mubarak Hospital to inquire about the health of those injured in the morning fire at a building in the Mangaf area.

Photos by Rezk Tawfiq

### NewsWatch

**KUWAIT CITY:** His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah sent on Wednesday a cable of condolences to the President of Malawi Lazarus Chakwera, over the death of Vice President Saulos Chilima and several other senior officials in an airplane crash.

In his cable, His Highness the Amir prayed to Allah Almighty to bestow the deceased with His mercy and grant their families patience and solace. (KUNA)

**KUWAIT CITY:** The Supreme Committee for Nationality Investigation has issued two new decisions, revoking the Kuwaiti citizenship of three persons -- two women and one man -- who obtained it through establishment and naturalization, reports Al-Qabas daily.

These decisions were made after a thorough review of Article 11 of Amiri Decree No. 15 of 1959 concerning the Kuwaiti Nationality Law, along with the subsequent amendments to the law.

### 'Halt Israeli aggression'

## Kuwait reiterates support for Palestinians at summit

**AMMAN, June 12, (KUNA):** Representative of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah -- Minister of Foreign Affairs Abdullah Al-Yahya said in Kuwait's speech at the Jordan-hosted international conference for the urgent humanitarian response for Gaza.

"Kuwait will not hesitate to extend a helping hand to the brotherly Palestinian people and will continue to support them as they face injustice and aggression," Minister Al-Yahya said in his speech.

The conference was organized in collaboration with Egypt and the United Nations and held at the Dead Sea resort today.

Kuwait Amir's Representative highlighted that Kuwait's governmental and popular campaigns to collect and provide aid to Palestinian people.

He pointed out that Kuwait, since the start of the Israeli offensive on Gaza, has launched an air bridge through

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## Kuwait airport traffic in May 1.15m

**KUWAIT CITY, June 12, (KUNA):** The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) said on Wednesday, the number of passengers that travelled to and from Kuwait International Airport last May reached 1,151,421.

Acting Deputy Director General of Aviation Safety and Air

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KRCS in collaboration with Lebanese Red Cross distributes packages to refugee families for Eid Al-Adha.

## KRCS gives Eid aid to refugees

**BEIRUT, June 12, (KUNA):** Kuwait Red Crescent Society (KRCS) distributed on Wednesday Eid Al-Adha packages to Syrian refugees residing in Lebanon.

Lebanese Red Cross relief coordinator Youssef Boutros told KUNA that the KRCS and the Lebanese Red Cross began distributing the packages -- containing clothes and other materials -- to some 2,000 refugee families.

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### Day by Day

I ADMIRE the wisdom behind the saying, 'Don't carry the world on your head; God created it to be under your feet'.

Consider the story of Prophet Moses, Peace be Upon Him, who, despite being put in a basket and left in the river as a helpless infant, did not perish.

Contrastingly, Pharaoh, surrounded by his powerful army, drowned despite his authority. It's a reminder that with God's support, no harm can befall you. Without His presence, even the mightiest power is rendered powerless.

True strength lies in self-confidence and trust in God. He is the ultimate source of solace and relief.

... Yet tomorrow is another day.

Zahed Matar

## Prayer Timings

Fajr ..... 03:13 Asr ..... 15:22  
 Sunrise .. 04:48 Maghrib .. 18:48  
 Zohr ..... 11:48 Isha ..... 20:20

# Local

## Expected weather for next 24 hrs:

**By Day:** Very hot with light variable wind to light to moderate northwesterly wind, with speeds of 10-38 km/h.

**By Night:** Hot to rather hot

## Weather

with light to moderate northwesterly wind, with speeds of 12-35 km/h.

## Station

Kuwait City

## Max Exp

47

## Min Rec

34

Kuwait Airport

48 30

Abdaly

48 29

Jahra

48 35

Salmiyah

40 33

Nuwaib

47 30

Wafra

48 28

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

## HH Crown Prince and Prime Minister send greetings

# HH Amir congratulates Russia, Philippines on national days

KUWAIT CITY, June 12, (KUNA): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah on Wednesday sent a cable of congratulations to Russian President Vladimir Putin on the occasion of his country's National Day.

In the cable, His Highness the Amir wished President Putin good health and wellness, and for Russia and its friendly people further progress and prosperity.

Meanwhile, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah sent a cable to President Putin, congratulating him on his country's National Day and wishing him good health and wellness.

His Highness Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah also sent a cable to President Putin, congratulating

him on his country's National Day.

In the meantime, His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad sent on Wednesday a cable to President of the Philippines Ferdinand Romualdez Marcos Jr, congratulating him on his country's National Day.

In the cable, His Highness the Amir wished the president everlasting health and wellness, and further progress and prosperity to his country and friendly people.

His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad also sent a cable to President Romualdez Marcos Jr, congratulating him on his country's National Day and wishing him good health and wellness.

Also, His Highness Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah sent a cable to President Romualdez Marcos Jr, congratulating him on his country's National Day.

## HH Amir receives Crown Prince and GCC secretary general

KUWAIT CITY, June 12, (KUNA): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received His Highness the

Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah at Bayan Palace on Wednesday. Also, His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal

Al-Ahmad received Secretary General of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) Jassem Al-Budaiwi at Bayan Palace on Wednesday.

# Cabinet calls for non-oil income diversification and job creation

Kuwait's efforts to withdraw farmland from illegal use

KUWAIT CITY, June 12, (KUNA): The Kuwaiti Cabinet Tuesday asked the Kuwait Investment Authority (KIA) and other concerned state bodies to scale up investment efforts and tap investment opportunities to diversify non-oil income sources and create new jobs for Kuwaiti youth.

This came during the Cabinet's customary weekly meeting held at Bayan Palace under the chairmanship of His Highness Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah.

The Cabinet also tasked Minister of Electricity, Water and Renewable Energy and Minister of State for Housing Affairs Mahmoud Bushehri, who is in charge of the Public Authority for Agricultural Affairs and Fish Resources (PAAAFR), to move legally to withdraw farmland from those involved in using their plots in illegal activities and purposes.

However, it voiced support for farm owners who use their farmland for purposes in line with the law and the PAAAFR's regulations, expressing sincere thanks and appreciation to First Deputy Prime Minister, Defense and Interior Minister Sheikh Fahad Yousef Al-Sabah, and senior security officials and personnel for their efforts in busting lawbreakers and anyone involved in drug trafficking.

Meanwhile, the Cabinet approved the minutes of a high-level nationality verification committee, which included the withdrawal of nationality from several people who had got it illegally, based on Law 15/1959 for Kuwaiti Nationality.

The Health Ministry was also entrusted with coordinating with other state agencies to put a national health survey project in place as soon as possible with a view to revamping the country's public health.

The Cabinet, in the meantime, congratulated His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, along with the Kuwaiti people and residents on the occasion of Eid Al-Adha.

On this occasion, the Cabinet decided to suspend work at all ministries, state bodies, and public institutions between Sunday (June 16) and Tuesday (June 18) as an official holiday nationwide marking Eid Al-Adha.

Finally, the ministers mourned the death of former minister of trade and industry Abdulwahab Al-Nafisi, recalling his great efforts and sincere contributions to serving the country.

## KUNA participates in Hajj Media Forum in Makkah

JEDDAH, June 12, (KUNA): Kuwait News Agency (KUNA) participated on Wednesday in the first Hajj Media Forum organized by the Saudi Ministry of Information in the Holy City of Makkah.

The forum aims to provide an integrated media environment that allows journalists and media professionals to access information and details related to the Hajj season and get an inside look at all the preparations and efforts made by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to ensure safe Hajj rituals.

The forum has 11 comprehensive media zones, an interactive media exhibition that highlights technical and technological services to serve the pilgrims, a headquarters for press conferences, a media centre with integrated services, various studios, and future projects in the holy sites.



KUNA photo

HH the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah chairs the weekly Cabinet meeting Tuesday.



KUNA photo

HH the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled receives Secretary General of GCC Al-Budaiwi.

## HH Crown Prince welcomes GCC chief

His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah received Secretary General of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) Jassem Al-Budaiwi at Bayan Palace on Wednesday.

During the reception, the GCC chief congratulated His Highness Sheikh Sabah Khaled on the recent decree issued by His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah appointing him as Crown Prince. (KUNA)



KUNA photo

Deputy PM and Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs Al-Moushejri with the Ambassador of Hungary Szabo.

## Kuwait, Hungary seek to boost ties

Kuwait's Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs Shareeda Al-Moushejri met with Hungarian Ambassador to Kuwait Andras Szabo on Monday, discussing ways to strengthen Kuwait-Hungary bonds.

Minister Al-Moushejri received Ambassador Szabo at Seif Palace, where they reviewed different issues regarding potential cooperation between the two nations, strengthening bilateral relations, according to a statement of the minister's office. (KUNA)

## 19 flights transports 4K pilgrims

# Airport witnesses highest number of departures to Makkah: DGCA

By Mohammad Al-Musleh

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, June 12: Since Kuwait International Airport has turned into a beehive to facilitate the departure of pilgrims to the Holy House of Allah in Makkah, the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) and other agencies operating at the airport raised the highest level of readiness to complete passenger procedures smoothly and on time; considering this coincides with the approaching Eid Al-Adha holiday.

On Wednesday, the airport witnessed the highest number of departures to the Holy Land; as 19 flights left for Jeddah transporting approximately 4,000 pilgrims through three terminals: T1, T4 and T5.

A source told the daily that the end of the air bridge for the departure of pilgrims will be on Friday with only two flights.

The source confirmed that the airport is fully prepared for the travel season; particularly during the Eid holiday. He said a field plan has been prepared based on the operational intensity of airline companies and the increasing number of passengers.

He stated that work teams are available round the clock to complete procedures for the departure and arrival pas-

sengers, as well as to address obstacles they may face in order to facilitate their movement and quickly complete their procedures.

On the other hand, travel agencies in the country disclosed that many travelers canceled their reservations before Eid Al-Adha due to the short duration of the holiday; especially since many made reservations early because they expected that the holiday would extend to a full week.

General Manager of Salhiya World Tourism and Travel Company Aymaan Zandah said the demand for travel during the Eid holiday is above average. He affirmed that ticket prices did not increase by more than 20 percent compared to normal days due to several factors like the short Eid holiday and the preference of many to postpone the travel date until the summer vacation period, which extends for three continuous months.

Zandah explained many travelers canceled their reservations after the Council of Ministers announced the dates of Eid Al-Adha holiday.

He stressed that ticket prices are affordable for everyone, as the price of a round-trip ticket to London during the Eid holiday ranges from KD240 to KD400; while the price of a ticket to Istanbul is around KD210 and KD200 to Cairo and Lebanon.

KUWAIT CITY, June 12, (KUNA): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah's appointment as Crown Prince was widely welcomed by citizens who genuinely believe in his leadership, Kuwaiti editors-in-chief said, trusting his ability to push forward national development and renaissance.

Speaking to KUNA separately, they said His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah's decree appointing His Highness Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled as Crown Prince was a result of decades of experience and achievements.

Experience and capabilities of His Highness the Crown Prince would certainly contribute to advancement of the State of Kuwait, they said.

"We have known His Highness Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled since early 1980s after working for years at the Foreign Ministry and after having a noticeable presence at Kuwait Mission to the UN," Waleed Al-Nesf, Chief Editor of Al-Qabas newspaper.

He noted that when serving as Kuwaiti ambassador in Riyadh, His Highness the Crown Prince had active contributions at the bilateral level with Saudi Arabia, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) and the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC).

He said His Highness the Crown Prince was named head of the National Security Bureau at end of 1990s, then appointed as Minister of Social Affairs, Minister of Information and Minister of Foreign Affairs in 2011.

Al-Nesf said it was quite natural to see His Highness the Crown Prince being assigned as Prime Minister in 2019, forming four governments.

His Highness Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled's government succeeded in confronting the coronavirus, bringing in vaccines against Covid-19 and addressing any shortages in medical supplies, medicine or food.

### Selection

On his part, the chief editor of Al-Jarida daily newspaper, Khaled Al-Mutairi stated that the selection of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad for His Highness Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled as Crown Prince represented the right choice for the new era in Kuwait, the era which has begun with His Highness the Amir.

He added that His Highness the Amir saw that His Highness the Crown Prince - with his long career in politics and distinguished journey in diplomacy, along with his experience in dealing with various circumstances - was the right person to shoulder the heavy responsibility hand in hand with His Highness the Amir in leading Kuwait amidst the current situation.

He noted that although His Highness the Amir considered all those precise criteria, his primary motivation was not focusing on the past, but the future, believing that His Highness the Crown Prince was fit to complete the vision of His Highness the Amir, which is expected to be full of

development and prosperity after His Highness the Amir removed all obstacles to push for more development and prosperity.

Regarding the Crown Prince's journey, Al-Mutairi mentioned his honorable record in national struggle, after passing through many milestones where he left his mark on achievements, starting from joining the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 1978 then as a member of Kuwait's permanent delegation to the United Nations, then an ambassador and then the head of the National Security Bureau.

He then became the Minister of Social Affairs, then the Minister of Information, until he held the foreign affairs portfolio in 2011, and then became Prime Minister from November 2019 to July 2022, after the late Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah entrusted him with leading the government, later, the late Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah renewed his trust in him as Prime Minister as well.

Al-Mutairi pointed out that the history of His Highness the Crown Prince was promising to achieve the vision of His Highness the Amir, especially after his success in steering the executive authority during the pandemic as he led the country out of that stage of fear and uncertainty with minimal losses as Prime Minister.

### Commendations

He added that Kuwait received numerous commendations for how it handled these unforeseen emergencies at a time when many countries were still suffering the repercussions of that crisis and relevant severe impacts.

Al-Mutairi said that choosing His Highness Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled as Crown Prince completes the vision His Highness the Amir has for Kuwait, reflecting keenness on achieving the best for Kuwait.

He added that Kuwaiti citizens should look forward to more development and prosperity in Kuwait in various and numerous fields including investments, education, health and more.

On his part, editor-in-chief of Alanba newspaper, Yousef Al-Marzooq affirmed that the confidence of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad in His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled is a deep-rooted trust that has been established through years of diligent work, undertaking tasks and responsibilities.

His Highness is a wise politician who has spent more than 45 years in political and diplomatic fields, with a remarkable journey and significant efforts since assuming his first position in Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 1978 until his nomination as Crown Prince, Al-Marzooq added.

He highlighted that the spontaneous outpouring of public joy following the announcement of His Highness as Crown Prince reflects the profound admiration for his persona among citizens that sincerely served and protect Kuwait's present and future.

## Kuwait marks UN anniversary on missing persons

VIENNA, June 12, (KUNA): Kuwait's Permanent Representative to the United Nations, Ambassador Nasser Al-Hein, held a celebration ceremony on Tuesday, attended by UN Security Council in Geneva, and representatives of the group of countries of the International Coalition for the Missing People.

Al-Hein told KUNA after the ceremony that this celebration comes on the occasion of the fifth anniversary, which falls on June 11th, after the unanimous adoption of a Kuwaiti draft resolution by the UN Security Council under No. 2474 regarding missing people and prisoners, which Kuwait was honored to present.

During its membership in the Security Council 2018-19 years.

Al-Hein added that the desired goal behind Resolution 2474, is to urge all countries to implement this resolution by taking more effective measures to prevent cases of disappearance of people in response to the urgent and right calls of their families who seek peace of mind by clarifying their fate.

Al-Hein said that the State of Kuwait seeks to strengthen cooperation regarding missing people, including Kuwaiti prisoners with the Iraqi side and through the tripartite committee and members of the coalition, so that there will be greater cooperation to reveal their fate.

At the conclusion of his statement, Al-Hein explained that the Kuwaiti resolution that was unanimously adopted but not limited to Iraq, but rather affects an international issue present in all conflicts from World War I until now.

There are missing people who have no trace, and the Resolution 2474 stresses the necessity of finding appropriate mechanisms to reveal the fate of missing people.

On June 11, 2019, the UN unani-

mously adopted resolution 2474, the Council called upon parties to armed conflict to take all appropriate measures, to actively search for persons reported missing, to enable the return of their remains and to account for persons reported missing "without adverse distinction".

Through the text, the Council also called upon parties to armed conflict to take appropriate measures to prevent persons from going missing, to pay the utmost attention to cases of children reported missing, and to register and notify the personal details of persons deprived of their liberty, including prisoners of war.

It further called upon States, in cases of persons missing resulting from armed conflict, to take measures, as appropriate, to ensure thorough, prompt, impartial and effective investigations and the prosecution of offences linked to missing persons due to armed conflict.

## 'Ministry fails to praise students not linked to paper leak scandal'

"NO one disagrees that the issue of leaking high school exams, which was witnessed in the Islamic Education subject exam for Grade 12 students, is a real crisis, and can be considered a national security issue, because of its impact on the future of generations and, by extension, the future of the nation," columnist **Asrar Johar Hayat** wrote for **Al-Qabas** daily.

"While the decision to cancel the test may seem logical under the circumstances, it reflects a failure on the part of the Ministry of Education to address deeper issues. "Beyond managing curricula and assessments, the ministry bears a fundamental educational responsibility, as its name suggests. This encompasses not just academic instruction, but also cultivating values and principles in the nation's youth. Unfortunately, recent events have highlighted a significant oversight in fulfilling this duty.

"The incident during last week's Islamic education test exemplifies this failure. Students, who arrived punctually and prepared, were unfairly penalized for circumstances beyond their control. "Despite enduring a two-hour delay and exposure to the elements, they received neither an apology nor acknowledgment from the ministry. Instead, they were left to bear the consequences of administrative mistakes.

"Moreover, the ministry's response to the leaked tests lacked nuance. While it rightfully disciplined those responsible, it neglected to commend the integrity of students who honored their commitment to academic honesty. This oversight underscores a broader neglect of instilling values like punctuality and trustworthiness.

"Furthermore, the ministry failed to provide a conducive testing environment for students. High school exams already induce considerable stress, being pivotal to students' academic and professional futures.

"Yet, the chaotic handling of the situation only exacerbated this pressure, depriving students of the calm environment they deserve.

"In essence, the ministry's handling of these events reflects a systemic failure to prioritize the holistic education and well-being of students. "As guardians of the nation's future leaders, it is imperative that the ministry rectifies these shortcomings and renews its commitment to fostering a supportive and values-driven educational environment."

### Also:

"The concept of artificial intelligence (AI) has become prevalent in both the scientific discussions and media dialogues, permeating various technical fields. Although AI is not new to academia and industry, its integration into everyday devices and user-friendly applications have made it accessible to a broad audience," columnist **Nada Sulaiman Al-Mutawa** wrote for **Al-Jarida** daily.

"Navigating the integration of AI in education raises important questions about its proper implementation and potential misuse.

"Teachers have the opportunity to harness technological advancements and AI programs to enrich course plans and foster a more engaging learning environment.

"Similarly, school administrations can benefit from AI by streamlining administrative tasks, facilitating quicker decision-making, and steering towards optimal outcomes, thus reducing bureaucratic hurdles.

"For students, AI holds promise in offering personalized learning experiences and real-time feedback, much like the assistance provided by ChatGPT.

"This ensures that students receive timely support and do not encounter gaps in their research or understanding.

"However, the challenge lies in guiding educators on how to effectively utilize AI tools within the curriculum.

"It's crucial to empower teachers with the knowledge and skills to leverage these resources to enhance student engagement and learning outcomes.

"By doing so, we can cultivate a more interactive and enriched educational experience that caters to the diverse needs of students."

"Protectors of the borders... The borders in any country around the world are considered the key to safety. If the borders are in safe hands, the country and its people are safe. However, if the security grip on one of the borders is relaxed, the country could be in peril," columnist **Talal**

**Al-Saeed** wrote for **Al-Seyassah** daily.

"The airport is one of our most important openings. Unfortunately, every day we hear about a serious security breach like the smuggling of wanted persons through a passport officer who does not fear Allah or his country, or through some customs officials, as it happened recently when seven suitcases filled with narcotic substances were allowed into the country to destroy an entire generation, just because they accepted bribes from citizens who brought the contraband from a Gulf country!

"The other breach is at Nuwaiseeb border, which recorded the highest number of security breach cases, although it is considered a model border. The most recent breach was that of a family allowed to leave without registering. There is a big and exciting story behind it.

"We return to the dilapidated Salmi border where everything is unsafe, starting with the road of death leading to the border and then the border itself, which lacks the most important security facilities and procedures. It is very easy to penetrate the border and move from the entrance to the exit, without trouble for those who want to tamper with procedures.

"As for the employees, the nature of the border has affected their psyches, up to the point that they work under duress due to lack of amenities. As for smuggling operations, not a week passes by that we do not hear about them through this border.

"Another issue is the Abdally border, which is considered the first line of defense, but it is not permanent as everything in it is temporary. It can no longer confront whatever comes from brotherly Iraq!

"As for ports, talk about them and there is no problem. We will not go into details.

"The Almighty Creator says: 'The best recruit is strong and trustworthy, so where is this strong and trustworthy person in the midst of everything happening in our borders?'

"Is it not time to tighten control over our children, instead of repeating security breaches? We are no longer surprised whenever we hear disturbing news about security breaches..."

"Kuwait sacrifices to approach the Almighty and to feed the poor... The Islamic Law takes social solidarity into account and expanded its forms to include all aspects of life and its basic components to protect the dignity of man and the sanctity of his being. Every year, when the 10 days of Dhu Al-Hijjah are approaching, Kuwaiti charitable institutions intensify their efforts to search for those in need among the Muslims to surround them with a strong fence in order to protect them. They distribute sacrificial meat gifts, supervise the slaughtering and distribution at home and abroad on behalf of their owners," columnist **Abdullah Al-Shehab** wrote for **Al-Anba** daily.

"These initiatives combined human values, creating one of the highest manifestations of righteousness that do not neglect the needs of the deprived. In many regions around the world where humanity lies at the feet of hunger, it is difficult for a person to obtain his share of food due to the low standard of living. This makes eating meat a form of luxury. Kuwaiti charitable efforts in this field were the first to launch the '10,000 Sacrifice' campaign to provide sacrificial meat to the needy in a number of countries, most notably the Gaza Strip, and refugees in Yemen, Chad, Sudan and Somalia. This is in addition to sending delegations to these countries to ensure that the sacrifices comply with the Islamic Sharia and health regulations, and that they reach the rightful beneficiaries in line with the donor's wishes and in agreement with the implementing authorities.

"The '10,000 Sacrifice' campaign was launched to put a smile on hungry lips, and to send messages wrapped in reassurance -- that extending a helping hand to the needy is the duty of the nation's ablest person. Charitable committees across Kuwait usually race against time in receiving donations from benefactors, in addition to the marketing initiatives that seek for charity like the Charity Gate every Friday, which allows donating the value of the sacrifices through direct donation links.

"Charitable efforts do not ignore the poor, low-income families, needy families and orphans in Kuwait, as they have their share of the donations. The ministries of Foreign Affairs and Social Affairs played a major role in the success of this initiative, thanks to the facilities they provide, such that the people embraced the idea of helping the needy."

— **Compiled by PFX Fernandes and Mahmoud Ateyieh**

## Funds to be transferred to ministry after liquidation

# MoSA prepares to take legal action against 17 ineffective associations

KUWAIT CITY, June 12: The Ministry of Social Affairs, through its management of civil society associations, has been conducting a thorough screening process of various associations to identify those that are ineffective and non-compliant with regulations and requirements, reports **Al-Jarida** daily.

This process has led to the identification of 17 new associations that have been deemed ineffective and not adhering to the established guidelines.

The administration is now preparing to submit a memorandum with the names of these associations to the minister of Social Affairs in order to take necessary legal measures against them, including dissolution and liquidation of their funds.

The funds from these associations will be transferred to the ministry after liquidation, and their future allocation will be determined accordingly.

The decision to dissolve these associations was made due to clear violations of Article No. 27 of Law 24/1962 regarding clubs and public benefit associations. Some of these associations have not conducted any activities on the ground or provided services to the community for years.

Additionally, they have failed to submit financial reports to the Ministry or utilize the automated system for correspondence, indicating their ineffectiveness.

Regarding the funds of these dissolved associations, they will be transferred to the Ministry in accord-

ance with the law. The Ministry is committed to applying the law rigorously to these associations, which are considered dormant and do not benefit citizens.

The Ministry's dedicated team will continue to review the work of associations to identify any further ineffective ones in the future.

The law grants the Minister of Social Affairs the authority to dissolve associations in various circumstances, including membership decrease, financial inability, violation of legal provisions, deviation from goals, and failure to carry out effective activities. This decision reflects the Ministry's commitment to ensuring that associations operate in accordance with the law and serve the public interest.

## Kuwait-France military co-op strong – envoy

KUWAIT CITY, June 12: French Ambassador to Kuwait, Claire Le Flecher, lauded the robust military and security cooperation between France and Kuwait, affirming that this partnership remains pivotal in their bilateral relations, reports **Al-Qabas** daily.

Le Fleischer highlighted French Defense Minister Sebastien Lecornu's two visits to Kuwait in September and December 2023, underscoring the depth of the connection between the two countries.

Pointing to the significant strengthening of bilateral ties during the invasion of Kuwait and liberation, she emphasized that France and Kuwait were wartime allies who fought together, forming enduring bonds that transcend typical diplomatic relations.

Le Flecher noted that the 1992 defense agreement between France and Kuwait stands as the oldest such agreement concluded by France in the Gulf region.

Reflecting on her recent meeting with First Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Defense, and Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahd Al-Yousef, Le Flecher described the discussions as fruitful, focusing on enhancing defense cooperation.

She highlighted activities such as high-level visits, training programs, and joint military exercises like "Pearl of the West" as elements of this cooperation.

## 'Job priority' for Kuwaitis

KUWAIT CITY, June 12: Many expatriates are currently occupying administrative, accounting and data entry jobs in public institutions; although a lot of citizens are looking for such jobs, reports **Al-Anba** daily quoting sources.

Sources cited as an example the two expatriate accountants, and six administrative and data entry staff in the Civil Service Council; although 600 out of 6,500 citizens on the job waiting list are accountants. They urged the council to implement the decision of the Civil Service Commission (CSC) on the hundred percent nationalization of public sector jobs. They said CSC Decision No. 17/2017 states that public sector jobs should be for Kuwaitis only. In case nationals are not available or not qualified for the job; the children of Kuwaiti women married to non-Kuwaitis and the citizens of other Arab countries citizens must be prioritized, they added.

# Ex-MP, 5 others case in vote buying adjourned until Oct 10

Ruling on 4 constitutional appeals set for July 10

By **Jaber Al-Hamoud**  
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff and Agencies

KUWAIT CITY, June 12: The Criminal Court held its second session for the trial of **Third Constituency candidate and former MP Saadoun Hammad**, three campaign workers and two female citizens in a vote-buying case.

The court, headed by Judge **Fawzan Al-Anjari**, decided to postpone the hearing until Oct 10 for pleading.

In the last session, the court questioned **Hammad** about the charge of mediating to buy votes in his favor, three workers in his campaign about the charge of helping him buy votes, a female citizen for selling her vote for KD1,000 and another female citizen about helping to buy votes by renting her house for this purpose. All of them denied the charges.

**Ruling set for July 10:** The Constitutional Court's Appeals Examination Committee, headed by Judge **Fouad Al-Zuwaid**, set July 10 for ruling on four constitutional appeals.

The first appeal concerns the Undersecretary of the Ministry of Interior in his capacity regarding the constitutionality of the claim that Article 33 of the regulations on scholarships and leaves issued by the Civil Service Council (Resolution No. 10 of 1986) is unconstitutional.

The second appeal is from a citizen against the Undersecretary of the Ministry of Interior in his capacity regarding the extent of the constitutionality of the claim that Paragraph Two of Article 297 of the Code of Procedure in Civil and Commercial Matters is unconstitutional due to its violation of articles 50, 130, 163 and 169 of the Constitution.

The third appeal was filed by a citizen against the Deputy Prime Minister in his capacity to demonstrate the constitutionality of Cabinet Resolution No. 1390 issued in early November 2021 as it contradicts articles 7, 8, 11, 29 and 41 of the Constitution.

The last appeal concerns the Director General of the Public Authority

# MPW secures 'contract' for culvert construction

By **Mohammed Ghanem**  
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, June 11: The Central Agency for Public Tenders (CAPT) has approved the request of the Ministry of Public Works to award the contract for the construction and maintenance of a culvert to drain rainwater in South Abdullah Al-Mubarak to the company with the lowest bid and met the conditions and specifications for a total price of KD 4.488 million.

Sources from the ministry said this culvert will absorb rainwater during winter, especially during heavy rainfall that causes flood in the area.

On the other hand, the Ministry of Public Works organized a training workshop for its officials on applying and activating institutional governance under the supervision of the Civil Service Commission (CSC).

In a press statement, the ministry confirmed that Minister of Public Works and Minister of State for Municipal Affairs **Dr. Noura Al-Mashaan**

is keen on quickly completing the application of the principles and foundations of governance to ensure the safety and sustainability of administrative and technical procedures in the ministry.

It affirmed that the workshop was held in compliance with the directive of **Al-Mashaan** to implement the principles of transparency, integrity, accountability, participation and justice.

It added that it has taken serious steps towards governance by developing services and procedures, classifying data, and creating work manuals for construction projects as the first stage.

Moreover, **Al-Mashaan** revealed the workshop aims to develop methodological and practical steps towards governance in the ministry.

The national framework for governance of the government administrative system and the national guide for institutional governance were explained by certified trainers – **Eng. Dhuha Al-Dhahi**, **Eng. Ahmed Al-Rashidi** and **Sarah Al-Mesbah**.

for Disabled Affairs in his capacity to clarify the constitutionality of the first clause of Article One of Law No. 8 of 2010 regarding the rights of persons with disabilities.

**Copper thieves detained:** The Ministry of Interior has announced significant progress in combating copper cable theft across the nation, reports **Al-Seyassah** daily.

As part of intensified security measures, the Public Security Sector has arrested four people of African nationality on charges related to the theft of copper cables.

Additionally, the authorities discovered the storage location of the stolen cables along with all tools utilized in the cutting process.

The arrested men, along with the confiscated items, have been handed over to the appropriate authorities for

further investigation and necessary legal action.

**Early warning discussed:** The team, led by Commander of Mass Destruction Defense Force Brigadier **Hamad Obaid**, tasked with setting up the early warning and radiological monitoring system, held its first meeting at the **Al-Gewan Camp** on June 10-11 with the participation of the commanders of mass destruction defense forces in GCC countries, reports **Al-Jarida** daily.

During the meeting, they discussed the mechanism for the establishment of the early warning and radiological monitoring system, and linking it with the environment authorities and Emergency Management Centre in GCC.

The system is aimed at enhancing the collaboration among GCC countries for protection against mass destruction weapons.

## 'Additional tasks'

# Kuwait attorney gen's decision advances human rights agenda

KUWAIT CITY, June 12: Attorney General Counselor **Saad Al-Safran** recently issued a decision on amending the name of the International Cooperation Prosecution to Prosecution for International Cooperation and Human Rights, as well as expanding its functions, reports **Al-Shahed** daily.

The Public Prosecution revealed the decision stipulates additional tasks for the abovementioned entity as follows:

■ Receive complaints and reports on human rights issues;

■ Study these reports;

■ Initiate investigation into human rights issues if necessary;

■ Prepare for the necessary action;

■ Follow up the application of rules stipulated in international and regional agreements, treaties and covenants related to human rights and ratified by the State of Kuwait, and are under the jurisdiction of the Public Prosecution;

■ Follow up the implementation of agreements and memorandums of understanding that the State of Kuwait concluded with other countries regarding the treatment of detained or convicted individuals;

■ Coordinate with the concerned local authorities to protect human rights;

■ Prepare responses to inquiries and requests and present them to the Public Prosecution;

■ Establish a central database of crimes related to human rights violations, those involved in these crimes, results of investigations, rulings;

■ Classify these crimes in accordance with established principles, so they can be used to promote, protect and improve human rights conditions related to the work of the Public Prosecution.

The prosecution indicated that the decision is an affirmation of the State of Kuwait's commitment to strengthen international cooperation in the field of human rights and to establish the values of justice and equality in a way that ensures national stability and security.



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# CSC dismisses social media allegations about end-of-service bonus settlement

No change in procedures for Kuwaiti employees' retirement

**KUWAIT CITY, June 12, (Agencies):** The Civil Service Commission denied on Tuesday the rumors circulating on social media regarding the settlement of end-of-service benefits, indicating that there has been no change in the procedures for the retirement of Kuwaiti employees. The Bureau said in a statement on its official account on the social networking site (X) that the information in the circulating book pertains only to the rules and procedures for terminating the service of non-Kuwaiti employees in government agencies.

The commission has reiterated that settling government employees' end-of-service benefits requires specific documentation, with a primary emphasis on obtaining a statement of the employee's entry and exit from the country issued by the Ministry of Interior, reports Al-Qabas daily.

In a letter addressed to relevant authorities, the CSC stated that settling end-of-service rewards necessitates several documents, including an end-of-service reward settlement form issued by Integrated Systems, updated with accurate employee data.

Additionally, requirements include the employee's career progression certificate, a detailed salary certificate, and a statement of entry and exit movements issued by the Ministry of Interior or through the (Sahel) program.

Furthermore, financial disclosure statements from pertinent authorities such as the Ministry of Electricity, Water, and Renewable Energy, the Ministry of Transportation, and the Ministry of Interior are also necessary for processing.



Deputy Foreign Minister receives European Institute of Peace chief advisor and former State Secretary for Foreign Affairs.

## Deputy FM receives EIP delegation

Kuwaiti Deputy Foreign Minister Ambassador Sheikh Jarrah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah Wednesday received a delegation of the European Institute of Peace (EIP), headed by the Institute's chief advisor and former State Secretary for Foreign Affairs of Sweden Anika Soder.

During the meeting, they discussed the latest regional and international developments and issues of common interest. (KUNA)

## KCCA enhances 'legal writing' skills with training course on memo prep

**KUWAIT CITY, June 12:** The Kuwait Center for Commercial Arbitration (KCCA), a branch of the Kuwait Chamber of Commerce and Industry, recently concluded a training course titled "Preparing Memorandums and Legal Writing" held on June 10-11, 2024, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The objective of the course was to enhance participants' skills in preparing memorandums and to broaden their knowledge base, particularly in construction techniques within the context of judicial and arbitration cases.

The course aimed to equip participants with strategies for constructing defense arguments, understanding opponents' positions, and refining their skills in legal writing, including citing relevant legal texts and court precedents.

## Stats show Kuwaiti women outlive men

By Najeh Bilal

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

**KUWAIT CITY, June 12:** Recent statistics from the Public Authority for Civil Information shed light on gender disparities in life expectancy among Kuwaiti citizens.

In 2023, the number of Kuwaiti female deaths totaled 1,770, whereas 2,022 male citizens passed away during the same period.

This trend persists despite the higher number of female citizens compared to males, with Kuwaiti women outnumbering men by 28,334 individuals.

According to the obtained statistics, the population of Kuwaiti women stood at 787,271, while Kuwaiti males numbered 758,937 as of December 2023. This disparity indicates a significant increase in the female population.

These findings underscore the longevity of Kuwaiti women compared to men, highlighting a notable demographic trend within the country.

## Eid Al-Adha greetings

AMBASSADOR of Mexico H.E. Eduardo Peña Peña Haller has the honour to extend his sincere congratulations and best wishes to His Highness Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, Amir of the State of Kuwait, His Highness Sheikh Sabah Khalid Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, Crown Prince, His Highness Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, Prime Minister, the Government and people of the State of Kuwait on the occasion of the advent of "Eid-al-Adha" coupled with our best wishes for continued well-being and success, and the friendly people of Kuwait further prosperity, progress and stability.



Peña Haller

Ambassador Peña Peña Haller added, "As the Ambassador of Mexico to the State of Kuwait, I am continually inspired by the shared values that define and deepen the relationship between our two countries. Both Mexico and Kuwait uphold the principles of non-intervention, self-determination, the legal equality of states, and the peaceful settlement of international disputes, all of which are anchored in our mutual commitment to international law. We also strive together to promote international cooperation aimed at the development of our peoples. Looking ahead, I am eager to spearhead a range of projects that will not only strengthen these bonds but also expand trade and investment opportunities between our nations. It is through these endeavors that we can transform our shared values into tangible benefits for our citizens, paving the way for a prosperous future marked by mutual respect and collaboration.

In light of these shared principles, our upcoming initiatives will specifically focus on exploring collaborative opportunities in cultural exchanges that highlight the rich heritage of both Mexico and Kuwait. These initiatives are not just pathways to economic growth but also bridges that connect our peoples, fostering a deeper understanding and appreciation of our diverse traditions and histories. As we move forward, I am confident that the steadfast partnership between Kuwait and Mexico will serve as a model of international cooperation and mutual respect, benefiting not only our nations but also contributing positively to global peace and development.

**Eid Mubarak!**  
"Wa Kullu Aam Wa Antum Bekhair"

A press release issued by the Embassy of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela in the State of Kuwait extends warm regards to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Kuwait, as well as to all diplomatic and consular missions and international organizations accredited to Kuwait.

In his message the Venezuelan envoy HE Navin Alfredo Abella Abella said, "On the occasion of Eid Al-Adha, we pray to the Almighty to shower upon you, your esteemed families, your country, and its gracious people abundant blessings, goodness, and prosperity.

"We take this opportunity to convey our utmost appreciation and respect to the friendly Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Kuwait and to all diplomatic and consular missions and international organizations accredited to Kuwait."

## MoCI expands discounted construction materials

**KUWAIT CITY, June 12:** The Minister of Commerce and Industry and Minister of State for Communications Affairs, Omar Saud Al-Omar, has issued a ministerial decision to include fiberglass water tanks manufactured by the National Factory for the Production of Fiberglass Plastics among the construction materials eligible for discounts provided to beneficiary citizens, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

These discounts entail a subsidy ranging from 20% to 25% to make the tanks more accessible and affordable for citizens.

Minister Al-Omar's decision is part of a broader initiative by the Ministry of Commerce and Industry to support Kuwaiti citizens in the construction of their residential units.

By including fiberglass water tanks in the list of discounted construction materials, the ministry aims to provide additional facilities and support to citizens undertaking construction projects.

This decision reflects the government's commitment to facilitating the construction process for citizens and ensuring they have access to essential materials at reduced prices.

The inclusion of fiberglass water tanks in the discounted materials list is a proactive step towards fulfilling this objective and offering maximum support to citizens in their housing endeavors.

## 'Exploring Kuwaiti pros' job prospect'

# Kuwait Fund & African Dev't Bank forge path for economic avenues

By Inaas Awadh

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

**KUWAIT CITY, June 12:** Acting Deputy Director General for Administrative and Financial Affairs at the Kuwait Fund for Development Iman Bader Al-Abd Al-Razzaq said the Forum on Jobs and Employment Opportunities for Consulting Offices of Kuwaiti Contractors and Supplier Companies 2024, in cooperation with the African Development Bank, is a unique opportunity to form a partnership between ambitious Kuwaitis and the African Development Bank Group.

Al-Abdul-Razzaq pointed out in her speech during the forum that young people with high educational attainment are considered a factor of success and development in Kuwait in the coming years; as they are ready to take important work positions that constitute strong building blocks in a sustainable and prosperous future for Kuwait, built on innovation and research in experienced organizations like the African Development Bank.

She explained that job sites are represented in several fields, such as finance, project management and a large number in development fields; hence, employers are required to make an effort to attract distinguished applicants to participate for a potential opportunity to work at the headquarters of the African Development Bank or one of their offices around the world.

She expressed her happiness that the Fund was part of the first career forum for cooperation with the African Development Bank, hoping this cooperation will continue in the future. She added it could be an opportunity to change the applicant's practical path, and out of the Fund's belief in supporting youths and enhancing development efforts through the program for qualifying newly graduated engineers and architects 20 years ago to guide young Kuwaiti men and women to engage in the Kuwaiti labor market.

On the other hand, Executive Director representing Kuwait at the African Fund for Development Edmund Wega affirmed that Kuwait is a strong partner of the African Development Bank; stressing the need to strengthen this partnership through cooperation.

He disclosed the visit to Kuwait is a great opportunity to support and accelerate the bank's strategy for the next 10 years, which focuses on the private sector's participation in five basic areas -- the most important of which is improving the quality of life in Africa, protecting human health, developing relations between all parties participating in the bank, and working hard to provide African countries with multiple energy sources.

Reiterating that this visit is an ideal opportunity to explore multiple partnerships with the African Development Bank, Wega clarified that participation depends on the role of the private sector in development projects in the African continent. He called for employing a number of Kuwaiti citizens in the African Development Bank, especially since the participation journey between the State of Kuwait and the African Bank is based on cooperation between all parties.

He underscored the need to explore more opportunities that depend on human resources and capabilities in terms of personal skills, which play a major role in supporting the bank. He said the bank encourages Kuwaitis to use it to have added value for the African continent.

Vice President for Human Resources and Talent Management at the bank Jack Adjanga confirmed that the Kuwaiti-Afri-

can economic relations are old and deeply rooted.

He stated that Kuwait supports the African continent, considering its membership in the bank for more than 47 years, particularly in 1977.

He said those in charge of the bank noticed that Kuwait is the least represented among the member-states, "so we decided to organize the 16th forum of the bank for the year 2024, which is currently being held in Kuwait in cooperation with Kuwait Fund for Development to present employment opportunities for Kuwaiti offices, consulting houses, contracting companies and suppliers."

He explained that the forum focuses on activating joint financing programs between Kuwait and Africa, especially since Kuwait's share of the bank's capital amounts to \$14 million.

"This is in parallel with benefiting from the experience of Kuwaiti youths in various fields of work and development, specifically the five main areas on which the bank's strategy for the next 10 years is based including industry in Africa and the development of the private industrial sector to create wealth from natural assets.

"This entails integrating Africa by addressing barriers and creating regional value chains in order to capitalize on the continent's huge market potential, improving the quality of life for the people of Africa by developing innovative pioneering programs to open employment opportunities for youths, improving access to basic services, and creating economic opportunities for the extremely poor.

"It will also feed Africa and transform agriculture to increase productivity, reduce food prices, enhance food security, revive rural areas and create generate opportunities for Africans, as well as illuminating Africa and supplying it with energy by unleashing the continent's energy potential to drive much-needed industrialization," he elaborated.

Adjanga also pointed out that the forum in Kuwait will not be the last, as it will be followed by other forums and visits to present opportunities and exchange ideas and visions that support business growth between Kuwait and Africa.

He concluded by extending an invitation to Kuwait to attend and participate in the African Investment Forum on Dec 4-5; which will bring together projects, financing entities and initiators to discuss ways to invest in Africa.

Advisor to the Vice President of Human Resources and Talent Management at the bank Turay Musakaruka gave a detailed presentation about the bank's journey, its history, and the benefits and opportunities it offers to partners and employees.

He said the bank was established in 1964 in the city of Abidjan in Ivory Coast. He revealed the bank has had eight presidents to date. Since its establishment, the bank has been aiming to achieve sustainable development for the African continent, reduce poverty, and provide progress for African countries and people by raising the necessary funds, he added.

He added that the total number of member states in the bank is 81 -- 54 countries in the African region and 27 outside; indicating the bank's branches and offices are spread across 43 African countries, the most important of which are Morocco, Tunisia, Egypt, East, West and South Africa, in addition to the bank's representative office in the Asian continent in Tokyo, Japan.



# EID AL ADHA

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<b>Book for Three nights and get 20% discount</b> (Inclusive of breakfast) (Non-refundable/Non-Cancellable)	Queen Cabana (2 persons) per night. 2 Bedroom Chalet (4 persons) per night	<b>BHD 61.000 net</b> <b>BHD 136.198</b>



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KUNA photo  
Deputy Foreign Minister receives outgoing Somali Ambassador to Kuwait.

## Deputy Foreign Minister receives outgoing Somali envoy to Kuwait

KUWAIT CITY, June 12, (KUNA): Deputy Foreign Minister Sheikh Jarrah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah Wednesday received outgoing Somali Ambassador to Kuwait Dr. Abdullahi Mohammad Odowa on the end of his term as his country's ambassador to Kuwait.

Minister insists on implementation of governance

## Kuwait introduces stricter advertisement regulations to enhance aesthetic appeal

KUWAIT CITY, June 12, (Agencies): Kuwait Minister of Public Works and Minister of Municipal Affairs Dr. Noura Al-Mashaan affirmed Wednesday the importance of the new advertisement regulations, which address the aesthetics and the appearance of advertisements found on the streets.

In a statement to KUNA, Dr. Al-Mashaan stressed the keenness to

expedite the issuance of advertisement regulations based on Ministerial Decree No. 599 of 2023 in regards to the visual pollution resulting from unregulated and uncomely appearances of current advertisements.

The Municipality's efforts are significant in ensuring advertisements adhere to specific and aesthetic standards, reducing visual clutter which reflect negatively on Kuwait and its people, Dr. Al-Mashaan added.

The new advertisement regulations, Dr. Al-Mashaan elaborated, are set to prioritize high quality advertisements that are consistent and abide by regulation standards. Advertisements are to be monitored, and violations will be penalized, she added.

Dr. Noura Al-Mashaan, the Minister of Public Works and the State Minister for Municipal Affairs, highlighted the need to accelerate the implementation of governance to ensure sustainable technical and administrative performance in the Ministry of Public Work, reports Aljarida daily.

According to a press statement issued by the Ministry of Public Works, a workshop was organized for the leading officials regarding the need to enhance justice and transparency through the implementation of governance.

## Kuwait Airways announces 1st flight to Oman's Salalah

KUWAIT CITY, June 12, (KUNA): Kuwait Airways announced Wednesday its first flight to Oman's Salalah, with three scheduled flights per week on Sunday, Tuesday and Friday.

In a press release, Kuwait's national carrier explained that electing the city of Salalah as a destination came after a meticulous study of the market and demand, explaining that this is in line with the airline's strategy of expanding network and diversifying options. Salalah is a destination with much to offer including moderate climate, tourist attractions, natural landscapes and historical sites, read the statement.

Kuwait Airways was first estab-



KUNA photo  
Kuwait Airways' first flight to Oman's Salalah.

lished in 1953 as a private company and operated its first flight in March of 1954. The Kuwaiti government gained full ownership in 1962.

## Company presents top roaming plan at no cost in collaboration with Awqaf Ministry

# Zain joins departing Hajj pilgrims at Kuwait International Airport



A group photo of Zain and Ministry of Awqaf teams.

KUWAIT CITY, June 12: Zain participated in seeing off Hajj pilgrims departing from Kuwait International Airport to Saudi Arabia, wishing them a safe and prosperous journey. This initiative is part of the company's ongoing strategic collaboration with the Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs, through which Zain provides all its customers performing Hajj with its top roaming plan at no cost, keeping them connected with their loved ones.

Zain's team was present at Kuwait International Airport's Departures Hall to share the joys of this spiritual occasion with the departing pilgrims and their families. The company distributed



Zain holds this initiative every year during Hajj season.

special gifts to the travelers and presented its annual complementary offer featuring its top roaming plan (Roaming Plus) to all customers who are registered in this year's ministry-certified Hajj campaigns.

The free offer includes 30 local minutes, 30 minutes to Kuwait, and 30 SMS messages per week, in addition to 3 GBs of daily internet (fair usage policy applies daily after exceeding 3 GB, after which speed is reduced until end of day). The offer runs from 9-22 June and is only valid at Hajj rituals locations.

Zain presents this initiative every year to keep customers who travel to the Sacred House connected to each other and to their loved ones at no cost during Hajj season. The company continuously offers services that are tailored to match its customers' expectations and needs during their travels.

## 5 get nod

Continued from Page 1

the Gulf Track railway project, with a 12-month implementation period for studying and designing, followed by a tender for implementation over 30 months. This contributes to the broader Gulf train project set to conclude by the end of 2030.

This initiative is part of the General Authority for Roads and Land Transport's efforts to develop the land transport sector and enhance trade exchange between Kuwait and the Gulf Cooperation Council countries in passenger and goods transport.

It aims to bolster the Gulf and local economy, create job opportunities for national cadres, and strengthen social ties among cooperating countries. The Council of Ministers assigned the project to the General Authority for Roads and Land Transport through Resolution No. 1249 dated 10-11-2021.

## Kuwait airport

Continued from Page 1

Transport Affairs Abdullah Al-Rajhi, said to KUNA, Kuwait's International Airport witnessed a rise in flights by two percent, and in airfreight by 28 percent.

He affirmed that last May, the number of arrivals reached 532,841 and the departures reached 618,580.

He noted that the number of flights operated from and to Kuwait International Airport reached 9,959 flights compared to 9,744 in 2023.

Al-Rajhi added that air cargo reached a total of 20.4 million kgs, inbound cargo reached 16.8 million kg and outbound cargo reached 3.5 million kg. He stated that the most popular destinations during last May were Dubai, Cairo, Istanbul, Doha and Riyadh.

## KSRC gives

Continued from Page 1

He revealed that the KRCS would be distributing sacrificial Eid Al-Adha meat to needy Lebanese families, in addition to Syrian and Palestinian refugees throughout the country.

He revealed that last week the KRCS began aiding Lebanese in the south of the country affected by military confrontations, which began last October.

Some 6,000 Lebanese families benefited from the relief aid operations, Boutros affirmed.

## 49 perish

Continued from Page 1

about the health of those injured in the morning fire at a residential building in the Mangaf area. During the visit, the Minister of Interior received a detailed briefing from Ministry of Health officials on the health status of the affected individuals.

Minister of Public Works and Minister of Municipality Dr. Noura Al-Mashaan suspended on Wednesday administrators at Al-Ahmedi Municipal branch pending investigations into the fire that engulfed a building in Mangaf area.

In a statement to Kuwait News Agency (KUNA) Dr. Al-Mashaan affirmed that she instructed the Municipality to open a full investigation into the matter.

In view of the dire repercussions and high number of deaths caused by the building fire in Mangaf on Wednesday; Director General of Kuwait Municipality Saud Al-Dabbous issued urgent decisions to suspend the Deputy Director-General for Hawally and Ahmadi Governorate Affairs, acting Director of Ahmadi Municipality

Branch, Director of the Audit, Follow-up and Engineering Department and Head of the Violations Removal Department in Ahmadi in the interest of the public.

Al-Dabbous then assigned the abovementioned officials' counterparts in other branches to carry out their work until the completion of investigations into the circumstances that led to this painful tragedy.

In a press statement, Al-Dabbous stressed that no one is above the law and that the law is strictly implemented to protect lives, properties and public interest.

He affirmed that the Municipality had previously intensified its monitoring campaigns on real estate properties, particularly the basements being used for purposes other than their licensed activities. "At that time, the heads of the concerned sectors were instructed to immediately form monitoring campaign teams from the audit, follow-up and engineering departments, the emergency and rapid intervention units, and the violations removal departments to inspect real estate properties in coordination with the Ministry of Interior and Kuwait Fire Force, as well as to take the necessary action regarding transgressions or violations," he added.

In conclusion, he expressed his sincere condolences to the families of the deceased; imploring Almighty Allah to cover them with His vast mercy and grant their families patience and solace.

Meanwhile, Indian Ambassador to Kuwait Dr. Adarsh Swaika has confirmed he is following up developments regarding the Mangaf fire, and that the embassy provided assistance to all those injured.

During his visit to Adan Hospital, Swaika revealed that more than 30 Indian workers who were injured in the fire accident were admitted Wednesday and a number of them were treated; while the hospital offi-

cial reported that almost all of them are stable.

In addition, the Indian Foreign Affairs Ministry posted on 'X' social media networking site that they were deeply shocked by the news of the fire incident in Kuwait; and reports indicate that it led to more than 40 deaths and more than 50 were rushed to the hospital.

The ministry stated: "Our ambassador has gone to the site. We are waiting for more information. We express our sincere condolences to the families of those who lost their lives tragically, and we wish speedy and complete recovery for the injured. Our embassy will provide all forms of assistance to all those affected."

Elsewhere, India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi expressed deep sadness over the tragic fire in Kuwait City. He extended heartfelt condolences to all those who lost loved ones and prayed for the quick recovery of the injured.

## Kuwait reiterates

Continued from Page 1

which 50 aircraft loaded with thousands of tons of humanitarian and relief aid were dispatched to the Gaza Strip.

Moreover, Kuwait has also organized 100-land and sea aid convoy loaded with relief supplies and shelter materials to Palestinian people during the same period, the Minister said.

He added that Kuwait has also sent medical teams the Gaza Strip to help support the collapsing healthcare sector there.

"Kuwait acts out of principled and firm position supporting the Palestinian people and their legitimate rights," the Minister said.

He stated that Kuwait will always among the main defender of the

## French Ambassador awards Kuwaiti professor for cultural contributions

KUWAIT CITY, June 12: French Ambassador to Kuwait, HE Claire Le Flecher, conferred the Knight of the Order of Arts, Literature, and Culture upon Dr. Hassan Ashkanani, Professor of Archeology and Anthropology at Kuwait University, in recognition of his significant role in strengthening cultural relations between the two nations, reports Al-Qabas daily.

During the ceremony, Le Flecher praised Dr. Ashkanani for his outstanding support for collaborative efforts in the cultural domain, citing his invaluable contributions to fostering cultural exchange. She emphasized France's decision to honor him with the prestigious Order of Arts, Literature, and Culture, highlighting it as a token of appreciation for his ongoing dedication to the enrichment of cultural endeavors.

Following a detailed account of



French envoy honoring Dr. Ashkanani.

the history of the award, originally reserved for aristocrats, Le Flecher underscored Dr. Ashkanani's illustrious career in academia and cultural pursuits.

In response, Dr. Ashkanani expressed gratitude to the distinguished guests, including cultural luminaries, artists, and diplomats, as well as his Kuwaiti compatriots, for their presence at the event.

## Municipality issues clarification on payment for funeral services

By Inaas Awadh

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, June 12: Muhammad Sandan, Director of the Public Relations Department at the municipality, clarified that all services provided by the Funeral Affairs Department are offered free of charge, encompassing the transportation, preparation, washing, shrouding, and burial of the deceased.

In a press release, Sandan refuted

claims regarding the mandatory purchase of a burial coffin for 30 dinars, emphasizing that this information is inaccurate.

He explained that the coffin service is optional and not obligatory, catering to those who prefer to cover the expenses themselves. Sandan noted that this optional service has been available for years, responding to citizens' requests for autonomy in preparing the bodies of their loved ones.

## Kuwait-based charity donates \$16 million to Gaza

KUWAIT CITY, June 12, (KUNA): Local charity Kuwait Relief Society has provided some USD 16 million worth of aid to Palestinians in the Gaza Strip since October, as part of broader assistance delivered to the Palestinian enclave.

The aid given by the Kuwaiti charity, weighing some 4,400 tonnes, primarily entailed food and healthcare assistance, the charity's chief Omar Al-Thuwaini told KUNA, citing various joint endeavors Kuwait Relief Society was involved in alongside its Palestinian partners.

Thorough air and land routes, the Kuwaiti charity was

able to deliver varied and comprehensive aid that helped meet the needs of the Palestinians in the Gaza Strip, while a team of Kuwaiti physicians had visited the enclave on two separate occasions to tend to wounded Palestinians, he pointed out.

He went on to heap praise on Kuwait's political leaders for their prompt and effective response to the humanitarian catastrophe unfolding in the Gaza Strip, while giving equal credit to Egypt and Jordan for their roles in facilitating the aid delivery.

Palestinian cause and the leading advocate for a just and comprehensive peace in accordance with the relevant UN resolutions to meet the legitimate aspirations of the Palestinian people, foremost of which is the establishment of their independent state on the borders of June 4, 1967.

His Highness the Amir's Representative welcomed the growing international recognition of the State of Palestine and support for Palestine's bid for a full membership in the United Nations, as well as for the international efforts and initiatives to reach a ceasefire to save lives of the innocent and defenseless people of Palestine.

Minister Al-Yahya emphasized that the international community needs to realize that stability could not be reached in the Middle East region before a just, lasting and final solution to the Palestinian cause.

He expressed Kuwait's deep appreciation to the sisterly Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, the sisterly Arab Republic of Egypt, and the United Nations for their important initiative to hold this conference to find ways to enhance the international response to the humanitarian disaster in the Strip and alleviate the human suffering caused by the sinful Israeli occupation aggression against Palestinian people.

He regretted that the people of Gaza have experienced unbearable suffering and reiterated Kuwait's condemnation of the Israeli occupation's insistence on obstructing the delivery of humanitarian aid, and on imposing a blockade and arbitrary measures at Gaza border crossings, which prevented the flow of sufficient vital supplies to the needy residents of the Gaza Strip and exacerbated the humanitarian crisis there.

He stressed the need for international efforts to formulate clear visions for ensuring unimpeded delivery to humanitarian aid in the Gaza Strip and to end the Israeli occupation's blatant violations of international laws

and guarantee the right of peoples to obtain humanitarian aid during conflicts.

The Heads of Delegations issued a statement Tuesday at the conclusion of the "Gaza Emergency Humanitarian Response Conference," calling for ending the Israeli occupation aggression in Gaza, and establishing a permanent ceasefire, and ensuring the immediate and unconditional release of all hostages and detainees.

The statement highlighted the necessary conditions for the safe and dignified return of displaced Palestinians in the Gaza Strip.

It also encouraged providing support and sustained, transparent, and long-term funding to enable UNRWA to carry out its duties as mandated by the United Nations General Assembly.

The final statement addressed increasing diplomatic efforts to end the Israeli occupation of the Occupied Palestinian Territory, and lifting all punitive measures imposed on the Palestinian people.

Jordanian King Abdullah II underlined on Tuesday that it is essential to step up efforts to put an end to the worsening humanitarian situation in the Gaza Strip.

King Abdullah II made the remark while welcoming visiting US Secretary of State Antony Blinken, according to a Royal Court statement.

He stressed the importance of building on the "Call for Action: Urgent Humanitarian Response for Gaza" conference, noting the additional support announced by the US for Gaza and the West Bank.

He also called for reaching an immediate and lasting ceasefire in Gaza, while ensuring the protection of civilians, according to the statement.

Jordan, Egypt, and the United Nations aiming to identify ways to strengthen the international community's response to the humanitarian crisis in Gaza, jointly held the conference.

## World News Roundup

## Europe

## 'Politicians regroup'

## Russia fires 'more' missiles at Ukraine

KYIV, Ukraine, June 12, (AP): Russian forces fired missiles and drones at the Kyiv region and five other areas of Ukraine in a nighttime attack, officials said Wednesday, ahead of several days of intense diplomatic activity around the war that is now in its third year.

Ukraine's air force said it shot down 29 out of 30 air targets, including four cruise missiles, one Kinzhal ballistic missile, and 24 Shahed drones. Several people were injured, authorities said.

Ukraine President Volodymyr Zelenskyy praised the air force's response, calling it a "daily achievement." He has repeatedly appealed to Ukraine's Western partners to provide more air defense systems, and the United States has agreed to send another Patriot missile system, two US officials said late Tuesday.

How best to support Ukraine's efforts to stop Russia's invasion will be a central issue in international meetings in coming days.

Kyiv's outnumbered and out-numbered forces are battling to hold back the bigger Russian army, which is trying to exploit Ukrainian vulnerabilities. Ukraine has been short of troops, ammunition and air defenses in recent months as the Kremlin's forces try to cripple the national power supply and punch through the front line in eastern parts of the country.

Ukraine will need to weather the Russian onslaught through the summer, military analysts say, and in the meantime train more soldiers, build fortifications and hope that the provision of Western military aid picks up speed so that in 2025 Kyiv may be able to mount its own offensive.

Leaders of the Group of Seven rich democracies, including US President Joe Biden, are due to gather Thursday in Italy for their annual summit to discuss how to squeeze more money for Ukraine from Russian assets frozen in their countries.

## Security

Also Thursday, defense chiefs from the US, Europe and other nations hold their monthly meeting on Ukraine's security needs. US Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin is to host the event in Brussels.

Next weekend, representatives of nearly 90 countries and organizations, half from Europe, are to attend a Swiss-hosted Ukraine peace summit, which will take place without Russia.

Both sides in Europe's biggest conflict since World War II have been reaching out to friendly nations to help keep their armed forces supplied. The war has cost tens of thousands of lives on both sides, including many civilians.

While Ukraine has looked to Western countries, Russian President Vladimir Putin has turned to nations such as Iran and North Korea for help.

Fighting along the roughly 1,000-kilometer (620-mile) front line has in recent months focused on the partly occupied Donetsk region of eastern Ukraine, where Russian forces are trying to reach the key hill-top city of Chasiv Yar and other strategic hubs.

Last month the Kremlin's forces also launched an offensive in the northeastern Kharkiv region, which borders Russia. Putin said he wanted to establish a buffer zone there to prevent Ukrainian cross-border attacks. The offensive drew Ukrainian fighters away from Donetsk.

However, Russia's gains have been incremental and costly.

In the Kharkiv region, Russian units have become bogged down in Vovchansk, Ukraine's Commander-in-Chief Oleksandr Syrskyi said Wednesday on the Telegram messaging app.

## Also:

**BRUSSELS:** Hungary agreed on Wednesday not to veto NATO support for Ukraine but Prime Minister Viktor Orbán insisted that his government would provide neither funds nor military personnel for any joint assistance effort.

At a summit in Washington next month, US President Joe Biden and his NATO counterparts are expected to agree on a new system to provide more predictable, long-term security help and military training to Ukraine's beleaguered armed forces.

Ukraine's Western allies are trying to bolster military support for Kyiv as Russian troops launch attacks along the more than 1,000-kilometer (620-mile) front line, taking advantage of a lengthy delay in U.S. military aid.

"Hungary made it clear at today's meeting that it does not want to block decisions in NATO that ... are decisions shared and advocated by the other member states," Orbán told reporters after talks in Budapest with NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg.

As an organization, the world's biggest security alliance does not send weapons or ammunition to Ukraine and has no plans to put troops on the ground. But many of its members give help on a bilateral basis, and jointly provide more than 90% of the country's military support.

The other 31 allies see Russia's war on Ukraine as an existential security threat to Europe, but most of them, including Biden, have been extremely cautious to ensure that NATO is not drawn into a wider conflict with Russia.

**PARIS:** French President Emmanuel Macron called Wednesday for moderate politicians from the left and the right to regroup to defeat the far right in general elections.

Macron, a pro-business centrist, said he wants "men and women of goodwill who were able to say 'no' to extremes to join together to be able to build a joint project" for the country.

A somber-looking Macron is addressing French voters for the first time since he called for a snap national election following a crushing defeat of his party by the far right in the European parliamentary vote.

Unlike in his recent national addresses in which Macron focused on Russia's war in Ukraine and ways Europe should forge a common defense policy, independent of the United States and shore up trade protections against China, Macron stuck to France's internal issues favored by the surging right, including curbing immigration, fighting crime and Islamic separatism in France.

He said he decided to dissolve the National Assembly, France's lower house of parliament, because he could not ignore the new political reality after his pro-European party was handed a chastening defeat and garnered less than half the support of the National Rally with its star leader, Jordan Bardella.



Putin



US President Joe Biden speaks to Everytown for Gun Safety Action Fund's 'Gun Sense University,' at the Washington Hilton on June 11 in Washington. Biden kept his distance from the courtroom where his son Hunter Biden stood trial on felony gun charges to avoid any appearance of meddling but his quick statement reacting to the jury's guilty verdict Tuesday spoke to where his heart has been all along. (AP)

## Politics

## Rulli wins special election in Ohio

## Utah governor defends record in debate

SALT LAKE CITY, June 12, (AP): Utah Gov Spencer Cox defended his record against a primary challenger in a debate Tuesday after the GOP incumbent was recently booed by Republican convention delegates who argued he is too moderate.

Despite failing to secure his party's nod, Cox is considered the overwhelming favorite among Republican voters statewide. He used Tuesday's televised debate to highlight his accomplishments uninterrupted after going off-script back in April to address his harsh reception from delegates.

## Endorsed

The state GOP convention often favors farther-right candidates and expectedly endorsed challenger Phil Lyman, a former county commissioner turned state legislator who embraced false claims of election fraud following the 2020 presidential election. Cox already had qualified for the June 25 primary before the convention by gathering signatures.

The Republican primary winner will face Democratic nominee Brian King, a state representative, in November. The GOP candidate is heavily favored to win in a deeply red state that hasn't had a Democrat in the governor's office since 1985.

In a mostly cordial debate heavy on policy specifics, Lyman insinuated that Cox has been a submissive leader and pitched himself as the stronger alternative.

"I'm not against polite words, but there's a point where we have to use aggressive rhetoric," Lyman said. "Utah should have a governor who stands up for the people, who speaks frankly, who is understood."

Cox argued he's been assertive and successful without being brash.

"I'm so proud of the way we have been able to conduct ourselves, the way we treat people with dignity and respect while also passing some of the most important and conservative legislation anywhere in the country," he said.

Cox's brand of socially conscious conservatism has led to occasional sparring matches with Republican legislative leaders since he took office in

WILMINGTON, Del., June 12, (AP): US President Joe Biden kept his distance from the courtroom where his son Hunter Biden stood trial on felony gun charges to avoid any appearance of meddling but his quick statement reacting to the jury's guilty verdict Tuesday spoke to where his heart has been all along.

"Jill and I love our son, and we are so proud of the man he is today," Biden wrote. "So many families who have had loved ones battle addiction understand the feeling of pride seeing someone you love come out the other side and be so strong and resilient in recovery."

Biden aides and allies have privately worried about the toll a guilty verdict would take on the 81-year-old president, for whom personal loss has been closely intertwined with his public life. They say the president is less worried about any personal political cost he might incur and more concerned as the father of a son who is only a few years removed from the throes of severe drug addiction.

Joe Biden left Washington for

his Delaware home on Tuesday afternoon, where Hunter Biden, his wife Melissa and their toddler Beau awaited the president on the tarmac. Joe Biden gave his son a big hug, and hugged Melissa, too. He ran his hand through Beau's hair and kissed the top of his head, the president's emotions clear on his face. The family lingered on the tarmac for a few minutes before they got into separate cars and headed to the residence.

Joe Biden had spent more time than usual in Wilmington while the trial was underway, part of a family show of support for Hunter. He departs for Italy on Wednesday morning to attend the Group of Seven summit.

It was clear that the president's son's legal drama had caused at least some confusion at the White House. After the verdict was announced, the White House canceled press secretary Karine Jean-Pierre's scheduled briefing and announced that Biden would helicopter to Wilmington, Delaware, for the unplanned overnight visit with his family.

2021 and has sometimes placed him at odds with the national party as it has shifted further right.

## Also:

**COLUMBUS, Ohio:** Republican state Sen Michael Rulli won a special election Tuesday in eastern Ohio for a US House seat that has sat vacant for months, expanding the GOP's narrow majority in the congressional chamber.

Rulli, 55, defeated Democrat Michael Kripchak to fill the remainder of Republican Bill Johnson's unexpired term. The two face off again Nov. 5 for a full two-year congressional term that begins in January.

Rulli's victory by roughly 10 percentage points was much closer than earlier GOP performances in Ohio's

6th District. Johnson won his last four elections by more than 30 percentage points. Trump also carried the district by around 30 percentage points in 2020. While this was a special election held in the summer, when turnout traditionally dips, the results could offer hope for Democrats looking to be competitive this fall in Ohio and neighboring Pennsylvania.

"We knew the polls were going to be close, and the guy I ran against really worked. He's a really hard worker," Rulli said. "But this is a blue-collar district, this is Bruce Springsteen, the forgotten man, 'Joe Bag of Donuts.' They don't trust the Democrats and Republicans, and they look at the individual. And I'm really good at retail politics."



King Willem-Alexander and Queen Maxima, of the Netherlands, and Savannah Mayor Van Johnson pose for a photo in City Hall on June 11 in Savannah, Ga. The Dutch royals spent the second day of their US tour on Tuesday visiting Savannah, Georgia's oldest city that is both a historic gem and a growing powerhouse in global trade. (AP)



Wray



Schierbaum

## America

**8 with possible IS ties held:** Eight people from Tajikistan with suspected ties to the Islamic State group have been arrested in the United States in recent days, according to multiple people familiar with the matter.

The arrests took place in New York, Philadelphia and Los Angeles and the individuals, who entered the US through the southern border, are being held on immigration violations, said the people, who were not authorized to discuss the ongoing investigation by name and spoke to The Associated Press on condition of anonymity.

The nature of their suspected connections to the IS was not immediately clear, but the individuals were being tracked by the FBI's Joint Terrorism Task Force, or JTTF. They were in the custody of US Immigration and Customs Enforcement, which made the arrests while working with the JTTF, pending proceedings to remove them from the country.

The individuals from Tajikistan entered the country last spring and passed through the US government's screening process without turning up information that would have identified them as potential terrorism-related concerns, said one of the people familiar with the matter.

FBI Director Christopher Wray has said the US is facing accelerating threats from homegrown violent extremists as well as foreign terrorist organizations, particularly in the aftermath of the Oct 7 attack by Hamas on Israel. (AP)

**Gunman wounds 3:** A gunman shot three people at a food court in downtown Atlanta before he was shot by a police officer Tuesday afternoon, authorities said.

All four people who were shot at the Peachtree Center food court are expected to survive, including the suspect, according to Atlanta Police Chief Darin Schierbaum.

During a news conference, Mayor Andre Dickens praised the responding officer who wounded the gunman.

"Had he not been there, things could have gotten worse," Dickens said.

Peachtree Center is a complex of office towers and an underground mall within blocks of multiple hotels that anchor Atlanta's busy convention business. (AP)

**1 killed on transit bus:** One person died after being shot on a commuter bus Tuesday afternoon that led officers on a wild chase for miles from Atlanta into an outlying suburb, striking several vehicles as it barreled through rush hour traffic with frightened passengers aboard, authorities said.

TV news helicopters followed the dra-



A Gwinnett County, Ga commuter bus sits in the road where it was stopped in Smoke Rise, Ga, on June 11. One person died after being shot on a commuter bus on Tuesday afternoon that led officers on a wild chase for miles from Atlanta into an outlying suburb, striking several vehicles as it barreled through rush hour traffic with frightened passengers aboard, authorities said. (AP)

matic pursuit of the Gwinnett County Transit bus, which police said took off after officers responded to a report of gunfire on a bus and a possible hostage situation just after 4:30 pm near downtown Atlanta.

The helicopter footage showed the bus striking multiple vehicles during the chase and crossing onto the wrong side of a road with police in pursuit. At one point an officer could be seen waiting on a highway and then throwing a device under the bus trying to stop it. The bus continued on, weaving in and around other vehicles. (AP)

**Off-duty guard charged:** An off-duty security guard in a Seattle suburb has been charged with second-degree murder by prosecutors who said that he fatally shot a 17-year-old six times in the back as the teen and his friends tried to return a toy gun that the guard believed was a firearm to a sporting goods store.

King County prosecutors charged Aaron Brown Myers on Monday in the death of Hazrat Ali Rohani outside a Big 5 Sporting Goods Store in Renton, Washington. Myers, 51, also faces a second-degree assault charge after authorities say he held another teen at gunpoint.

Rohani and two other teens were headed into the store at about 7:30 p.m. on June 5 to return a malfunctioning airsoft gun, Rohani's friends told police. (AP)

## Lat/Am

## Mexico killings probed

## Council 'appoints' a new Cabinet in Haiti

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti, June 12, (AP): Haiti's transitional council appointed a new Cabinet on Tuesday, marking the final step in rebuilding the government that will lead a country under siege by gangs.

Government spokeswoman Kettia Marcellus confirmed the existence of the new Cabinet and its ministers to The Associated Press.

Carlos Hercules, the attorney for Prime Minister **Garry Conille**, was appointed as minister of justice and public security. Conille himself will be interior minister. Jean Marc Berthier Antoine will be defense minister.

Haiti struggles with gangs that control at least 80% of the capital of Port-au-Prince. It is preparing for the UN-backed deployment of a police force from Kenya expected in the coming weeks.

Weeks of coordinated attacks by gangs forced former prime minister Ariel Henry to resign in April, and his Cabinet was dissolved. Gunmen took control of police stations, opened fire on the main international airport that remained closed for nearly three months and stormed Haiti's two biggest prisons. More than 2,500 people were killed or injured in the first three months of the year and more than half a million others displaced as Haiti prepares for the UN-backed deployment of a police force from Kenya expected in the coming weeks.

Conille has pledged to crack down on the violence. Dominique Dupuy, a UNESCO ambassador who was once a member of the transitional council before resigning, will be foreign affairs minister. She resigned in part because of political attacks and death threats.

The new Cabinet has four women. Critics note that Haiti's government barely has female representation. One woman with non-voting powers sits on the transitional council, and no women were interviewed for the post of prime minister.



Conille

## Transition

"It is an insult to the 6 million women and girls in Haiti whose participation is necessary for the transition's success," said Pascale Solages of Nèges Mawon, a Haitian feminist organization.

The new prime minister has publicly acknowledged that women should have their place in government.

"In this pivotal moment in Haiti's democracy, we are being given nothing but a chance to watch men make decisions from the observer seat," said Rosy Auguste Ducena of the National Human Rights Defense Network.

Others in the new Cabinet include Ketleen Florestal, minister of economy and finance. She takes charge as Haiti has deepening poverty, with inflation reaching nearly 30% in recent years. People continue to lose their jobs due to gang violence, which has forced businesses to close. Florestal previously worked at the World Bank as adviser to the executive director for Haiti.

Antoine Augustin will be education minister. Hundreds of schools in Port-au-Prince remain closed because of gang violence.

One thing that stands out about many of the ministers appointed to the new Cabinet is the relative obscurity of their names, said Michael Deibert, author of "Notes From the Last Testament: The Struggle for Haiti," and "Haiti Will Not Perish: A Recent History."

## Also:

**SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico:** Puerto Rico's elections commission said Tuesday that it's reviewing its contract with a U.S. electronic voting company after hundreds of discrepancies were discovered following the island's heated primaries.

The problem stemmed from a software issue that caused machines supplied by Dominion Voting Systems to incorrectly calculate vote totals, said **Jessika Padilla Rivera**, the commission's interim president.

While no one is contesting the results from the June 2 primary that correctly identify the winners, machine-reported vote counts were lower than the paper ones in some cases, and some machines reversed certain totals or reported zero votes for some candidates.

"The concern is that we obviously have elections in November, and we must provide the (island) not only with the assurance that the machine produces a correct result, but also that the result it produces is the same one that is reported," Padilla said.

More than 6,000 Dominion voting machines were used in Puerto Rico's primaries, with the company stating that software issues stemmed from the digital files used to export results from the machines.

The contract between Dominion and the elections commission ends June 30.

**José Varela**, vice president of Puerto Rico's House of Representatives, called for Padilla to appear at a public hearing Thursday to address the issues.

"We cannot allow the public's confidence in the voting process to continue to be undermined as we approach the general elections," he said.

The problems called to mind the island's botched 2020 primaries, when a lack of ballots at some centers forced the government to reschedule voting in a first for the U.S. territory.

On June 2, Puerto Rico held primary elections to select gubernatorial candidates for the pro-statehood New Progressive Party and the Popular Democratic Party, which supports the island's territorial status.

**MEXICO CITY:** Mexico's President **Andrés Manuel López Obrador** said Tuesday that investigators are looking into the killings of four women and two children in central Mexico, where National Guard officers were present.

The murders occurred Sunday in León, an industrial city in the state of **Guanajuato** where drug cartels have been fighting bloody turf battles for years.

The quasi-military National Guard has been López Obrador's main force for battling organized crime, though the military has been implicated in a series of human rights abuses that are tainting the Guard.

Guanajuato state Gov. **Diego Sinhue Rodríguez**, called for an investigation after security camera footage showed National Guard officers entering "a property without permission" before the alleged killers entered the same home.

The footage shows five National Guard officers in the neighborhood five minutes before the killings took place. The guards are seen crossing the street and entering the home wearing bulletproof gear. They leave the home at approximately 9:17 pm carrying a large black bag. Five minutes later, a group of four men are seen arriving at the home where, shortly after, residents heard gunshots.



Russian President Vladimir Putin, (center left), and North Korea's leader Kim Jong Un, (center right), examine a launch pad during their meeting at the Vostochny cosmodrome outside the city of Tsiolkovsky, about 200 kilometers (125 miles) from the city of Blagoveshchensk in the far eastern Amur region, Russia, on Sept 13, 2023. Kim hailed the country's relationship with Russia on June 12 as reports suggest Putin will soon visit the isolated country for his third meeting with Kim. (AP)

## Asia

## HK invokes new law to cancel passports of 6 activists

## North Korea's leader Kim hails Russia ties

SEOUL, South Korea, June 12, (AP): North Korean leader Kim Jong Un hailed the country's expanding relationship with Russia on Wednesday, as reports suggest that Russian President Vladimir Putin will soon visit the country for his third meeting with Kim.

Military, economic and other cooperation between North Korea and Russia have sharply increased since Kim visited Russia last September for a meeting with Putin. The US, South Korea and their partners believe North Korea has supplied artillery, missiles and other conventional weapons to Russia to support its war in Ukraine in return for advanced military technologies and economic aid.

## Boost

Kim has been pushing to boost partnerships with Russia and China in a bid to strengthen his regional footing and launch a united front against the United States.

During their September meeting at Russia's main space launch site, Kim invited the Russian president to visit North Korea at "a convenient time," and Putin accepted.

On Wednesday, Kim sent Putin a message congratulating Russia on its National Day, according to the North's official Korean Central News Agency.

"Thanks to the significant meeting between us at the Vostochny Spaceport in September last year, (North Korea)-Russia friendly and cooperative relations developed into an unbreakable relationship of comrades-in-arms," Kim said in the message.

Kim's comments came as media reports said Putin is expected to visit North Korea as early as next week. If realized, it would be their third summit meeting. Their first summit happened in Vladivostok in April 2019.

Japanese public broadcaster NHK, citing unidentified diplomatic sources including high-ranking Russian officials, reported Wednesday that Putin is preparing to visit North Korea and Vietnam next week.

NHK said Putin is expected to seek stronger military ties with North Korea as Russia faces a shortage of weapons in its war with Ukraine, while North Korea is believed to want help with space technology in the wake of its recent failure to put a second spy satellite in orbit in late May.

Russian business daily Vedomosti, citing an unidentified diplomatic source, said Monday that Putin will

## 4.8 quake in southwestern SKorea cracks walls, leaves minor damage

SEOUL, South Korea, June 12, (AP): A magnitude 4.8 earthquake cracked walls, spilled items from store shelves and caused other minor damage in a fishing community in southwestern South Korea on Wednesday, but no injuries have been reported.

The earthquake in Buan, which had an estimated depth of 8 kilometers (5 miles), was the strongest detected in South Korea this year.

The National Fire Agency said it so far confirmed eight minor cases of property damage in Buan and the nearby city of Iksan, including cracked walls at homes and a warehouse, at least two broken wall tiles and at least one broken window. It was also strong enough to knock items off store shelves.

Jo Yoo-jin, an official at the North Joella province fire department, said officials received nearly 80 calls from area residents who felt the shaking. More than 200 other similar calls were placed by residents in other regions, including 38 in the central North Chungcheong province and seven in the country's capital, Seoul, according to the National Fire Agency.

There were no reports of injuries as of Wednesday morning.

South Korean Prime Minister Han Duck-soo, the country's No. 2 official behind President Yoon Suk Yeol, instructed officials to guard against the possibility of aftershocks and prepare for safely evacuating residents and protecting key infrastructure such as power plants and transportation networks.

## Also:

**HANOI, Vietnam:** An extreme weather phenomenon known as the dzud has killed more than 7.1 million animals in **Mongolia** this year, more than a tenth of the country's entire livestock holdings, endangering herders' livelihoods and way of life.

Dzuds are a combination of perennial droughts and severe, snowy winters and they are becoming harsher and more frequent because of climate change. They are most associated with Mongolia but also occur in other parts of Central Asia.

Many deaths, especially among malnourished female animals and their young, occur during the spring, which is the birthing season.

visit North Korea and Vietnam "in the coming weeks." The report quoted Russia's ambassador in North Korea, Alexander Matsegora, as saying that preparations for Putin's visit to North Korea were underway.

## Also:

**HONG KONG:** The Hong Kong government on Wednesday canceled the passports of six overseas-based activists under the new national security law, stepping up its crackdown on dissidents who moved abroad.

Among them were former pro-democracy lawmaker **Nathan Law**, unionist **Mung Siu-tat** and activists **Simon Cheng**, **Finn Lau**, **Johnny Fok** and **Tony Choi** - all accused of endangering national security by authorities in the southern Chinese city. The government said they have "absconded" to the UK.

Last year, police offered rewards of 1 million Hong Kong dollars

(\$128,000) each for information leading to their arrests and drew sharp criticism from Western governments.

Authorities also banned anyone from providing funds or economic resources to the six, leasing properties to them or forming any joint venture with them, or risk a penalty of up to seven years in prison.

The government said it acted because the six were continuing to engage in activities that endanger national security, smearing the city and colluding with external forces.

Tang, when asked whether subscribing to the activists' accounts on Patreon and YouTube is illegal, said anyone who provides funds to them would be seen as violating the rules, regardless of the platform.

The measures were taken under the new powers granted by Hong Kong's homegrown national security law enacted in March.



Mexico's future President Claudia Sheinbaum speaks during a press conference in Mexico City on June 11. (AP)



Zuma



Suminwa

## Africa

**Zuma seeks to halt election:** South Africa's third biggest political party, led by former president **Jacob Zuma**, has filed legal papers seeking to halt the first sitting of Parliament scheduled for Friday to elect the country's president.

Zuma's uMkhonto weSizwe Party has said none of its 58 newly elected lawmakers will attend the sitting. The party earlier filed objections with the Independent Electoral Commission alleging widespread irregularities in national elections last month. The party received just over 14% of the vote.

The party, also known as MK, has not publicly offered evidence to back up its allegations. The commission has said it has addressed all objections.

The legal challenge now asks the Constitutional Court to set aside the commission's decision to declare the election free and fair, and to order the president to call another election.

The election saw the ruling African National Congress party lose its majority in parliament for the first time since taking power three decades ago at the end of the apartheid era.

The ANC now seeks to form a government of national unity with various opposition parties.

The outcome of those talks will determine who parliament chooses as South Africa's president. President Cyril Ramaphosa, Zuma's rival, is seeking re-election for a second term. (AP)

**DRC's 1st female PM sworn in:** **Judith Suminwa Tuluka** was sworn in early Wednesday as the first female prime minister of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC).

Before the National Assembly, the lower house of the DRC parliament, Tuluka and the other 54 new government members officially took office after deputies approved Tuluka's action program with a required absolute majority.

Tuluka, while presenting her action program Tuesday afternoon, said she was proud to have broken the "glass ceiling" as the first Congolese woman to serve the country as prime minister.

"By assuming this position, I am fully aware of the historical importance of this moment and the symbolism of this appointment for the Congolese nation. I feel both the weight of the responsibility on me and an immense pride in the idea of representing within the Republic, the culmination of the efforts of all Congolese men and women tending to break the famous 'glass ceiling,'" noted Tuluka.

She promised to lay the groundwork for an "emerging Congo" by creating around 2.6 million jobs and an academy

of mathematics and artificial intelligence in Kinshasa, while laying out actions on national security, economic diversification, infrastructure connectivity, public services,

and climate change.

Holder of a master's degree in applied economics from the Université libre de Bruxelles of Belgium, Tuluka was ap-



In this photo released by Mongolian Red Cross Society, a Mongolian herdsman prepares wood to provide heating for the family, walks past near a member of the Mongolian Red Cross Society in Ulaangom Soum, Uvs province of Mongolia, on March 1, 2024. An extreme weather phenomenon known as the dzud has killed more than 7.1 million animals in Mongolia this year, more than a tenth of the country's entire livestock holdings, threatening herders' livelihoods and way of life. (AP)

pointed state minister for Planning in March 2023. From 2020 to 2023, she also served as deputy coordinator of the Presidential Strategic Monitoring Council, an agency affiliated with the presidential office.

This new government unveiled on May 29, consists of 55 members, including the prime minister, six deputy prime ministers, and 10 state ministers, compared to the 57 members in the March 2023 reshuffle. (Xinhua)

**'21 days of nat'l mourning':** The Malawi government said Wednesday that Vice President Saulos Chilima will be honored with a state funeral after he died in a plane crash along with eight other people.

President Lazarus Chakwera had already announced 21 days of national mourning on Tuesday, when the wreckage of the small military plane carrying Chilima and a former first lady was discovered in a mountainous area in the country's north. Flags will fly at half-staff across the southern African nation during the period of mourning.

Chakwera has appointed a ministerial committee to oversee preparations for Chilima's state funeral, the government said in a statement. No date was announced.

Chakwera previously said that there were 10 people on the plane but the government now says that a total of nine were on board when it crashed. (AP)

	Change	Closing pts		Change	Closing pts
EGYPT	-	EGX 30	+51.10	26,133.39	
PAKISTAN	-	KSE 100	+134.18	72,869.31	
SAUDI	-	TASI	-123.66	11,651.81	
DUBAI	-	DFMGI	-29.75	3,979.18	
JAPAN	-	Nikkei 225	-258.08	38,876.71	

# Business

## NBK engages as platinum sponsor in ENCON4 forum

Al-Sager highlights NBK's commitment to strategic projects

**KUWAIT CITY, June 12:** National Bank of Kuwait (NBK) participated as a platinum sponsor of ENCON4 Forum of Major State Development Projects, organized by the Kuwaiti Federation of Engineering Offices and Consulting Houses (KFE-OCH), in cooperation with the General Secretariat of the Supreme Council for Planning and Development (SCPD), and Kuwait Direct Investment Promotion Authority (KDIPA), under the motto "Transparency, Achievement, and Sustainability, Principles of the New Era."

In his speech during the event, Mr. Isam Al-Sager, Vice-Chairman and Group CEO of National Bank of Kuwait, affirmed that the bank is committed to aligning its strategic objectives with Kuwait National Development Plan, as well as to cementing its position as the first partner of the government in financing major strategic projects.

"NBK recognizes the importance of cooperation and partnership, since no individual entity can achieve these visions, as they require the concerted efforts of government agencies, private and financial institutions to overcome the challenges and seize opportunities to build a better future for our Country under the leadership of HH the Amir of Kuwait and HH the Crown Prince," added Al-Sager.

"We are optimistic that the new government, in light of the significant support it enjoys at the present time, will be able to address the major economic challenges and implement the long-awaited economic reform program," he noted.



Khaled Mahdi of SCPD honors Isam Al-Sager on the sidelines of forum.

"We are also confident that the government will prioritize development projects and focus on policies that attract investment and increase investment spending in order to boost confidence and promote business environment in Kuwait, as well as give special attention to projects that achieve economic benefits while promoting sustainable development," he remarked.

"The steps we take today will determine the legacy we will leave behind for future generations," he emphasized.

ENCON4 aimed to attract invest-

ments and international companies, and to give the local and international private sector the opportunity to learn about the state's projects across all sectors in order to study these projects carefully to create competitive proposals to win their contracts. This will pave the way for Kuwait to enter a new era characterized by rapid accomplishment, transparency, and taking responsibility in implementing major development projects in the Country to achieve its sustainable development goals.

The forum also highlighted the need to focus on major state development projects as the main concern, as the projects included in the government's plan are the way to achieve development in the short,

medium and long term, and to restore Kuwait's role and leadership. NBK maintains its leadership as the main bank for financing mega deals and projects, benefiting from its solid financial position, extensive experience, in addition to the exceptional and sustainable relations with clients, both locally and internationally.

It also continues to seize opportunities on the local and regional levels, based on its historical role in leading alliances of mega deals and financing major strategic projects across many sectors, bolstering its leading position as the bank of choice for leading local and regional companies in financing their expansion plans.

## Hotels experience losses

### Experts call for revitalizing 'tourism sector' in Kuwait

By Najeh Bilal

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

**KUWAIT CITY, June 12:** In discussions with Al-Seyassah newspaper, experts emphasized the significance of revitalizing the tourism sector in Kuwait to attract visitors, bolster development, and diversify sources of income.

Abdullah Al-Abd Al-Jader, an Administrative Advisor, underscored tourism's potential to diversify Kuwait's income sources, advocating for the establishment of a dedicated Ministry of Tourism. He lamented the neglect of tourist sites and urged restructuring of tourism projects, emphasizing the need for experienced personnel to drive advancement of the sector.

Ahmed Al-Khasnam, an Economic Expert, attributed Kuwait's lag in tourism to governmental neglect and highlighted the urgency for revitalization. He called for land allocation to the private sector for expanding tourist parks and developing Kuwaiti islands to align with the national tourism vision for 2035.

Qais Al-Ghanim, President of the Real Estate Appraisers Association, identified obstacles hindering tourism excellence in Kuwait, including unprepared tourist sites and visa restrictions.

He advocated for emulating successful tourism models from neighboring countries like Saudi Arabia and the UAE.

Hamad Al-Hajri, a Real Estate Expert, highlighted the stagnation in the residential and hotel sectors due to insufficient tourist influx. Salem Al-Hamoud, a Tourism Expert, lamented Kuwait's lack of domestic tourism and urged flexibility in visa issuance to rejuvenate the sector.

Psychological Consultant Dr. Falah Raheel emphasized the psychological importance of tourist facilities for citizens and residents, advocating for their availability as a means of psychological relief and treatment.

In the hotel sector, an anonymous expert disclosed that Kuwait's hotels are experiencing significant losses due to limited tourist visits, with occupancy rates ranging from 40% to 60%. He expressed hope for sectoral recovery with the implementation of the unified Gulf tourist visa in December 2024, facilitating movement across Gulf countries.

These discussions underscored the urgent need for concerted efforts to revitalize tourism in Kuwait, leveraging its potential as a key economic driver and enhancing its status as a global tourism destination.

## OPEC expects demand for crude to stand at 43.2 mln bpd in 2024

**VIENNA, June 12, (KUNA):** The Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) Tuesday expected that demand for OPEC+ crudes would remain at 43.2 million barrels per day (mb/d) this year, unchanged from the previous month's assessment.

In its monthly report, OPEC showed that this assessment is about 900 thousand barrels per day (tb/d) higher than the estimated level for the year 2023, with expectations that global demand for OPEC+ crude will also remain unchanged in 2025 from the previous month's assessment to stand at 43.9 mb/d.

Regarding the value of the OPEC Reference Basket (ORB) of crude last May, it was reported that the price decreased by USD 5.53 (6.2 percent) to reach USD 83.59 pb, and the average value of standard Brent crude decreased by six US dollars (6.7 per-

cent) to reach USD 83 pb.

As for the growth of global oil demand in 2025, the organization said that demand will remain "strong" at 1.8 mb/d, unchanged from the previous month's assessment, however growth in global oil demand for the year 2024 remain unchanged from last month's assessment at 2.2 mb/d.

OPEC expected the oil demand in the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) to grow by about 200 tb/d, and that demand in non-member countries of OECD would grow by about two mb/d. Regarding global oil supplies, the organization estimated that supplies outside the scope of OPEC+ would grow by 1.2 mb/d in 2024, explaining that the main drivers of growth will come from the United States, Canada, Brazil and Norway.

## Crude oil prices dip below \$80/b but recover quickly

# OPEC reiterates demand growth expectations amid price fluctuations

By KAMCO Invest

**C**rude oil prices went below the USD 80/b level for the first time since February-2024 during the first week of June-2024 but swiftly recovered as OPEC reiterated its demand growth expectations and traders viewed the current price trend as an overreaction and an oversold market. The sanctions on Iran's shipping sector also supported prices. The initial monthly decline was led by receding war risk premium as well as fears that near-term demand may not be as healthy as was being expected, especially in China. This was also reflected in the physical market with lower quoted prices by producers eyeing lower-than expected summer demand. The slide in prices last week also came after the OPEC+ meeting that proposed limited and controlled unwinding of the additional voluntary cuts, depending on the demand trends starting from Q4-2024. On the other hand, minimal support came from an unplanned shutdown of Buzzard oil field in the North Sea and the fuel refinery fire in Russia. Data from US EIA showed positive trends for the summer demand season with higher demand for gasoline and higher refinery runs, but an increase in crude oil inventories affected prices.

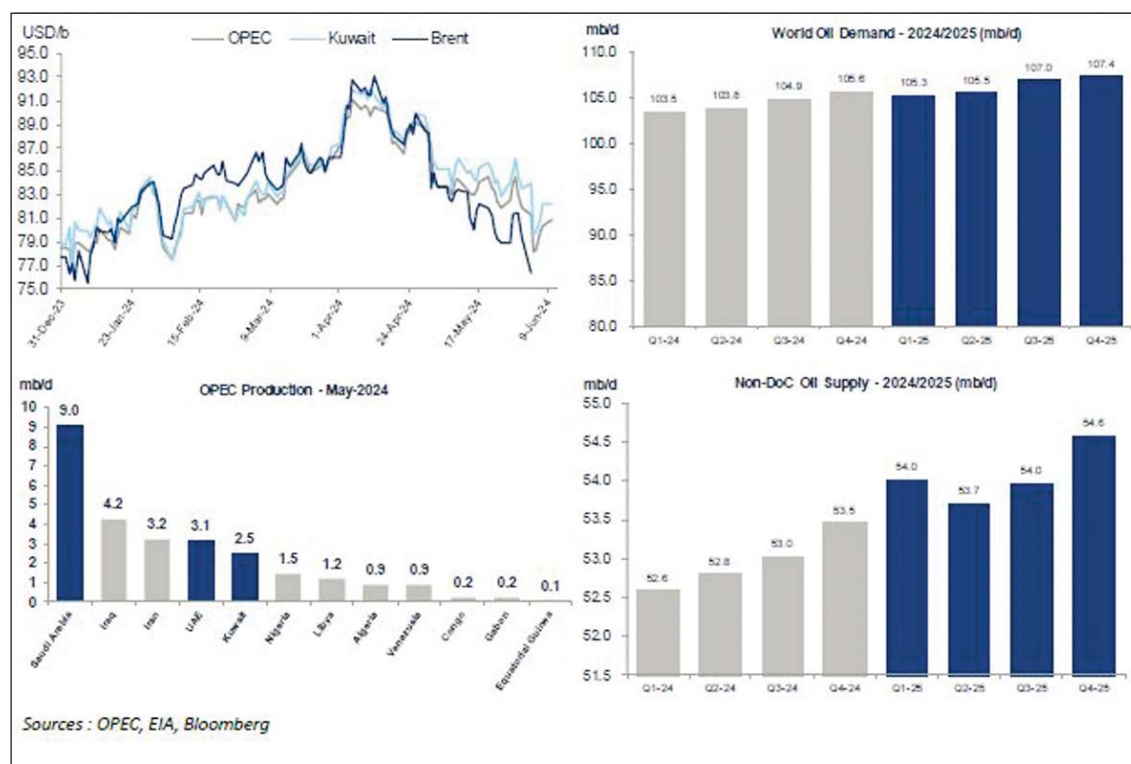
On the economic front, the Bank of Canada and the ECB implemented the first rate cuts after years of elevated interest rates. The cuts reflect softening inflation levels in these economies. The Fed is also touted to implement cuts this year depending on the trend in inflation in the coming months. The inflation in the US for April-2024 came in as per expectation but the Fed indicated that it needs more proof before implementing the rate cuts. Economic data in the US also showed lower consumer spending, mixed ISM data and the latest personal consumption expenditure came in as expected, all indicating greater proof of upcoming rate cut but at the same time lowering the expectation for oil demand growth in the coming months led by falling economic growth.

On the supply front, crude oil flows rebounded during May-2024 backed by increase in global seaborne crude shipments from US Gulf and West Africa. In the region, Saudi and Oman reported a decline in exports while Kuwait, Qatar, Iraq and the UAE reported an increase in shipments during the May-2024. Data from Russia also showed a y-o-y increase of 50% in oil revenues during May-2024, although recent weekly data on crude oil exports showed declines with shipments hitting the lowest level since February-2024 as Russia compensates for the overproduction against its April output target.

Oil production in the US remained elevated at 13.1 mb/d over the last eleven weeks ending May-2024. This came despite oil rig count declined for the second consecutive week last week to reach 492 oil rigs. Oil production by the OPEC showed marginal growth during the month led by marginal drop in production in Saudi Arabia that produced at 9.0 mb/d that was more than offset by higher production in Nigeria.

### Oil Prices

Oil prices remained volatile over the last few weeks and traded in a wide range led by significant news on both the economic front as well as on crude oil production. Crude oil future prices went below the USD 80/b level at the start of June-2024 led by negative news on the demand front while supplies from outside of the OPEC+ group remained elevated. Prices declined for three consecutive weeks until last week and in seven out of the last nine weeks and traded from over USD 91/b to close at USD 79.6/b last week. Traders also took cues from Aramco's cut in all its crude prices for Asia for July-2024. This week, however, saw positive news on the demand front as well as due to technical reason as traders started assessing the market as oversold and overreaction to the OPEC+ de-



cision to gradually restore the voluntary production cuts. Prices regained the USD 80/b mark and traded close to USD 82/b after witnessing the biggest daily gain since February-2024 at the start of this week. Support also came from a stronger-than expected jobs report in the US, better than expected reading on manufacturing and services sector activity as well as expectations of a strong summer travel demand. The rate cuts announced by key central banks, including the ECB, also supports forecast of a demand recovery in the near term, although the ECB warned that the cut does not mean a linear declining trend.

In terms of monthly price trend, prices of all crude grades reported gains declines during May-2024. Average spot Brent crude oil price was down by 9.0% to reach USD 81.8/b during May-2024 as compared to USD 89.9/b during April-2024. The decline in average OPEC reference basket price was slightly milder at 6.2% to reach USD 83.6/b while Kuwait export grade crude witnessed a decline of 5.1% to average at USD 85.2/b during May-2024. Meanwhile, the consensus estimate for Brent crude showed minimal changes as compared to last month and was flattish for the next four quarters. According to Bloomberg consensus estimates, crude oil prices are expected to average at USD 85.1/b in Q2-2024 and remain elevated over USD 83/b level till the end of the year.

### World Oil Demand

World oil demand growth forecast for 2024 was kept broadly unchanged in OPEC's monthly report. The agency expects oil demand to grow by 2.25 mb/d this year to reach 104.5 mb/d in 2024. That said, minor adjustments were down to oil demand data during the 1H-2024. The agency made downward adjustments to demand data for the OECD Europe, OECD Asia Pacific and Latin America due to lower-than-expected oil demand during Q1-2024. The agency also adjusted demand data for Africa lower during Q2-2024 to factor in anticipated fall in oil demand in the region. The aforementioned downward adjustments were completely offset by upward revision to data for a number of non-OECD countries led by better-than-

expected oil demand during the first two quarters of the year. According to OPEC, the positive trend in household consumption in the US is expected to continued during the second half of the year. Moreover, the current highlights for the summer travel demand also supported the conviction in demand growth this year as seen from the number of travellers that flew during this year's memorial day weekend was the highest in 20 years.

Oil demand in India also remained strong this year. Data from OPEC monthly report showed that crude oil imports in India was at a two year high level in April-2024. Data from India's Petroleum Planning and Analysis Cell showed higher m-o-m fuel consumption in May-2024 backed by strong industrial activity and demand-related to the recently concluded general elections in India. Total consumption reached 4.84 mb/d during the month, registering an increase of 3.2% from April-2024. However, the consumption declined as compared to May-2023 (20.49 million metric tons in May-2024 vs. 20.69 metric tons in May-2023). The y-o-y decline was mainly led by fall in demand for fuel oil while the rest of the product categories, including diesel, gasoline and LPG showed growth.

World oil demand growth forecast for 2025 was also kept unchanged by the OPEC. The agency expects oil demand to grow by 1.8 mb/d next year to average at 106.31 mb/d during the year.

### World Oil Supply

Oil supply growth forecast for the non-DoC countries for this year remain unchanged as compared to OPEC's last month's forecast. Supply from these countries is expected to grow by 1.2 mb/d in 2024 to average at 53.0 mb/d during the year. The latest data from the US EIA showed nationwide crude and condensates production averaging at almost 13.2 mb/d in March-2024. This indicated no net growth in production since October-2023 and an end to the surge in production that started after the Covid-19 pandemic. A report from Reuters showed drilling rigs and well completion crews have been idled in response to the fall in prices recently and drilling activity is at its

lowest since the start of 2022 led by industry consolidation and maximizing shareholder returns. Normal weather conditions during March-2024 also affected the growth in production in the US as compared to the trend seen last year. The latest Short Term Energy Outlook from the EIA has forecasted US oil production to average at 13.2 mb/d this year, registering an increase of 2% as compared to 2023 levels. This is an upward revision of around 40 tb/d from the forecast issued in May-2024. The increase in production in the near term is expected to be led by higher output from the Permian Basin and from Eagle Ford and is expected to be implemented mainly by oil majors like Exxon Mobil and Chevron Corp. that are growing production in the Permian basin by 10% this year, roughly double the growth rate as compared to smaller drillers.

The forecast for 2025 was also kept broadly unchanged from last month's level. OPEC has forecasted oil supply from the non-DoC countries to grow by 1.1 m/d next year to average at 54.1 m/d during the year. According to the US EIA, oil production in the US is expected to reach 13.71 mb/d next year, a downward revision from the agency's previous forecast issued in May that showed output at 13.73 mb/d.

### OPEC Oil Production & Spare Capacity

OPEC crude oil production continued to rise in May-2024 and showed four consecutive months of growth, according to revised estimates from Bloomberg. Data from the new agency showed oil production increasing by 60 tb/d during the month to average at 26.96 mb/d. The increase reflected higher m-o-m production mainly in Nigeria and Kuwait that more than offset marginal fall in production in most countries. Data from OPEC's secondary sources also showed growth in production during the month, although relatively small growth vs. Bloomberg estimates. The growth in output was seen mainly in production in Nigeria, Gabon and Equatorial Guinea that more than offset marginal decline in production in the group. On the other hand, OPEC data showed a production fall in the overall DoC countries by 123 tb/d mainly reflecting 152 tb/d decline in production in non-OPEC DoC countries, mainly coming from Russia and Kazakhstan.

Meanwhile, in an anticipated move, the OPEC+ countries extended the original production cuts by the group that capped production at 39 mb/d until the end of next year as against analyst expectations of an extension until the end of this year. The accord also extended the additional voluntary cuts of roughly 2 mb/d that were set to expire in June-2024 until next year. However, these cuts that being implemented by a smaller group of OPEC+ producers, with Saudi Arabia and Russia implementing the biggest share of these cuts, will continue in the current form until September-2024 and then be gradually phased out over the following 12 months. By January-2025, these additional cuts would be around 0.75 mb/d and total production by the group is planned to average at 38.068 mb/d by Q4-2025, as per the plan.

Oil production in Nigeria continued to slide during May-2024. Meanwhile, in a significant development, the country exported its first shipment of jet fuel from the newly started Dangote refinery to Rotterdam in Europe. The 45,000 metric tons of jet fuel cargo also highlights the compliance to European fuel standards for the 0.65 mb/d refinery.

Oil production in Kuwait remained almost flat at 2.46 mb/d during May-2024. The country, however, reported higher shipment of crude oil that reached a four month high during the month. Shipments had fallen to multi-year lows during March-2024, according to a Bloomberg report. Kuwait also inaugurated the full operation of the Al Zour Refinery, one of the biggest in the world, with a capacity of 615 tb/d.



Bank participates in the Forum of Major State Development Projects

**KFH has a pioneering role in supporting National Development Plans: AlShamlan**

KUWAIT CITY, June 12: Kuwait Finance House (KFH) has participated in the Forum of Major State Development Projects, recently organized by the Kuwaiti Federation of Engineering Offices and Consultant Houses (KFEOCH) from 11th to 13th of June. Titled "Sustainability, Transparency and Achievement are the Pillars of the New Era", the three-day event is the result of a fruitful collaboration with the General Secretariat of the Supreme Council for Planning and Development (SCPD) and Kuwait Direct Investment Promotion Authority (KDIPA).

"KFH's participation is derived from its pioneering role in supporting the development efforts to enhance the national economy," said Khaled Yousef AlShamlan, KFH Kuwait Chief Executive Officer in his speech during the forum. "KFH is also committed to be involved in relevant significant events that target the advancement of the economy through different initiatives."

AlShamlan emphasized that KFH is committed to utilizing its capabilities, expertise and high creditworthiness to further contribute to major development projects at all vital industries. In light of the robust financial performance and various competitive advantages which include a global presence that spans across 12 countries, topping companies listed on Boursa Kuwait in terms of market capitalisation (about USD41 bn) and scoring the highest profitability rates in the banking sector, in addition to its solid capital base, as well as high liquidity ratios, KFH enjoys a high creditworthiness to finance major projects in the infrastructure and oil sectors. These advantages also grant KFH the headship in mega financing deals that align with Kuwait's 2035 vision and boost the country's competitiveness as a regional financial and commercial hub.

He added: "In light of the major requirements and pressing economic reforms, development topics are becoming indispensable. Their importance goes beyond governmental level as private sector and different institutions are working collaboratively to re-design the development plan, promote investment in the country, boost local economy, as well as maintain intellectual wealth and human talents by employing them in the appropriate positions."

AlShamlan pointed out that KFH has a track record of contributions to development projects and private-public partnership initiatives. The most important initiatives include supporting the Kuwait International Airport expansion project and participating in the largest financing deal denominated in Kuwaiti Dinar, for Kuwait Petroleum Corporation and its subsidiaries. This deal included both the clean fuel project and the Liquefied Natural Gas Facility project.

"The robust capital base, high solvency, efficiency and extensive legacy have made KFH a strategic partner of these vital projects," said AlShamlan.

He also stressed the leading role KFH plays in financing SMEs considering their importance in diversifying the national economy and generating employ-



Khaled Yousef AlShamlan, KFH Kuwait Chief Executive Officer.



Officials pose for a group photo.

**Khaled Yousef AlShamlan**

- KFH is keen on utilizing its capabilities, expertise and high creditworthiness to contribute to major development projects
- KFH offers comprehensive financing solutions across various project sectors in Kuwait and the region

ment opportunities for youth, the basis of sustainable development.

AlShamlan concluded his speech by hoping that this forum will achieve its purposes in moving forward with implementing major development projects, accomplishing sustainable development goals (SDGs), establishing long-term solutions that depend on economic basics, and granting the opportunity to the private sector to contribute to development.

He said: "Amidst the positive environment, we also hope that the economic

achievements will be attained, praying to the Almighty to assist us in serving our beloved Kuwait."

It is worth noting that KFH is one of the most preferred and trusted institutions in the Kuwaiti banking sector for corporate finance. The bank has the largest market share in financing SMEs in addition to its ability to finance various major projects thanks to its robust capital base, high solvency, and strong credit rating as well as a wide diverse, flexible and efficient Sharia-compliant financing solutions.

Additionally, KFH's significant contribution reflects its belief in the crucial role played by the corporate sector and mega projects in driving economic development.

The Bank also offers comprehensive financing solutions across various project sectors, with a particular focus on petrochemicals, oil and gas, water and energy, renewable energy, and infrastructure. The financing solutions KFH offers include project long term financing, Sukuk issuance in addition to other methods of financing that cater to the different needs of projects and companies.

Thanks to KFH's experience in the financing market and extended relations with regional and international banks, KFH is the ideal lead arranger of syndicated financing deals.

**Loan facility totals \$3.6b**

**IMF reaches staff-level deal with Kenya, set to release 976m USD**

NAIROBI, June 12. (Xinhua): The International Monetary Fund (IMF) said Tuesday it had reached a staff-level agreement with Kenya and would unlock 976 million U.S. dollars if approved.

The loan facility which is subject to approval by the IMF executive board would bring its total funding under the existing Extended Fund Facility (EFF) and Extended Credit Facility (ECF) arrangements to 3.6 billion dollars, the IMF said in a statement.

It said the completion of the second review under the Resilience and Sustainability Facility (RSF) would enable Kenya to immediately access 120 million dollars.

The IMF team led by Haimanot Teferra who held discussions with the Kenyan authorities in April and May said it reached a staff-level agreement on a comprehensive policy package needed to complete the seventh review of Kenya's economic program under the EFF/ECF arrangements and the second review of the Resilience and Sustainability Facility (RSF) arrangement.

"Growth recovered in 2023 with real GDP growing by 5.6 percent, supported by a strong recovery in agriculture and resilience in the services sector following the return of rains after the severe droughts in 2021-2022," Teferra said.

She, however, said the unfortunate losses of lives, displacement of people, and destruction of infrastructure and agricultural land from the recent floods have strained resources and highlighted the urgent need for comprehensive disaster risk management as well as support from both national and inter-

national stakeholders to respond to the immediate needs and rebuild a more resilient infrastructure.

Teferra said headline inflation has decelerated to 5.1 percent in May, aided by lower food prices, stabilization of fuel pump prices, appreciation of the exchange rate, and base effects from last year's electricity tariff adjustments.

Core inflation, however, remains persistent, she said, noting that refinancing risks associated with the June Eurobond have dissipated following a successful partial buyback from the proceeds of a new Eurobond issuance in February.

"In view of Kenya's buyback of a significant share of the 2024 Eurobond using proceeds from a new issuance, which alleviated near-term exceptional balance of payment needs, staff and the authorities agreed to bring cumulative access under the EFF/ECF arrangements within the normal limits and a recalibration of access towards the more concessional financing under the ECF, consistent with the Fund's policy on blended access," Teferra said.

The disbursement of the funds is expected to boost the country's foreign exchange reserves which according to the Central Bank of Kenya (CBK) reached 4.2 billion dollars in 2023.

The IMF said the CBK's initiatives to enhance the functionality of the foreign exchange and money markets have contributed to improved liquidity and better functioning of these markets while CBK's efforts to build forex reserves will strengthen external buffers.

**Australia anticipates China will lift final obstacle for its exports**

CANBERRA, Australia, June 12, (AP): Australian Trade Minister Don Farrell on Wednesday predicted the final obstacle for exports to China, Beijing's ban on live lobster imports, will be lifted soon after Chinese Premier Li Qiang visits the country.

The return of lobsters to the Chinese market would be a milestone in the Australian government's ambition to stabilize bilateral relations since coming to power in 2022.

China banned minister-to-minister communications with Australia and imposed a series of official and unofficial trade barriers in 2020 on Australian products including beef, barley, coal, wood and wine costing exporters 20 billion Australian dollars (\$13 billion) a year.

Bilateral relations plumed new lows after a previous Australian government demanded an independent investigation into the causes of and China's responses to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Farrell said Li becoming the first Chinese premier to visit Australia in seven years on Saturday would remove the final trade barrier on lobsters.

"I think there's both the willingness on our part and the part of the Chinese government to remove all of the impediments in our relationship," Farrell told reporters.

Lobster is the one remaining banned product, said Farrell, China lifted tariffs on Australian wine in March and restrictions on Australian beef in December 2023.

"I'd be very confident that the visit this week will result in a very successful outcome for lobster producers," Farrell added.

Li will be accompanied by Chinese Commerce Minister Wang Wentao when he visits the Australian cities of Adelaide, Canberra and Perth from Saturday until Tuesday next week.

Farrell said every meeting he had

held with Wang since the center-left Labor Party replaced the conservative government in 2022 had progressed the trade relationship.

"I'm very confident that not only will we remove all of the remaining trade impediments, but that we can actually continue to build on our trading relationship with China," Farrell said.

Prime Minister Anthony Albanese, who in November became the first Australian government leader to visit Beijing in seven years, said Li's visit was symbolic of the normalization of relations since the current government was elected.

"That has been important for Australia to renew that trade, because one in four of Australian jobs relies upon trade, and one in four of Australian export dollars is from trade to China," Albanese said.

Farrell was speaking at Wirra Wirra Vineyard in South Australia state which celebrated its 130th anniversary as a winery on Wednesday.

Since China removed the tariffs in April, AU\$86 million (\$57 million) of wine had been exported to what was once the largest export market for Australian vineries, Farrell said.

That was more Australian wine than was sold to China in the preceding three years.

Australia provided almost 40% of China's imported wine and was a market worth AU\$1.24 billion (\$820 million) a year to Australian exporters before tariffs all but ended the trade in 2020.

While trade relationship is improving, the security relationship is becoming more tense as Australia supports U.S. efforts to counter China's growing influence in the Asia-Pacific region.

Albanese said he will raise with Li clashes between Australian and Chinese forces over international waters in the South China and Yellow seas.

**Inflation may have cooled in May, but Fed is seeking sustained improvement**

Cumulative price increases weighing on Biden's popularity

WASHINGTON, June 12, (AP): Less-expensive gas likely slowed U.S. consumer inflation in May. But when the government reports the latest monthly price data Wednesday, Wall Street traders and Federal Reserve officials will be paying particularly close attention to an index that excludes volatile food and energy costs.

These so-called "core" prices are expected to have risen 0.3% from April to May, the same as in the previous month, according to a survey of economists by data provider FactSet. Compared with a year earlier, core inflation is thought to have dipped from 3.6% to 3.5%.

Even as overall inflation moderates, such necessities as groceries, rent and health care are much pricier than they were three years ago - a continuing source of public discontent and a political threat to President Joe Biden's re-election bid. Most other measures suggest that the economy is healthy: Unemployment remains low, hiring is robust and consumers are traveling, eating out and spending on entertainment. Yet polls show that the cumulative price increases are weighing on Biden's popularity.

The Fed is closely monitoring each month's inflation report for signs that it's succeeding in its fight against rising prices. A rise in core consumer prices of 0.3% is too high, over time, to be consistent with the central bank's 2% annual inflation target and could be seen as a disappointment.

Still, the Fed's officials prefer a separate inflation measure, which typically comes in slightly lower than Wednesday's consumer price index.

After their latest two-day policy meeting ends Wednesday - just hours after the release of the May inflation data - the officials are poised to leave their benchmark interest rate unchanged at a 23-year high of about 5.3%.

Lower gas prices are thought to have slowed overall inflation to just 0.1% from April to May, according to FactSet, down from 0.3% the previous month and the lowest figure since October. Measured from a year earlier, consumer prices are believed to have risen 3.4% in May, the same as in April.

Persistently elevated inflation has posed a vexing challenge for the Fed, which raises interest rates - or keeps them high - to try to slow borrowing and spending, cool the economy and ease the



Customers queue up to order at an In-N-Out restaurant Sunday, June 2, 2024, in Lone Tree, Colo. On Wednesday, June 12, 2024, the Labor Department issues its report on prices at the consumer level in May. (AP)

**WB cuts 2024 growth forecast for Japan**

TOKYO, June 12, (Xinhua): The World Bank has cut its economic growth forecast for Japan for 2024 to 0.7 percent from 0.9 percent, while lifting the global growth outlook for the year to 2.6 percent from 2.4 percent, local media reported.

The Japan growth forecast fell 0.2 percentage point from the pre-

vious estimate in January due to sluggish consumption growth and slowing exports, as well as a halt in growth in demand from foreign tourists, Jiji Press said Tuesday, citing the World Bank's latest Global Economic Prospects report.

Japan's economic growth is projected to rise to 1.0 percent in 2025,

as consumption is expected to improve moderately, it added.

Meanwhile, the global economy would avoid a third consecutive drop in real GDP growth since a major post-pandemic jump in 2021, with 2024 growth stabilizing at 2.6 percent, unchanged from 2023, according to the report.

pace of price increases. The Fed has kept its key rate unchanged for nearly a year after having rapidly raised it in 2022 and 2023. Those higher rates have led, in turn, to more expensive mortgages, auto loans, credit cards and other forms of consumer and business borrowing.

The longer the Fed keeps borrowing costs high, the more it risks weakening the economy too much and potentially causing a recession. Yet if it cuts rates too soon, it risks reigniting inflation. Most of the policymakers have said they think their rate policies are slowing growth and should curb inflation over time.

Inflation had fallen steadily in the second half of last year, raising hopes that the Fed could pull off a "soft landing," whereby it manages to conquer inflation through higher

interest rates without causing a recession. Such an outcome is difficult and rare.

But inflation came in unexpectedly high in the first three months of this year, delaying hoped-for Fed rate cuts and possibly imperiling a soft landing.

In early May, Chair Jerome Powell said the central bank needed more confidence that inflation was returning to its target before it would reduce its benchmark rate. Powell noted that it would likely take more time to gain that confidence than Fed officials had previously thought. Several officials have said in recent weeks that they needed to see several consecutive months of lower inflation.

In addition to declining gas prices, economists have estimated that prices for several other items fell from April to May, including clothing, furniture and new cars.

Though used cars are projected to have risen in price after falling for several months, that may prove a temporary blip.

The cost of apartment rents, a key driver of inflation, could cool slightly. And auto insurance is thought to have risen by a sharp 1% just from April to May, according to economists at Goldman Sachs, though that would be down from increases of 1.8% and 2.6% in the previous two months.

Some signs suggest that inflation will continue to cool in the coming months. Americans, particularly lower-income households, are pulling back on their spending. In response, several major retail and restaurant chains, including Walmart, Target, Walgreen's, McDonald's and Burger King, have responded by announcing price cuts or deals.

**GM board approves another \$6 billion share repurchase**

WASHINGTON, June 12, (AP): General Motors has approved another \$6 billion share repurchase as the Detroit automaker adds to its 2024 momentum.

The Tuesday announcement follows a \$10 billion share buyback authorization in November of last year. Shares in the Detroit automaker rose 1.4% to

\$48.21 Tuesday while broader markets were mixed. GM's shares are up 34% since the beginning of 2024.

GM, which announced in April that it was moving its Detroit headquarters to a new downtown office building next year, also raised its dividend to 12 cents per share from the previous 9 cents per share.

Also Tuesday, GM said it's investing another \$850 million into the troubled Cruise autonomous vehicle unit. The money will "help with operational cash needs" at Cruise until the company finds the right long-term capital strategy that could include partnerships and funding from outside of GM.

Cruise suspended operations in October when one of its Chevrolet Bolt autonomous electric vehicles dragged a San Francisco pedestrian roughly 20 feet (6 meters) to the curb at roughly 7 miles per hour (11 kilometers per hour), after the pedestrian was hit by a human-driven vehicle.

## Sponsorship aligns with company's CSR strategy and UN's Sustainable Development Goals

### Markaz sponsors Kuwait Commute's Public Transportation Card Design contest

KUWAIT CITY, June 12: Kuwait Financial Centre "Markaz" concluded its participation as main sponsor for Kuwait Commute's Public Transportation Card Design competition, organized in collaboration with Kuwait's Universities. The competition witnessed the participation of university students and fresh graduates specialized in design, from different universities and institutions from across Kuwait, with the aim of promoting innovative solutions for Kuwait's transportation challenges, aligning with several United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Markaz's support for this competition aims to reduce traffic congestion, promote the use of public transportation, and contribute to a more sustainable and efficient urban environment, all while aligning with its corporate social responsibility (CSR) strategy.

Commenting on Markaz's support for the initiative, Abdullahif Al-Nusif, Managing Director of Wealth Management and Business Development at Markaz, said: "We are proud to support Kuwait Commute as it endeavours to enhance the public transportation system in Kuwait and encourage the use of transportation alternatives, aiming to alleviate traffic congestion and explore better solutions for the environment."

Al-Nusif added: "We were keen at Markaz to be the main sponsor of this competition, which is considered a step towards digitizing payment processes and encouraging the use of public transportation. We are also pleased to be part of an initiative that allows us to contribute to the development of youth's creativity and innovative capabilities that lead to positive and influential changes to society. This is reflected through an innovative nationwide competition that has granted these students the opportunity to design unified public transportation cards."



Markaz Kuwait Commute

Jassim Al Awadhi, Founder of Kuwait Commute, underlined the pivotal role of Markaz's support, stating, "Markaz's support as the main sponsor has enabled the successful launch of the Public Transportation Card Design Series Competition. Kuwait Commute seeks to raise awareness on the importance of a public transportation system that is safe, efficient, environmentally friendly, and suitable to serve everyone. This objective is aligned with the framework of sustainability, as outlined by the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals 3 (Good Health and Well being), 9 (Industry Innovation and Infrastructure), 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities), 12 (responsible consumption and production), and 17 (Partnerships for the Goals). It also provides invaluable opportunities for youth to showcase their talents, hone their skills, and contribute to the development of public transportation, ultimately enhancing the quality of life in Kuwait. We appreciate the trust Markaz has placed in us and thank them for their unwavering support, and we hope this fruitful partnership brings value to all".

Kuwait Commute shed light on the pressing need for more accessible transportation in this field, and the provision of feasible and executable solutions in this field. Under the Kuwait Commute initiative, one significant proposal is the introduction of a unified payment system. This solution promises a range of advantages, including increased cost-efficiency, convenience, and improved accessibility for commuters. Moreover, by integrating retail incentives, such as discounts or loyalty rewards, this initiative seeks to incentivize greater uptake of public transportation, making it a more appealing option for commuters.



Fahad Al Ali's speech during the graduation ceremony.



Danah AlJasem's participation along with officials from the special education schools administration in honoring the top achievers.

## Chief technology officer of stc Kuwait inspires graduates at ceremony

### stc sponsors 'graduation ceremony' for students with disabilities in collaboration with Ministry of Education

KUWAIT CITY, June 12: Kuwait Telecommunications Company – stc, a world-class digital leader providing innovative services and platforms to customers, announced its role as a main sponsor of the graduation ceremony honoring students with physical disabilities for the third consecutive year. The ceremony was held in the presence of Mansour Al-Dhafiri, Assistant Undersecretary for Special and Specific Education, Mahmoud Abdel-Rida, acting Director of Special Education Schools Administration and the presence of several GCC ambassadors in Kuwait. stc's sponsorship of the ceremony falls under the educational "upgrade" initiative which was launched as part of the educational pillar defined within the Company's extensive corporate social responsibility (CSR) framework.

Following its support of various graduation ceremonies and platforms that promote education, stc played an active role in the graduation ceremony by having Fahad Al Ali, Chief Technology Officer of stc and Acting CEO at e – Portal Holding (a subsidiary of stc Kuwait) deliver an inspiring and motivational speech for the graduates. The ceremony was also attended by executives from stc, including Danah AlJasem, General Manager of Corporate Communications at stc. During the ceremony, 130 graduates with physical disabilities were honored amongst their proud families, friends and teachers for

their hard work and relentless dedication throughout the school year.

Addressing the graduates, Fahad Al Ali, Chief Technology Officer of stc and Acting CEO at e – Portal Holding highlighted the importance of education and its role in setting the trajectory for the years to come, emphasizing the invaluable contributions that students can make to society through gained knowledge and experiences. He said, "You have taken on an unforgettable journey that will last with you forever. Despite the challenges you have faced, you have shown that with determination and support, you can achieve all the goals that you have set out to achieve."

Al Ali added, "Today, we not only celebrate your academic achievements, but the hard work and relentless effort that has brought you to this moment in time. On behalf of stc, I would like to say that we are proud to witness what you have collectively achieved. That is why we are keen to support initiatives that empower individuals and foster a more inclusive community. We believe that your unique perspectives and talents will drive innovation and create positive change in our society."

Al Ali continued, "As you move forward, remember that your journey does not end here. It is just the beginning of new challenges and opportunities. The skills and resilience you have developed will serve you well

in all your future endeavors. Now you will begin a new chapter in your life, as you look to continue your educational journey. We believe in your potential to achieve great things and to lead with innovation and compassion."

Al Ali concluded, "As you step into the next phase of your lives, remember that the future is in your hands. Your potential is limitless, and stc will continue to support you every step of the way. Congratulations on your achievements, and may you continue to inspire us all with your courage and dedication. Always strive to be the best version of yourselves, and never let any obstacle deter you from your goals. The journey may be challenging, but the rewards are immeasurable."

Following the speech, graduates were recognized for their academic excellence. As a gesture of appreciation for their performance, stc distributed gifts as a token of appreciation. This year's graduation ceremony was a remarkable milestone as it united students from 12 different schools in Kuwait, as part of the Ministry of Education's initiative to create a shared platform for celebrating their success.

Commenting on stc's sponsorship of the ceremony, Danah AlJasem, General Manager of Corporate Communications at stc, said, "We are truly proud to witness the level of

academic excellence these students managed to achieve through nothing but hard work, dedication, and a will to succeed. It is our firm belief that education is the cornerstone of a thriving society, and we are committed to supporting initiatives that provide equal opportunities for all students, regardless of their physical abilities."

AlJasem added, "At stc, we strive to foster an inclusive environment where every individual has the chance to excel and contribute to their community that falls in line with stc's strategic approach of sustainable development that includes quality education to everyone. The achievements of these graduates are a testament to what can be accomplished when we work together to break down barriers and create supportive educational pathways. This event is not just a celebration of academic success, but a reminder of the importance of inclusivity and the power of community support. As we look to the future, stc remains dedicated to empowering individuals and nurturing the next generation of leaders."

The ceremony concluded with a heartfelt appreciation for the continuous efforts of the educators and families who played a crucial role in the students' success, reinforcing stc's commitment to supporting educational initiatives and inclusivity within the community.

## Summer campaigns by Warba Bank benefit clients with promotions

### Warba presents farewell gifts to pilgrims of the Holy Kaaba

KUWAIT CITY, June 12: As part of its commitment to social responsibility, especially during the Hajj season, Warba Bank participated in bidding farewell to pilgrims of the Holy Kaaba by presenting gifts at a designated pavilion at Kuwait International Airport, Terminal T4.

In this regard, Mr. Ayman Salem AlMutairi, Director Marketing and Corporate Communication, expressed Warba Bank's dedication to being present in various locations to fulfill its social responsibilities towards society in general and its customers in particular. He extended well wishes to the pilgrims, hoping for a successful pilgrimage and forgiveness of their sins. He emphasized that the distribution of gifts, including travel bags and essentials, aimed to facilitate the pilgrims' departure to the Holy Kaaba.

Warba Bank has launched several summer campaigns to benefit its clients. Al-Mutairi highlighted the Bank's efforts to enhance clients' satisfaction by offering summer promotions with its credit and prepaid cards. These cards provide the added advantage of cashback rewards of up to 6%.



Warba team supports pilgrims with gifts at Kuwait Airport.

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

Warba Bank's cards offer access to over 1,200 lounges in international airports worldwide. Cardholders and their family members also receive complimentary travel insurance, as well as discounts of up to 20% on hotel reservations, car rentals, travel itineraries, and dining experiences across various countries. Warba Bank prioritizes clients' needs during the summer season by closely monitoring their requirements and ensuring card security. In response to the Central Bank of Kuwait's "De-raya" campaign, the Bank encourages clients to specify their travel destinations through the Warba Bank application to safeguard their bank cards throughout their summer journeys.

## Bank cooperates with 'Dive 36' Center

### Warba Bank educates children on 'environment' conservation

KUWAIT CITY, June 12: Warba Bank organized an awareness event about the sustainability project and how to preserve the environment, in cooperation with the Dive 36 Center at Al-Khiran Mall, on the occasion of World Environment Day and Month, corresponding to June.

On this occasion, the Director Marketing and Corporate Communications at Warba Bank, Ayman Salem Al-Mutairi, said that Warba Bank's organization of this event comes from Warba Bank's belief that preserving the environment is everyone's responsibility, in order to preserve the future of next generations, which may suffer if the current deterioration in the environment continues. The event was also organized to contribute to achieving environmental preservation and building a conscious generation by teaching children about sustainability and preserving the environment in the heart of the south at Al-Khiran Mall.

Al-Mutairi added that Warba Bank plays a major role in educating younger generation about the importance of sustainability and preserving the environment, and therefore the Bank was keen to be present at Al-Khiran Mall to deliver messages about this topic, as well as developing the skills of young children in this matter and teaching them about environmental awareness on World Environment Day.

He explained that part of Warba Bank's sustainability plan is plant cultivation, where children are taught how to grow plants and clean the sea and islands, amid a large family atmosphere present at this event.

Al-Mutairi pointed out that Warba Bank always supports campaigns aiming to spread environmental awareness to ensure the preservation of cultural heritage for future generations, and this event also contributed to increasing awareness of the health risks of pollutants, plastic waste, and dangerous materials if they are neglected.

Al-Mutairi stated that this event also

comes as part of the Bank's strategic focus on sustainability for the year 2024 and under the ongoing social responsibility program towards the environment. We are keen to spread awareness among members of society to maintain a sustainable environment for all.

Al-Mutairi said that through this event, we would like to send a message to all visitors of beaches to protect them from the pollution that occurs as a result of leaving waste, and we are keen on the participation of families to instill the values of protecting the environment in the hearts of our children. Warba Bank will also continue to support many initiatives and activities concerned with the environmental aspect of preserving sustainability.

He explained that Warba Bank has issued its own report on sustainability for the year 2023, which includes disclosures about the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) standards and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, in addition to following the Central Bank of Kuwait's guidelines on sustainable financing, the Capital Markets Authority's sustainability report regulations, and the Kuwait Stock Exchange's guide.

He pointed out that sustainability reports are an important tool for companies and institutions to demonstrate their commitment to social, environmental and economic responsibility, as they help enhance transparency and trust between companies, investors and society. In addition, reports help identify matters that can be improved in the Bank's performance, to motivating it to take more sustainable and effective actions in the future, and as a tool to measure the Bank's social, environmental and economic impact, sustainability reports also help enhance awareness of corporate social responsibility and its role in society and the environment. In doing so, reporting helps companies and banks improve their reputation, manage risk and meet clients' growing needs for sustainable products and services.



Warba Bank promotes environmental awareness at Al-Khiran Mall.

## KIPCO Tower raises banners for 'House of the Dragon 2' premiere on OSN+

KUWAIT CITY, June 12: OSN+, the exclusive home for HBO content in the MENA region, has joined the House of the Dragon 'Raise Your Banners' global campaign in the Middle East to celebrate the upcoming second season of one of the most-awaited TV series of the year.

The campaign features stunning digital transformations of iconic landmarks, including the KIPCO Tower in Kuwait.

The digital stunt video features KIPCO Tower's dramatic roll-down banner pledging allegiance to #TeamBlack, symbolizing the vying houses at the heart of this season's House of the Dragon.

This is just one of the many exciting visuals planned to build anticipation for the series and follows the reveal of a roll-down banner at Elephant Rock in Saudi Arabia's Al-Ula.

The Dance of the Dragons, which officially began in the Season 1 finale, continues with Daemon versus Aemond, Erryk versus Arryk, and Aegon versus Aegon.

As the Seven Kingdoms are torn apart by the question of



KIPCO Tower joins House of the Dragon campaign: OSN+ unveils stunning digital stunt.

who should succeed the Iron Throne—Queen Rhaenyra or Aegon II—each noble house must choose sides.

Queen Alicent Hightower (Olivia Cooke), King Viserys's widow and Rhaenyra's childhood friend, leads Team Green.

Queen Rhaenyra (Emma D'Arcey), King Viserys's eldest child and chosen successor, leads Team Black. Denied the Iron Throne by the Greens, Rhaenyra is determined to reclaim her birthright by Fire and Blood.

Set 200 years before the events of Game of Thrones, House of the Dragon tells the story of House Targaryen and the brutal civil war that nearly tore it apart.

Based on George R.R. Martin's "Fire & Blood," the series promises to captivate audiences with its gripping narrative and breathtaking visuals.

House of the Dragon Season 2, an eight-episode HBO Original drama series, will be available exclusively on OSN+ and OSNtv across the MENA region from June 17, 2024. OSN+ can be accessed through all your favourite devices, including major TV platforms, all iOS, and Android devices, and from the web. Find out more and stream now at [www.osnplus.com](http://www.osnplus.com)

Television

### Variety



This image released by ABC News Studios shows Demi Moore, (left), and Andrew McCarthy in a scene from the documentary 'Brats.' (AP)

### Film

Hulu documentary explores labels and legacies

## McCarthy's 'Brats' unveils 'Brat Pack' fallout

By Mark Kennedy

He's 61 now, well-off and trim. He has many accomplishments as an actor but there's this one thing he finds hard to shake: Back in 1985, he got called something.

During the Reagan administration, rising star Andrew McCarthy was lumped into an amorphous group of young actors who were changing Hollywood. They were called the "Brat Pack."

Now, it's never nice to be called a "brat" or to lose your individuality to a pack, but McCarthy and the members of this collective - Emilio Estevez, Molly Ringwald, Demi Moore, Ally Sheedy, Judd Nelson, Rob Lowe and maybe Anthony Michael Hall - seemed to implode.

"That changed my life," says McCarthy, who starred in "Pretty in Pink" and "St. Elmo's Fire." After being branded, the so-called bratty actors scattered, not wanting to work together again. The stigma, McCarthy says, was "defining." He has PTSD, he suggests.

Now almost 40 years later, McCarthy hit the road to star in and direct his new Hulu documentary, "Brats," trying to get a handle on the label and how some of the pack handled it.

First stop is a term Estevez, who acknowledges that the Brat Pack term had some early benefits but was ultimately "more damage than good."

"It created the perception that we were lightweight," he adds.

Then there are visits to Sheedy, Moore, Lowe, Jon Cryer, Tim Hutton and Lea Thompson - all who commiserate with McCarthy. (Ringwald and Nelson are notable absences, perhaps still nursing wounds.) These visits have the feeling of therapy sessions.

"Marty Scorsese, Steven Spielberg is not going to call up somebody who's in the Brat Pack," McCarthy tells Estevez, who admits to pulling out of a movie at the prospect of teaming up with McCarthy.

(Not to be rude, but the Brat Pack-adjacent Tom Cruise did a movie with Scorsese, "The Color of Money," Moore became the hottest thing in Holly-

wood in the '90s and Robert Downey Jr., also Pack-adjacent, just took home an Oscar.)

As he pays one former colleague after another a visit at their well-appointed homes, the heat of injustice has dissipated. Moore's estate with its tasteful wood panels, shaded pool, massive glass walls and Japanese-inspired minimalism doesn't exactly scream, "That label from 1985 really destroyed my life."

The doc is scored well, with songs by The Cure, Lou Reed and Steve Winwood, "Forever Young" by Alphaville and a haunting "Don't You (Forget About Me)" cover by Zoe Fox and the Rocket Clocks.

But McCarthy's visual style is too fragmented, happy to capture his scrambling camera and sound operators in the frame and changing up his shots from guerilla-style jerky iPhone images to tasteful, polished portraits. His use of old clips is excellent, incorporating not just scenes from movies but TV interview outtakes, too.

#### Transition

A more interesting thing happens in McCarthy's road movie by the halfway mark - it becomes a sort of celebration of Brat Pack movies. Cultural observer Malcolm Gladwell talks about the generational transition in Hollywood, while Susannah Gora, who wrote "You Couldn't Ignore Me If You Tried" about the Brat Pack's impact, notes that teens in the Midwest were singing British New Wave synth-pop tunes thanks to McCarthy.

Pop culture critic Ira Madison III zeroes in on the lack of diversity in Brat Pack movies, "Less Than Zero" writer Bret Easton Ellis notes the influence the movies had on his work, and screenwriter Michael Oates Palmer comments that Brat Pack movies were the first to take "young people's lives seriously."

These are the building blocks of a better movie - Gladwell cutely mentions that he used parts of Cryer's character Duckie from "Pretty in Pink" as his identity in high school - but McCarthy isn't willing to stray.

He comes across as a very thoughtful guy, able

to quote Tennessee Williams and Eugene O'Neill, reserved, shy and wry, so often deep in his feelings. But this bratty label he cannot shake. He also wrote about it in "Brat: An '80s Story." It is his Moby Dick.

That analogy works when he finally harpoons his white whale - David Blum, who at 29 in 1985, hoping to snag some attention in the journalism world, coined the phrase "Brat Pack" - a flip play on the Rat Pack - for New York magazine.

McCarthy sits down with Blum at the conclusion of the film - the aggrieved actor and the journalist meeting for the first time four decades after being dragged into the '80s cultural lexicon. This is the "You can't handle the truth" moment.

And yet McCarthy is so nice that while he makes his case well, he sort of also understands Blum's position and kind of likes him, too. Will Blum finally admit that the label is scathing? "I mean, I guess in retrospect, yes. At the time, no. I was proud of the creation of the phrase," says the writer. They end their meeting with a hug.

Like a Brat Pack movie. "Brats," a Hulu release premiering Thursday, is not rated but has smoking, love scenes and swearing. Running time: 93 minutes. Two stars out of four.

#### Also:

**LOS ANGELES:** "Origin," Ava DuVernay's stirringly humanistic adaptation of Isabel Wilkerson's bestseller "Caste: The Origins of Our Discontents," begins streaming Monday on Hulu. In the film, Aunjanue Ellis-Taylor stars as Wilkerson, portraying the author as she investigates historical and contemporary cases of caste systems while navigating personal relationships that put broad social constructs into an intimate context. "Origin" was too much overlooked during awards season and its January theatrical run despite enthusiastic reviews from critics. Those included AP Film Writer Lindsey Bahr who called it "a powerful and artistic interpretation of an academic book that was anything but an obvious candidate for a narrative feature." (AP)

**LOS ANGELES:** Billy Ray Cyrus has filed for divorce from singer Firerose after seven months of marriage.

The 62-year-old country musician filed for divorce from the 36-year-old whose legal name is Johanna Rose Hodges in a Tennessee court on May 22, citing irreconcilable differences and "inappropriate marital conduct." Cyrus is also seeking an annulment due to fraud on Hodges' part, saying in the filing that he would not have married Hodges "had he known" about the alleged fraud. The filing gives no further details on the alleged inappropriate conduct of fraud, but says each should be able to keep property that they own separately.

Representatives for Cyrus and Hodges did not immediately return requests for comment. The filing was first reported Tuesday by TMZ.

After getting married in October 2023, the musicians lived in Tennessee and released several songs together over the course of their relationship.

In an Instagram post in April, commemorating their six-month anniversary, Hodges wrote "Life isn't always easy... but it sure helps when your husband's also your best friend. Thank you Lord!"

Neither Hodges nor Cyrus has commented on the divorce via their social media accounts. (AP)

**PHILADELPHIA:** Jay-Z is putting his weight behind an effort to fund private school vouchers in Philadelphia.

The entertainment mogul's Roc Nation announced it is funding a campaign this month to drum up support for the Pennsylvania Award for Student Success, a statewide legislative proposal to spend taxpayer money on private school scholarships for low-income families in neighborhoods with low-achieving schools. "We have enjoyed such a special connection with Philadelphians, so we've made it our mission to invest in the long-term success of the city's changemakers," Roc Nation Managing Director of Philanthropy Dania Diaz said in a news release last week. Jay-Z has developed close ties to Philadelphia through Roc Na-

tion's annual Made In America festival and involvement in the REFORM Alliance, which advocates for criminal justice reform.

Vouchers are controversial in a lot of states - including Pennsylvania, where Republicans promote them as a way to help students escape underperforming schools, and teachers unions, school boards and many Democrats oppose send-



Cyrus



Jay-Z

ing taxpayer money to private and religious schools. (AP)

**WARREN, Mich.:** The lead singer of the Four Tops said a Detroit-area hospital restrained him and ordered a psychological exam after refusing to believe that he was part of the Motown music group.

Alexander Morris, who is Black, filed a lawsuit Monday against Ascension Macomb-Oakland Hospital in Warren, alleging racial discrimination and other misconduct during an April 2023 visit for chest pain and breathing problems.

Hospital staff "wrongfully assumed he was mentally ill when he revealed his identity as a celebrity

figure," the lawsuit says.

The Four Tops started in the 1950s and had hits such as "I Can't Help Myself (Sugar Pie, Honey Bunch)" and "It's The Same Old Song." The group was inducted into the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame in 1990.

Morris is not an original member, but he joined the group in 2019. (AP)

## People &amp; Places

## Music

## Spring benefit concert

## Usher, Babyface shine at Apollo Theater gala

NEW YORK, June 12, (AP): The Apollo Theater, a bastion of Black music and culture and one of New York City's most storied venues, celebrates its 90th anniversary this year.

On Tuesday, the historic theater held its annual spring benefit - its largest annual fundraising effort, this year raising \$3 million - with a star-studded event featuring Usher, Babyface, Big Daddy Kane, Jordyn Sparks and more.

Sparks opened the night with an impressive medley of Stevie Wonder's "Superstition," Aretha Franklin's "Respect," and Chaka Khan's "I'm Every Woman." Then Kym Whitley emerged as a hilarious host, joking about the producer Babyface, who was being honored, arguing that he should now be known as "Grown-man-face, sexy-face, kiss-your-face."

Later, she'd offer her own transformative story at The Apollo, sharing with the audience that it was on that stage where she first made an appearance as a stand-up comedian on television. "If you can make it at The Apollo," she said, "You can make it anywhere."

Speeches were given by a number of Apollo representatives, including President/CEO Michelle Ebanks, chairman of the board Charles Phillips, executive producer Kamillah Forbes as well as New York Gov. Kathy Hochul.

But it was the performances that really got the crowd on their feet. Dancers treated Usher to a choreographed medley of his own songs, from "Yeah!" to "Burn," "Caught Up" to "Confessions Part II" and beyond.

Usher, who just a few months ago wowed audiences with his own career retrospective while headlining the 2024 Super Bowl halftime show, was presented with the Icon Award.

In his speech, he recalled watching "Showtime at The Apollo" with his late grandmother. "I remember thinking, 'Man, someday I'm gonna make it to that stage,' and 'hopefully one day, I'll get a standing ovation,'" he said as everyone in the audience stood. "I stand before you humbled by your appreciation."



Usher

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## Legacy

"You know, they say if you make it in New York, you can make it anywhere," he continued, referencing Whitley's comments from earlier. "Well, if you can make it to The Apollo, you can do anything."

Fat Joe and Kwanza Jones, formerly winners of The Apollo's famed Amateur Night, came out and led the crowd in a singalong of Babyface's 1989 hit, "Soon as I Get Home." They were tasked with introducing the super-producer, who had been presented the day prior with the inaugural legacy award at The Apollo Theater's 2024 Walk of Fame ceremony.

"I never imagined I would get this," Babyface said during Monday's ceremony. "I never saw myself actually, you know, being here at The Apollo. I didn't want to perform here because I didn't want to get booed, but I didn't get booed," he laughed. "I'm so glad that I came here for The Apollo."

On Tuesday, his acceptance speech mostly dithered the jokes to express gratitude. "To be here at The Apollo - what's so hard for me to find the words, because if I'm honest, I just never saw myself as like being on The Apollo stage. I was always the guy behind the scenes and writing songs for everyone else," he said. "I am just in awe to be considered as part of this."

"I'm just going to thank everybody. Normally I stand up here, I'm funnier than this," he continued. "Usually, I am. But I'm just, I'm really just so taken by this, and I just want to thank you for the bottom of my heart. I appreciate it."

The night ended with a series of singers coming out on stage to serenade Babyface with some of the most famous songs he produced: Toxi Braxton's "You Mean the World to Me," Eric Clapton's "Change the World," Whitney Houston's "I'm Your Baby Tonight" and so on.

Standouts included Karyn White doing her own "Superwoman," Johnny Gill getting everyone out of their seats for his "My, My, My" and of course, Babyface himself closing the night out with "Whip Appeal." They're called classics for a reason.

## Also:

**ATLANTA:** A Georgia judge has ordered a lawyer for rapper Young Thug to spend the next 10 weekends in jail after finding him in contempt.

Defense attorney Brian Steel represents the rapper, who is currently on trial in Atlanta on charges including violation of Georgia's anti-racketeering and gang laws. Fulton County Superior Court Chief Judge Ural Glanville on Monday ordered Steel jailed after the lawyer refused to tell him how he found out about a meeting between the judge, prosecutors and a prosecution witness.

The dramatic move is the latest twist in a trial that has dragged on for over a year with no end in sight and has been plagued by problems.

Young Thug, a Grammy winner whose given name is Jeffrey Williams, was charged two years ago in a sprawling indictment accusing him and more than two dozen other people of conspiring to violate Georgia's anti-racketeering law. He also is charged with gang, drug and gun crimes and is standing trial with five of the others indicted with him.

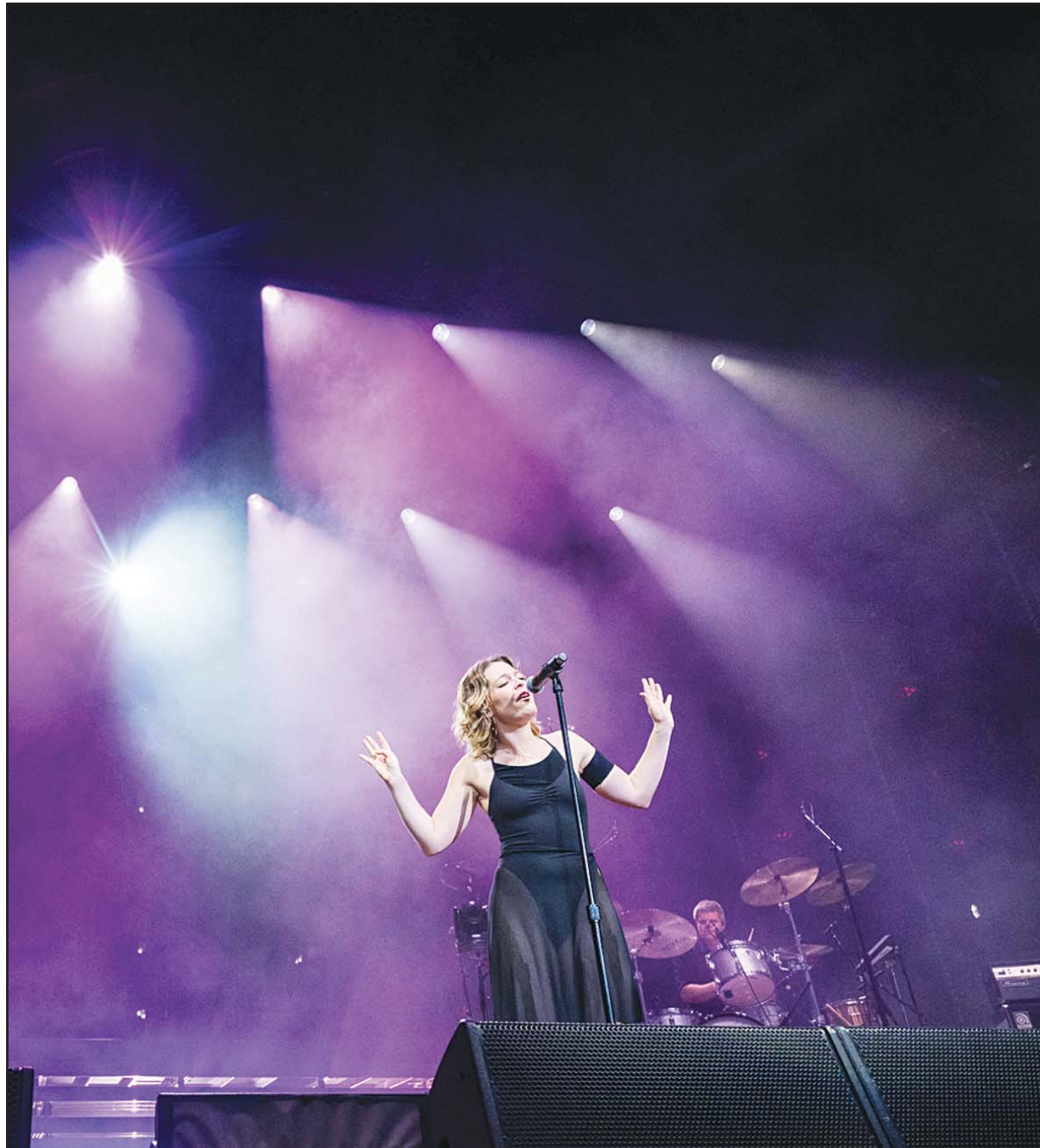
Jury selection in the case began in January 2023 and took nearly 10 months. Opening statements were in November and the prosecution has been presenting its case since then, calling dozens of witnesses.

Steel addressed Glanville in open court Monday, saying he had been informed of a meeting in the judge's chambers that morning and "made several claims regarding the sum and substance of the communication that the Court found troubling," Glanville wrote in an order finding Steel in contempt and ordering him jailed.

Only the judge, a court reporter, prosecutors, an important state witness and that witness' attorney were present for the meeting and Glanville expressed "serious concern with how this information was improperly disclosed" to Steel. Glanville told Steel several times that if he didn't reveal how he learned of the meeting and its substance he would be held in contempt, and Steel repeatedly refused, the order says.

Glanville ordered Steel to serve 20 days in the Fulton County Jail by spending the next 10 weekends there, reporting at 7 p.m. on Fridays and being released at 7 p.m. on Sundays beginning this Friday and continuing through Aug. 18.

Steel asked Glanville if he could serve his days in the Cobb County Jail, where Young Thug is being held, so he and his client could work on the rapper's defense, and Glanville said he had no problem with that and would talk to the sheriff, news outlets reported.



Maggie Rogers performs in a concert, Tuesday, June 11, in Atlanta. (AP)



Actor Dakota Johnson poses backstage before discussing the film 'Daddy' at The 92nd Street Y on Tuesday, June 11, 2024, in New York. (AP)

## Variety

**NEW YORK:** Author David Wroblewski has reached special status among contemporary authors: a two-time selection for Oprah Winfrey's book club.

Winfrey announced Tuesday that she had chosen "Familiaris," a prequel to Wroblewski's Oprah-endorsed debut novel from 2008, the Shakespearean saga "The Story of Edgar Sawtelle." The new novel, published this week, looks back to the origins of the Wisconsin-based Sawtelle family and its roots in the state's north woods.

"I'm delighted for us to dive into an epic novel from the tremendously talented bestselling author David Wroblewski with his latest creation 'Familiaris,'" Winfrey said in a statement. "David takes us on an extraordinary journey that brilliantly interweaves history, philosophy, adventure, and mysticism to explore the meaning of love, friendship and living your life's true purpose."

Additional material about "Familiaris" and the author will be available on the book club's online hub.

Wroblewski said in a statement that he was "to put it mildly, thrilled and grateful."

"I'm looking forward to discussing this story, whose characters have been part of my imaginative life for so long," he added.

Other authors in the two-time (and more) Winfrey club include Toni Morrison, Barbara Kingsolver and Wally Lamb. At times, she has selected multiple books at once. In 2021, she chose four interlinked novels by Marilynne Robinson: "Gilead," "Home," "Lila" and "Jack." (AP)

**NEW YORK:** American investor Martin Shkreli is facing a new lawsuit for allegedly retaining and sharing recordings from a one-of-a-kind Wu-Tang Clan album that he was forced to sell following his 2017 conviction on securities fraud charges.

The lawsuit was brought Monday by a cryptocurrency collective, PleasDAO, which purchased the only known copy of the album from Shkreli for \$4.75 million. The album, "Once Upon a Time in Shaolin," has not been released to the public, functioning as a rare contemporary art piece since it was auctioned off by the famed hip-hop group in 2015.

In the lawsuit filed in Brooklyn, New York, federal court, PleasDAO accused Shkreli of retaining digital copies of the album in violation of their deal and disseminating them widely among his social media followers.

They point to his recent comments on social media boasting of sharing the digital recordings with "thousands of people." Over the weekend, Shkreli played portions of the album during a livestream he hosted

## Music

## 'Ship to Shore,' a gem

## McCartney's lost classic

LOS ANGELES, June 12, (AP): The sound of Paul McCartney and Wings' "One Hand Clapping" used to only be heard on bootlegs, or in snippets available on archival releases over the years. But it's new (mostly) complete official release deserves two-handed applause.

As aging rockers empty their treasuries, McCartney steps forward with "One Hand Clapping," more than two dozen songs that were recorded 50 years ago for a video documentary and possibly a live album.

The record finds McCartney and the 1974 iteration of his band Wings in peak form as they set up shop in the familiar confines of Abbey Road Studios in London. The recordings were made while "Band on the Run" was enjoying a seven-week run at the top of the British album charts.

Maybe it's because he's in the Beatles' old studio, or maybe it's because "Band on the Run" was riding so high, but McCartney delivers spirited performances on "One Hand Clapping." He (briefly) revisits his beloved Beatles songs like "Let it Be" and reaches even further back to Buddy Holly tracks from the 1950s. But he and Wings put the most energy behind the newest material like "Jet" and "Junior's Farm."

"One Hand Clapping" serves as a fine snapshot of McCartney during this post-Beatles creative high, with a fair number of rarities. Sixteen of the 32 tracks have never been officially released before.

The only real miss with this project was the stupefying decision not to include the video, even if only as part of a higher-priced expanded edition. The video's only official release came in 2010 as part of a "Band on the Run" box set. Including it here would have made sense and given an even truer picture of the entire "One Hand Clapping" project.

That aside, the audio of "One Hand Clapping" succeeds by bringing all the songs together in one place for the first time. And that's a major win for McCartney fans who never got the bootlegs or who haven't shelled out big bucks over the years to pick up the songs that were included in dribs and drabs on other re-releases.

For more than half a century,

comment.

The lawsuit marks the latest twist for an unusual album created in protest of the devaluation of music in the streaming era, but purchased at auction by Shkreli, a man known for jacking up the price of a life-saving drug and his "Pharma Bro" persona.

Shkreli was later forced to sell the album - packaged in a hand-crafted silver and nickel case and including a 174-page book wrapped in leather - following his conviction of securities fraud charges.

PleasDAO said it bought the physical copy of the album and its digital rights over two transactions, in 2021 and 2024. They said they understood that Shkreli had destroyed any trace of the album's files. (AP)



Wroblewski



Shkreli

## Obit

## Fusion master

## Architect Maki dies at age 95

TOKYO, June 12, (AP): Japanese architect Fumihiko Maki, who won the prestigious Pritzker Prize for designs praised as smartly and artfully fusing the East with the West, has died. He was 95.

Maki, who taught architecture and urban design at Harvard, died June 6, his office, Maki & Associates, said Wednesday. Japanese media reports attributed the cause of death to old age. The office declined to confirm the reports.

The National Museum of Modern Art in Kyoto is considered one of his classic designs, with floating forms of glass, metal and concrete. Its gray exterior appears simple at first glance but sets off patterns of reflected light on rough and polished marble.



Maki

In the U.S., Maki's projects included the Yerba Buena Center for the Arts in San Francisco and 4 World Trade Center in New York. He also did the Makuhari Messe exhibition hall in Chiba, Japan, and the Hillside Terrace Complex in Tokyo.

Maki in the 1980s designed Tokyo's Spiral building, whose management mourned his death and thanked him for "the beautiful slopes and the rich space that envisioned an urban park."

## Design

In 2013, Maki complained about the then planned spaceship-like design of the 2020 Tokyo Olympics stadium, slamming it as too expensive and clashing with its surroundings. He said he had the support 100 other people, including architects, in opposing the size of the proposed design by British-Iraqi architect Zaha Hadi.

"The problems I see with the planned stadium all relate to the issue of scale," he said.

That design was eventually ditched for a more modest-looking design by Kengo Kuma which used pieces of wood for a natural Japanese look.

Born in Tokyo in 1928, Maki was educated at the University of Tokyo, the Cranbrook Academy of Art in Michigan and Harvard University Graduate School of Design.

Before opening his own design firm in 1965 in Tokyo, he worked in various offices including Skidmore Owings and Merrill, or SOM, based in Chicago, and Sert, Jackson & Associates in Cambridge, as well as the campus planning office of Washington University in St. Louis.

A devoted educator, Maki, in addition to teaching at Washington University, Harvard and the University of Tokyo, lectured around the world. His essays were published in a collection called "Nurturing Dreams" by MIT Press in 2008. In it, he explored the Japanese sense of space called "oku," which Maki described as "the core of this high-density space organized into multiple layers like an onion."

Utilizing oku allowed the Japanese to deliver a feeling of depth even in a cramped area, according to this theory.

## Concept

"In the formation of urban space, certain stable concepts that have been sifted and committed to memory by the collective unconscious of the community work automatically," Maki wrote.

"Oku, a spatial concept peculiar to Japan, is a good example, and I believe an understanding of this way of perceiving space is important in formulating ideas of what future cities should be like."

Maki was the second Japanese to win the Pritzker, hailed as the Nobel Prize of architecture, after Kenzo Tange, his mentor. Maki, along with fellow Tange students Arata Isozaki and Kisho Kurokawa, were the pillars of Japanese modernism.

The Pritzker, in selecting Maki, praised him as part of a new wave of architects rebuilding postwar Japan.

"He uses light in a masterful way making it as tangible a part of every design as are the walls and roof. In each building, he searches for a way to make transparency, translucency and opacity exist in total harmony. He uses detail to give his structures rhythm and scale," Bill Lacy, a member of the international panel of jurors that selected Maki, said at the time.

Maki was honored with other awards, such as the Wolf Prize from Israel in 1988 and the Arnold Brunner Prize from the American Academy of Arts and Letters in 1999. In 2011, the American Institute of Architects honored Maki with its highest accolade, the AIA Gold Medal.

Japanese media reports said a memorial service was planned. His office declined to give details, saying an official announcement was being prepared.

## How to beat the heat, dodge the germs

## Summertime can be germy: Expert tips to avoid sickness

By Bill Sullivan  
Indiana University

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

As flowers bloom and temperatures climb, many are eager to get back outside. But while the Sun may be shining, there is a dark side that can make the great outdoors not so great.

Gangs of germs are lurking in the woods, in the soil, in the water and in your food, ready to rain on your summer parade.

I'm a professor of microbiology at the Indiana University School of Medicine, where I study and teach about infectious disease. Here are some things to keep in mind to help you and your loved ones stay free of illness while enjoying summer activities.

There's nothing like the smell of a good barbecue and fresh goodies from your own garden. To make sure people leave your party with only good memories, be aware of germs commonly linked to food poisoning, which can result in diarrhea, cramps, nausea, vomiting and fever.

#### Bacteria

Meats, including fish and poultry, often house harmful bacteria such as Salmonella, E. coli or Listeria. Raw meat can contaminate anything it touches, so be sure to wash your hands and disinfect surfaces and utensils. To avoid cross contamination, do not keep uncooked meat near prepared foods. Meat products must be cooked to proper temperatures to ensure harmful germs are destroyed before consuming.

In addition to bacteria, a parasite called Toxoplasma gondii can cause acute food poisoning. Toxoplasma parasites are shed as microscopic oocysts in the feces of infected cats. Oocysts persist in the environment for a year or more, and other animals, including people, can inadvertently ingest them.

Upon infection, Toxoplasma forms tissue cysts in the flesh of food animals - another reason to cook your meats thoroughly. Pregnant people need to take special care in avoiding Toxoplasma, since the parasite can cross the placenta and cause miscarriage or birth defects.

To avoid getting toxoplasmosis from oocysts, people should wear gloves while gardening, wash fruits and vegetables, and make sure the sandbox is free of cat poop and covered when not in use.

Recreational water facilities, such as pools, water parks and fountains, are a great way to beat the summer heat. The smell of chlorine is a good sign that the water is being treated to kill many types of germs.

Unfortunately, some germs can remain infectious in chlorine for several minutes or days, which is plenty of time to spread from one person to another. These include viruses such as norovirus, bacteria such as E. coli, and parasites such as Cryptosporidium and Giardia.

Accidental ingestion of these germs can cause stomach problems, including diarrhea, which can become serious if it leads to dehydration. To avoid becoming infected, swim in well-maintained facilities

and avoid swallowing the water. To avoid infecting others, stay out of public water for at least a week if you have diarrhea.

Bacteria in the water that get trapped in the ear can lead to a painful infection known as swimmer's ear, which can be prevented by wearing earplugs in the water.

Ponds, rivers and lakes can also be home to these diarrhea-causing germs. Warm fresh water may also contain Naegleria fowleri, the so-called "brain-eating amoeba." While extremely rare, inhaling water containing Naegleria fowleri is almost always fatal. Wearing nose plugs can help prevent infection.

If you're going to reach for the beach, be sure to reach for waterproof bandages if you have an open wound, piercing or tattoo. Global warming has produced a rise in so-called "flesh-eating bacteria" that cause a dangerous condition called necrotizing fasciitis. These infections can be very difficult to treat and may result in surgical removal of affected tissue or limbs.

Shellfish such as oysters, clams and mussels filter ocean water as they eat, causing germs to get trapped inside their bodies. Consuming raw shellfish can lead to serious food poisoning due to infection with bacteria or Toxoplasma oocysts.

While hiking or camping, you may come across water that looks clean enough to drink, but don't be tempted.

Be sure to boil or properly filter water you drink to avoid bacteria such as E. coli and parasites such as Giardia and Cryptosporidium. These intestinal pathogens will produce cramps, nausea and diarrhea - especially unpleasant symptoms when you don't have access to indoor plumbing.

#### Parasite

After a very mild winter, you can expect a lot of ticks and mosquitoes in the summer, both of which are carriers of serious diseases. As they feed on blood, ticks can inject bacteria that cause Lyme disease or Rocky Mountain spotted fever. They can also transmit a parasite that causes babesiosis. Symptoms of illness following a tick bite should be promptly evaluated by a physician.

Mosquitoes can carry numerous viruses that are injected into the bloodstream while they take a blood meal. Common mosquito-borne viruses in the US include West Nile virus, eastern equine encephalitis and Zika. In most cases, these viruses produce flu-like symptoms that typically resolve on their own. Infection with Zika virus during pregnancy, however, can lead to birth defects, and West Nile virus can cause acute fever and neurological effects in some people.

To avoid tick and mosquito bites, wear insect repellent and keep your skin covered whenever possible. Wear light colors so the insects are more visible to you. Ticks like shade and high grass, so mow your lawn down to about 2 inches in height. Be sure to inspect your body and scalp for ticks after being outside.

It is important to pay attention to local news reporting outbreaks of infectious agents in your area or travel destination. With these precautions in mind, you're sure to have a terrific time, uninterrupted by the germs of summer. (AP)



Participants at the KFAS symposium held at DDI pose for a picture.

Over 20% of Kuwaitis affected by diabetes

## KDD, KFAS, DDI pioneer no-added-sugar ice cream for improved metabolic health

KUWAIT CITY, June 12: A groundbreaking collaboration between KDD, the Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Science (KFAS), and the Dasman Diabetes Institute (DDI) has resulted in the development of a new no-added-sugar chocolate ice cream product aimed at improving metabolic health and nutrition.

Several well-known dignitaries, senior officials from various sectors, and the general public were invited to a symposium hosted by KFAS at DDI on June 12, 2024, from 10 am to 2 pm, where the science and collaboration behind this innovative product was unveiled.

With over 20 percent of Kuwaitis affected by diabetes mellitus and a significant portion suffering from metabolic diseases and chronic health conditions, the need for healthier food options is paramount.

The initiative by KDD to create products catering to metabolic health, including improved insulin response,



One of the officials addressing the audience.

represents a significant leap in its innovation strategy of reducing or eliminating added sugars.

The research conducted by KDD in collaboration with DDI involved a double-blind randomized cross-over

clinical trial, comparing the metabolic effects of the no-added-sugar ice cream to conventional varieties with added sugar.

The results demonstrated significantly lower blood glucose and insulin responses in patients with diabetes, highlighting the potential health benefits of the new product.

This ice cream innovation is the first in a series of 'Good for Me' products developed based on the Metabolic Matrix, a science-based framework focused on the 3 pillars of protect the liver, feed the gut and support the brain. The Metabolic Matrix has gained global recognition and was featured in a peer-reviewed methods paper.

By the end of June 2024, KDD's no-added-sugar ice cream will be available in chocolate, vanilla, and strawberry flavors at major co-operatives, hypermarkets, and KDD outlets, offering consumers a delicious and nutritious treat aligned with their health goals.

### Space tourists show astronaut-like body changes

## Research examines effects of brief space travel

DALLAS, June 12, (AP) - Space tourists experience some of the same body changes as astronauts who spend months in orbit, according to new studies published Tuesday. Those shifts mostly returned to normal once the amateurs returned to Earth, researchers reported.

Research on four space tourists is included in a series of studies on the health effects of space travel, down to the molecular level. The findings paint a clearer picture of how people - who don't undergo years of astronaut training - adapt to weightlessness and space radiation, the researchers said.

"This will allow us to be better prepared when we're sending humans into space for whatever reason," said Allen Liu, a mechanical engineering professor at the University of Michigan who was not involved with the research.

NASA and others have long studied

the toll of space travel on astronauts, including yearlong residents of the International Space Station, but there's been less attention on space tourists. The first tourist visit to the space station was in 2001, and opportunities for private space travel have expanded in recent years.

A three-day chartered flight in 2021 gave researchers the chance to examine how quickly the body reacts and adapts to spaceflight, said Susan Bailey, a radiation expert at Colorado State University who took part in the research.

While in space, the four passengers on the SpaceX flight, dubbed Inspiration4, collected samples of blood, saliva, skin and more. Researchers analyzed the samples and found wide-ranging shifts in cells and changes to the immune system. Most of these shifts stabilized in the months after the four returned home, and the researchers

found that the short-term spaceflight didn't pose significant health risks.

"This is the first time we've had a cell-by-cell examination of a crew when they go to space," said researcher and co-author Chris Mason with Weill Cornell Medicine.

The papers, which were published Tuesday in Nature journals and are now part of a database, include the impact of spaceflight on the skin, kidneys and immune system. The results could help researchers find ways to counteract the negative effects of space travel, said Afshin Beheshti, a researcher with the Blue Marble Space Institute of Science who took part in the work.

#### Also:

**HOUSTON, Texas:** SpaceX's mega Starship rocket completed its first full test flight Thursday, returning to Earth

without exploding after blasting off from Texas.

It was the fourth launch of the world's biggest and most powerful rocket, standing nearly 400 feet (121 meters) tall. The three previous flight demos ended in explosions. This time, the rocket and the spacecraft managed to splash down in a controlled fashion, making the hourlong flight the longest and most successful yet.

"Despite loss of many tiles and a damaged flap, Starship made it all the way to a soft landing in the ocean!" SpaceX CEO Elon Musk said via X.

Starship was empty as it soared above the Gulf of Mexico and headed east on a flight to the Indian Ocean. Within minutes, the first-stage booster separated from the spacecraft and splashed into the gulf precisely as planned, after firing its engines.

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# Sykes returns to help Mystics secure 1st win of the season



The Olympic rings are seen on the Eiffel Tower Friday, June 7, 2024, in Paris. (AP)

Less than 50 days to go

## Paris iconic landmarks getting ready for upcoming Olympics

PARIS, June 12, (Xinhui): With the giant Olympic rings being hoisted onto the Eiffel Tower, there are now less than 50 days until the official opening of the Paris 2024 Olympic Games.

From the Luxor Obelisk at Place de la Concorde to the golden dome of Les Invalides, and from the Champ de Mars beneath the Eiffel Tower to the Grand Palais near the Champs-Elysees, the construction of temporary venues for the Paris Olympics is proceeding rapidly. This effort is part of Paris' promise to integrate the Olympics into the city, creating a fusion of sport and culture.

"The main construction work began in late March, and the dismantling work after the Games will take one to one and a half months. All temporary venues are expected to be back to normal by mid-October," said Maxieme Rosenwald, who is in charge of the

### OLYMPICS

construction of all temporary venues for the Paris Olympics, in a recent interview.

Among all the temporary venues, Place de la Concorde, located midway between the Arc de Triomphe and the Louvre, is undoubtedly the focus of attention.

This is Paris' largest city square and will host 3x3 basketball, BMX freestyle, breaking, and skateboarding events during the Olympics. These events, particularly popular among younger generations, embody the Games' youthful and urban spirit.

"This summer, spectators at Place de la Concorde will have a fantastic experience. In addition to sports, it will become an urban park with performances, photography exhibitions, street art, and various cultural activities, like a carnival," said Mathieu Collet, the event general manager of the Urban Park La Concorde.

"Spectators will also be able to watch athletes' pre-event training, which is a new experience," he added. "One challenge we face is converting one of the courts from a 3x3 basketball venue to a breaking venue, which will take about 36 hours." Since the beginning of the year, various trucks and cranes have been frequently coming and going,

Peleteiro eyes Oly success

## Nadal, Alcaraz to play doubles

MADRID, June 12, (AP): Rafael Nadal and Carlos Alcaraz will play doubles together for Spain at the upcoming Paris Olympics, the Spanish tennis federation said Wednesday.

The announcement comes three days after the 21-year-old Alcaraz won the French Open for the first time - earning his third Grand Slam trophy. Alcaraz is widely seen as the heir to Nadal in Spanish tennis, and has frequently remarked that Nadal was his childhood hero.

The 38-year-old Nadal already owns Olympic gold medals in singles (2008) and doubles (2016 with Marc López) to go alongside his 22 Grand Slam titles.

"Rafa and Carlos will be playing together in Paris," said Spain captain David Ferrer while announcing the squad.

The other Spain players in the men's Olympic team will be Pablo Carreño Busta, Alejandro Davidovich Fierstein, Spanish triple jumper Ana Peleteiro, who bounced back from becoming a mother to win the gold medal in the European Athletics

Championships in Rome on Sunday, is now setting her sights on winning a second Olympic medal in Paris.

The 28-year-old claimed a bronze medal in Tokyo and her winning jump of 14.85 meters in Rome means she is on track for more Olympic glory in Paris. Speaking to Spanish sports paper, Diario AS, Peleteiro said that her preparations were "going well because I'm healthy and I'm able to train," even though she had caught "a couple of viruses because my daughter inevitably gave them to me." She admitted that after her maternity many didn't think she would be able to be back to her best, but said that doubt was "something that has happened to me all my life." "People have always told me that I would not achieve anything because I was too lazy or that I was worthless, but I don't listen to that," she insisted.

with 100 to 250 workers on-site daily, rapidly constructing the stands. Earlier this month, the roof structure for the 3x3 basketball and breaking venues was hoisted into place for the first time, and construction is proceeding on schedule.

"For tourists, being able to watch Olympic events in the city center is an extraordinary experience," said Rosenwald. "But our biggest challenge is to closely coordinate with the Paris city government to delay or minimize road closures and reduce the impact on local residents' lives." The construction of the temporary venue at Les Invalides faces similar challenges. This site will host archery events for the Olympics and Paralympics and will also be the finish line for the marathon events.

Stands with a capacity of 4,000 spectators have already been constructed on both sides of Avenue du Marechal Gallieni.

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Lynx hand the Aces 3rd straight loss

LAS VEGAS, June 12, (AP): Alanna Smith scored 18 points, Kayla McBride had 16 points and eight assists, and the Minnesota Lynx beat the Las Vegas Aces 100-86 on Tuesday night.

All five starters for Minnesota (9-3) scored in double figures. Bridget Carleton and Courtney Williams

### BASKETBALL

each scored 15 points, and Napheesa Collier had 14 points, six rebounds and six assists.

Las Vegas (5-5) lost for the third straight game - for its worst 10-game start to a season since 2018. Alysha Clark, Megan Gustafson and Kelsey Plum each made two 3-pointers in the first quarter as Las Vegas built a 31-29 lead. But the Aces only scored 29 combined points over the next two quarters to trail 78-60 entering the fourth.

Minnesota's 20-point, fourth-quarter lead was trimmed to 86-74 with 4:39 remaining but the Aces didn't make their next field goal until the 1:46 mark.

A'ja Wilson led Las Vegas with 28 points to extend her WNBA record by scoring at least 20 points in 15 straight games. Plum scored 11 of her 13 points in the first half. Jackie Young, who has been battling an illness, was held to single digits for the second straight game.

Carleton made a 3-pointer from the corner with 0.5 seconds left before halftime to extend Minnesota's lead to 59-48.

**Mystics 87, Dream 79**

In College Park, Brittney Sykes scored 18 points in her first game since May 17, Ariel Atkins also had 18 points and the Washington Mystics won their first game of the season, beating the Atlanta Dream.



Minnesota Lynx guard Natisha Hiedeman (2) drives to the basket against Las Vegas Aces guard Jackie Young (0) during the first half of an WNBA basketball game in Las Vegas. (AP)

Washington (1-12) avoided tying the longest losing streak in franchise history with the 2012 team dropping 13 games in a row.

Sykes, who had missed the past 10 games due to an ankle injury, went 4 of 6 from 3-point range in just 14 minutes and Atkins made all three of her attempts from distance. The Mystics made a season-high 17 3-pointers, with a make from eight different players.

Washington had seven 3-pointers in the first quarter, on just 11 attempts, to take a 25-15 lead. But the Mystics were just 1 of 6 from distance in the second quarter as Atlanta got within 38-33 at the break after closing on an 8-1 run.

Sykes, Karlie Samuelson and Stefanie Dolson each made a 3-pointer in the opening three minutes of the third quarter to make it 49-38, and Washington led by at least nine the rest of the way.

Julie Vanloo added 11 points off the bench for Washington.

Rhyn Howard scored 16 points, Aerial Powers added 13 and Tina Charles had 12 points and nine rebounds for Atlanta (5-5). Allisha

Gray, averaging a team-high 16 points per game, was held to nine points on 3-of-10 shooting.

Howard, at 24 years, 43 days, became the youngest player in WNBA history to reach 200 career 3-pointers.

**Storm 95, Sparks 79**

In Seattle, Nneka Ogumike scored a season-high 26 points against her former team, Jewell Loyd added 21 points and Seattle beat Los Angeles.

Seattle has won seven of its last eight games, with the lone loss coming against Minnesota on Sunday.

Seattle scored on four straight possessions down the stretch to seal it. Skylar Diggins-Smith drove into the lane and passed it out to Ogumike for a corner 3-pointer to make it 79-70. Diggins-Smith added a 3-pointer on Seattle's next possession for a 12-point lead. Ogumike capped the 8-0 run.

Diggins-Smith finished with 19 points, five rebounds and six assists for Seattle. Sam Whitcomb made three 3-pointers to finish with nine points. Ezi Magbegor grabbed 13 boards to help the Storm rebound the Sparks 45-33.

## Jerry West, a 3-time Hall of Fame selection & NBA logo, dies at 86

LOS ANGELES, June 12, (AP): Jerry West, who was selected to the Basketball Hall of Fame three times in a storied career as a player and executive, and whose silhouette is considered to be the basis of the NBA logo, died Wednesday morning, the Los Angeles Clippers announced.

He was 86.

West, nicknamed "Mr. Clutch" for his late-game exploits as a player, was an NBA champion who went into the Hall of Fame as a player in 1980 and again as a member of the gold medal-winning 1960 U.S. Olympic Team in 2010. He will be enshrined for a third time later this year as a contributor, and NBA Commissioner Adam Silver called West "one of the greatest executives in sports history."

"He helped build eight championship teams during his tenure in the NBA - a legacy of achievement that mirrors his on-court excellence," Silver said. "And he will be enshrined this October into the Naismith Basketball Hall of Fame as a contributor, becoming the first person ever inducted as both a player and a contributor. I valued my friendship with Jerry and the knowledge he shared with me over many years about basketball and life."

West was "the personification of basketball excellence and a friend to all who knew him," the Clippers said in announcing his death. West's wife,

Karen, was by his side when he died, the Clippers said. West worked for the Clippers as a consultant for the last seven years.

He was an All-Star in all 14 of his NBA seasons, a 12-time All-NBA selection, part of the 1972 Lakers team that won a championship, an NBA Finals MVP when the Lakers lost to the Boston Celtics in 1969 - the first year that award was given out, and still the only time it went to a player on the losing team - and was selected as part of the NBA's 75th anniversary team.

### BASKETBALL

West was general manager of championship teams with the Los Angeles Lakers, helping build the "Showtime" dynasty. He also worked in the front offices of the Memphis Grizzlies, the Golden State Warriors and the Clippers. Among his many highlights as an executive with the Lakers: he drafted Magic Johnson and James Worthy, then brought in Kobe Bryant and eventually Shaquille O'Neal to play alongside Bryant.

His basketball life bridged generations: West played with Elgin Baylor, whom he called "the most supportive and the greatest player of that era," and Wilt Chamberlain. As a coach and executive, he worked with a who's-who of NBA

stars from the last 40 years: Kareem Abdul-Jabbar, Johnson, Worthy, O'Neal, Bryant, Stephen Curry, Klay Thompson, Kevin Durant, Kawhi Leonard and Paul George among them.

"I marvel at them, at the joy they brought basketball fans all over the world," West said in 2019.

Even in the final years of his life, West was considered basketball royalty. He routinely sat courtside at Summer League games in Las Vegas, often watching many games in a day while greeting long lines of players - LeBron James among them - who would approach to shake his hand.

"The game transcends many things," West said while attending Summer League last year. "The players change, the style of play may change, but the respect that you learn in this game never changes."

James, on social media, offered his condolences: "Will truly miss our convos my dear friend! My thoughts and prayers go out to your wonderful family! Forever love Jerry! Rest in Paradise my guy!" The NBA's all-time scoring leader wrote Wednesday.

West is 25th on the NBA's all-time scoring list, and while the league has never confirmed that West was in fact the model for its logo - a player dribbling a ball, set against a red-and-blue background - the league has never said otherwise, either.

## Behram carries brother's dream for China's WC qualification bid

URUMQI, China, June 12, (Xinhua): In the just concluded second stage of the 2026 FIFA World Cup Asian qualifiers, a name has captured the attention of Chinese football fans: Behram Abduweli.

The 21-year-old striker from Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region, north-

western China, boasts remarkable physical fitness and impressive speed. In his national team debut against Thailand at home last Thursday, Behram came off the bench in the second half and volleyed in the crucial equalizer, becoming the first player from Xinjiang to score for

the national team.

In Tuesday's away match against South Korea, Behram started and tirelessly ran up and down the field, vigorously challenging the defenders. His effort won widespread recognition from Chinese fans.

Thousands of kilom-

eters away from Seoul, in a modest home in Yining, Xinjiang, his elder brother, Kamiran Abduweli, and their grandfather Mijit Abdurahman were cheering for Behram in front of the TV.

The walls of their home are adorned with Behram's medals, and a cabinet is filled with his trophies. They even cleared out a storage room to keep Behram's football shoes and jerseys.

"I've never missed a single game he played," Kamiran said.

Kamiran, now a driving school instructor, once had the same dream as his brother. They lost their parents early, leaving their grandfather to care for them. To make ends meet, the brothers sold corn in the alley after school.

Their happiest moments were when they could finish selling their goods early and play football, sometimes playing with just a plastic bottle until dusk.

"Once we started playing football, all our worries vanished," Behram recalled.

The hardships of life did not diminish their pas-

sion for football. Their talent soon became evident, and in elementary school, a PE teacher told them that playing football well could change their lives.

"We trained relentlessly. One of our biggest motivations was the hope that football would lead us to a better life," Behram said.

In 2015, Kamiran was discovered by a football club in Nanjing, while Behram was also scheduled to take part in a national youth football competition in the distant Shandong. Unable to afford travel expenses for both, Kamiran made a difficult decision to relinquish his opportunity for his brother.

"Our family's condition was tough, and our grandfather worked very hard. As the elder brother, I had to take responsibility, so I decided that Behram should go," Kamiran said.

At the age of 13, Behram left home with only 2,000 yuan, approximately 270 U.S. dollars. In October 2021, he was elected into Shandong Taishan FC, firmly stepping into his lifelong dream.

"When he joined Shandong, I couldn't help but feel a twinge of envy,"

said Kamiran, "He used to wear my old football shoes. When I stopped playing, I bought him the best shoes I could afford." Through phone calls and messages, Kamiran closely followed his brother's progress, advising him that with changing life circumstances, football should be a heartfelt pursuit rather than just a means of livelihood.

"I realized that only by being more disciplined and dedicated could I go further with the football I love," said Behram.

Humble and disciplined, Behram began to excel. In 2023, he played a crucial role in helping the national youth team reach the AFC U-20 Asian Cup quarterfinals for the first time in nine years. In March this year, his grandfather and Kamiran flew to Shanghai to witness him receive the 2023 China Golden Boy Award (U21).

Last year, Behram used his savings to buy a new house in Yining for his family.

"I never got to play professional football, but I hope my brother can fulfill our shared dream and go further," said Kamiran.

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# Pakistan finally get first win at T20 World Cup

Australia trounce Namibia by 9 wickets

**WESTBURY, June 12, (AP): Four. Six. Four. With three big heaves of the bat on consecutive balls, Mitch Marsh finished off a nine-wicket rout of Namibia that secured Australia's place in the playoff stage of cricket's Twenty20 World Cup.**

On a day that started with 2022 runner-up Pakistan beating Canada by seven wickets to maintain its slim hopes of progressing and finished with Australia's emphatic win, Sri Lanka's chances faded following a washout against Nepal. "A professional performance," Marsh said in an understated assessment after Australia bowled out Namibia for 72 and then reached 74-1 with 14 overs to spare. "Great to qualify for the Super 8s."



Pakistan's Mohammad Rizwan runs after playing a shot during the ICC Men's T20 World Cup cricket match between Pakistan and Canada at the Nassau County International Cricket Stadium in Westbury, New York. (AP)

Canada's inexperienced batters crumbled against pace for yet another low score at the T20 World Cup as Pakistan finally registered its first win after losses to the United States and India.

Pakistan's four-pronged pace attack contained Canada to 106-7 with only opening batter Aaron Johnson showing aggression in his 44-ball knock of 52.

Mohammad Rizwan's unbeaten 53 anchored Pakistan, coming off a narrow loss to fierce cricket rival India on the weekend, to 107-3 in 17.1 overs.

"Good for us, we needed this win," Pakistan skipper Babar Azam said. "We started well with the bowling, in the first six overs (and) we know we had to be up to the mark."

## CRICKET

Johnson sent early tremors into the former champions with his back-to-back boundaries off Shaheen Shah Afridi's first two balls of the match.

But Mohammad Amir, who came out of retirement for the World Cup, responded by taking 2-13 and buckling the batters as wickets continued to fall.

Johnson was dropped on 44, raised his half-century with his fourth six before he too was finally undone by Naseem Shah in the 14th over.

Fast bowler Haris Rauf became the third quickest bowler to complete 100 wickets in T20 internationals when he had Shreyas Movva (2) caught behind and then found the edge of Ravinderpal Singh's bat in the same over to finish with 2-26.

Rizwan and Babar (33) shared a 63-run stand before the Pakistan skipper banded his bat on the wicket in anger when he tried to guide a delivery to third man and was caught behind. Rizwan's run-a-ball half-century saw Pakistan over the line.

Pakistan, the 2022 runner-up, needs to beat Ireland in its last game and also hope co-host U.S. lose both its remaining games to India and Ireland to have a chance of advancing.



Australia's Travis Head bats against Namibia during an ICC Men's T20 World Cup cricket match at Sir Vivian Richards Stadium in North Sound, Antigua and Barbuda. (AP)

The Americans opened the tournament with a win over Canada before edging Pakistan in a Super Over tie-breaker in the upset of the tournament.

Heavy rain in Florida meant former champion Sri Lanka and Nepal had to share the competition points in an outcome that ensured South Africa secured a spot in the playoffs and put the Sri Lankans on the brink of a group-stage exit. There was no play possible in the Group D match at Lauderhill, leaving Sri Lanka without a win in three games.

## Figo speaks highly of joint bid for 2030 WC

GENEVA, June 12, (Xinhua): Portugal football legend Luis Figo said in a recent interview that he has high hopes for the FIFA 2030 World Cup in Morocco, Portugal and Spain and that hosting the tournament will bring Portugal together.

"In Portugal, hosting the FIFA World Cup 2030 will bring the country together like never before. I believe that we will see the Portuguese people of all ages, and all backgrounds, come together like never before, to deliver a truly incredible event," said Figo, who had been capped 127 times for Portugal in his career.

Figo had played for many European powerhouses, such as Barcelona, Real Madrid and Inter Milan, winning four league titles in Spain and four in Italy, as well as other glories.

"It will of course be a great opportunity to showcase Portugal to the world, and I'm excited about the potential to highlight all regions of our beautiful country. Morocco, Portugal and Spain have already proved themselves by organizing

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other major events. We have the infrastructure, facilities and expertise to host a truly exceptional event," he added.

As the sole candidates, Morocco, Portugal and Spain announced a joint bidding in November 2023, while Uruguay, Argentina and Paraguay also confirmed as bidders to host the centenary celebration with one 2030 World Cup match in each country. FIFA will vote for the host nations at the FIFA Congress later this year.

"This would also be a unique World Cup, bridging two continents together. Through a culmination of different cultures, I believe the event will unite people through their strong passion of football and offer a great experience for visitors from across the world," Figo said.

## 'We're readying for all imaginable danger'

# Hooligan fears shadow Euro 2024 as German police set for their biggest deployment ever

BERLIN, June 12, (AP): Clashes between weapon-wielding fans. Organized fights between hundreds of supporters. Late-night attacks. Life-threatening injuries.

A recent surge in violence around soccer games is contributing to concerns over security when Germany hosts the European Championship.

"We're readying for all imaginable dangers with high levels of deployment from all security authorities," said German interior minister Nancy Faeser, who said the country is preparing for all manner of threats, from hooligans, to terrorists, to cyber criminals. "The police will have a very visible presence," she said.

Faeser's ministry confirmed some 22,000 police officers will be on duty each day for the tournament, with no vacations.

"For the federal police it's the largest deployment since it was founded in 1951," ministry spokesman Lars Harmsen told The Associated Press.

German police will be supported by police from countries participating in the tournament, and internal border controls have already been temporarily reintroduced.

Euro 2024 features matches in 10 cities, including four in the densely populated Rhine-Ruhr metropolitan region - easily accessible from neighboring countries with some of the best rail links in Europe.

The tournament presents multiple opportunities for soccer-related violence, which has been increasing steadily around Europe since 2021. Last season, one fan in Greece and one in France were killed in fights. The season started and ended with attention-grabbing clashes and even saw intense soccer rivalries carried into other sports.

British police in 2022 reported more arrests in any season since 2013-14, and in 2023 they reported issuing more banning orders than at any time since 2010-11, as well as an increase in arrests from the season before. In France, more than 100 police officers were injured in soccer-related incidents during the 2022-23 season. The violence continued last season with multiple incidents, including pre-arranged fights and coaches transporting fans being pelted with objects.

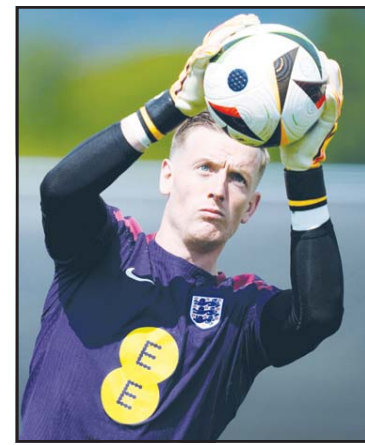
Among the recent incidents, rivals from Lyon and Paris Saint-Germain fought a pitched battle at a motorway stopoff before the French Cup final last month.

That same weekend, fans of Dutch club Utrecht clashed violently with police. One officer needed hospital treatment and others were treated at the scene.

Also that weekend, soccer rivalry spilled into EuroLeague basketball finals in Berlin with coordinated late-night attacks by Olympiakos fans and Serbian allies from Red Star Belgrade against supporters of Olympiakos' Greek rival Panathinaikos. Police arrived to find blood-covered men, with many injured from baseball bats and batons and one in a life-threatening condition. Red Star were not even playing at the tournament and arrived undetected.

Alliances among hooligan firms are one of the hazards facing German authorities at Euro 2024. Cross-national club rivalries carrying into the international scene make it harder to identify and control troublemakers.

Italian ultras from Atalanta joined Eintracht Frankfurt fans to fight Napoli supporters before a Champions League game. The Atalanta fans helped Eintracht fans circumvent a



England's goalkeeper Jordan Pickford holds the ball during a training session in Blankenhain, Germany ahead of their Group C soccer match against Serbia at the Euro 2024 soccer tournament. (AP)

travel ban to enter Italy through a club ally in Calabria.

The season began with the death of a fan in Athens after heavy clashes between supporters of Greek club AEK and Croatian side Dinamo Zagreb before a Champions League qualifier. Dinamo fans were joined by supporters of Panathinaikos, a fierce rival of AEK, underlining dangerous alliances.

"Hooligan firms who are keen on fighting it out, they're much more organized than before," German soccer researcher and author

Christoph Wagner told the AP. "Red Star coming down with Olympiakos, that's the kind of thing people don't have on their monitors."

England's game against Serbia on June 16 in Gelsenkirchen stands out since both fan groups have a history of domestic and international violence.

Euro 2016 in France was marred by violence as Russian hooligans roamed Marseille attacking English fans. Many known English hooligans were absent because more than 2,000 were banned from traveling. But many of those bans will have elapsed before Euro 2024.

Gelsenkirchen's location in the Rhine-Ruhr region could be a factor. Fans staying in Cologne can reach Gelsenkirchen within an hour. Those staying in Düsseldorf, Wuppertal, Essen or Duisburg are even closer

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and could arrive by car.

British newspaper The Daily Telegraph, citing German police intelligence, reported Tuesday that up to 500 Serbian hooligans planned to arrive.

Other high-risk games involve Poland, Croatia, Romania, the Netherlands and the Czech Republic.

Hooligans from Poland are among Europe's most violent. Last November, police arrested 46 Legia Warsaw fans before a Europa Conference League game against Aston Villa. Four police were injured.

German groups, such as Eintracht Frankfurt or Schalke 04 from Gelsenkirchen, may look for confrontation when teams are playing in their city.

## Best of the Rest

**Can replaces Pavlovic:** Germany coach Julian Nagelsmann has called up Borussia Dortmund midfielder Emre Can to replace Bayern Munich's Aleksandar Pavlovic, who will miss the European Championship because of illness.

The German soccer federation said Wednesday that Pavlovic, a young midfielder who made his international debut in last week's 0-0 draw with Ukraine, was unable to join the squad for the 2-1 win over Greece - Germany's final warmup for Euro 2024.

Can, who has played 43 games for Germany, will be expected to provide backup for Toni Kroos, Robert Andrich and Pascal Gross.

"He immediately expressed his enthusiasm and willingness to join the team. We wanted another player in the squad who has played a lot of games and who knows how to handle the pressure. He can fulfill the profile we need," Nagelsmann said of Can.

Can hasn't played under Nagelsmann before. The 30-year-old last played for Germany in the 2-1 win over France under interim coach Rudi Voller in September. Voller had taken over for one game after Hansi Flick was fired. Nagelsmann was appointed Germany coach on Sept. 22.

Germany opens Euro 2024 on Friday against Scotland in Munich. (AP)

**Seško opts to stay at Leipzig:** Slovenia forward Benjamin Seško has turned down reported interest from Arsenal and other Premier League clubs to extend his stay at Leipzig.

The Bundesliga club said Wednesday that the 21-year-old Seško had extended his existing contract by a year to 2029.

Arsenal, Chelsea and Manchester United were all reportedly interested in signing the prolific forward. Seško scored 18 goals in 42 games across all competitions last season after joining Leipzig from sister club Salzburg last summer. (AP)

**Prague promote Friis:** Sparta Prague promoted assistant coach Lars Friis to lead the Czech champion on Wednesday, replacing coach Brian Priske who is moving to Dutch team Feyenoord.

Sparta said the 48-year-old Friis was given a multi-year contract. Before joining the coaching staff 18 months ago as assistant to Priske, Friis was head coach of Danish clubs Viborg and Aalborg.

"It was most important for us to continue in our work according to a clearly set club system," Sparta sport director Tomáš Rosický said.

Both Friis and Priske are Danish. Priske came to Sparta two years ago and immediately led struggling Sparta to its first title after nine years. He successfully defended the title this year and did the double by winning the Czech Cup. Under Priske, Sparta reached the round of 16 in the second-tier Europa League this season where it was eliminated by Liverpool.

Sparta agreed to release Priske before the end of his contract to take over Feyenoord whose coach Arne Slot became the Liverpool manager as the replacement for Jürgen Klopp. (AP)

## Japan beat US in warmup

# Bastos fires Botafogo to victory

RIO DE JANEIRO, June 12, (Agencies): A second-half goal from Angola international defender Bastos gave Botafogo a 1-0 home win over Fluminense in Brazil's Serie A championship on Tuesday.

The 32-year-old former Lazio center-back put the hosts ahead just after the hour at the Olympic stadium by heading home following Damian Suarez's cross.

The visitor didn't have a single shot on target as Botafogo eased to its fifth win of the campaign and reclaimed top-spot in the 20-team standings.

Fluminense - who has not won in the league since a 2-1 home defeat of Vasco da Gama on April 20 - dropped 16th, 10 points further back.

In other Brazilian Serie A fixtures on Tuesday, Corinthians drew 2-2 at

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Atletico Goianiense, Juventude was held to a 1-1 home draw by Vitoria and Atletico Mineiro prevailed 2-1 at Bragantino.

The United States heads to its first men's Olympic soccer tournament since 2008 off a performance it would rather forget.

Shota Fujio converted a penalty kick in the sixth minute, Mao Hosoya added a goal in the 69th and Japan won 2-0 in an under-23 game on Tuesday night in the Americans' last warmup match.

"Since we started this process eight months ago, this was I would say the lowest performance by far that we had," U.S. coach Marko Mitrovic said. "I strongly believe that this group can do much better than they showed today." Japan was awarded the penalty kick when Koki Saito flicked the ball off the right arm of defender Bryan Reynolds at the edge of the penalty area. Fujio sent the penalty kick to Patrick Schulte's right as the goalkeeper

jumped to the left.

Japan scored its second goal after intercepting John Tolkin's throw-in. Shunsuke Mito dribbled toward the goal and his pass deflected off defender Jonathan Tomkinson and Schulte, and Hosoya tapped in the rebound from 4 yards.

"Obviously, it wasn't the game that we wanted to end kind of this journey on going into the Olympics," said midfielder Paxten Aaronson, the younger brother of national team midfielder Brenden Aaronson. "The guys know that that one game doesn't define us." Japan midfielder Ribito Yamamoto was stretched off in the 24th minute after getting hit flush in the face with a shot.

Schulte started in goal, with Reynolds at right back, Walker Zimmerman and Tomkinson in central defense and Caleb Wiley at left back. Tanner Tessmann, Aaronson, Duncan McGuire, Johan Gomez and Griffin Yow were in midfield and Taylor Booth headed the attack.

Midfielder Gianluca Busio didn't play after hurting an ankle while playing for Venezia in its playoff against Cremonese on June 2, when it earned promotion to Serie A.

The U.S. will open against host France on July 24, then meet New Zealand and Guinea. Japan plays Paraguay, Mali and Israel.

Men's Olympic soccer is limited to players under 23, with each team's 18-man roster allowed three players over the age limit. The 31-year-old Zimmerman captained the U.S. and was the only overage American player to dress.

Rosters of two goalkeepers and 16 outfield players must be submitted by July 3, and each team will designate up to four standbys, including one goalkeeper.

"The U.S. has never brought home a medal and I think this team can do that," Tessmann said.

Players spent part of their leadup to the match in a challenging experience.



United States forward Cade Cowell (9) and Japan midfielder Kein Sato (10) chase after the ball during the second half of an international friendly soccer match in Kansas City, Kan. (AP)



The Belgium soccer team arrive at the airport in Stuttgart, Germany ahead of the Euro 2024 European soccer Championships. (AP)

# Sports

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## 'Asian Cup qualification revitalizes Kuwaiti soccer'

We deserved the win over Afghanistan: Pinto

By Khaled El Anzi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

**KUWAIT CITY, June 12:** The President of the Football Association, Abdullah Al-Shaheen, dedicated Al-Azraq's qualification for the 2027 Asian Cup finals in Saudi Arabia and the decisive round of the 2026 World Cup qualifiers to His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, and His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmed Al-Abdullah.

Al-Shaheen highlighted that this qualification marks a positive turning point for Kuwaiti soccer, stating, "Our ambition requires developing a technical plan that matches our goals for the upcoming competitions."

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Expressing his delight over Al-Azraq's victory against Afghanistan, Al-Shaheen remarked, "I am very happy because qualifying for the 2027 Asian Cup and competing for a spot in the 2026 World Cup has brought joy and confidence back to the Kuwaiti people after a long absence from the international stage."

He continued, "Building a team in two years is challenging, and reviving determination and hope after years of setbacks is even more so. However, through collective effort, we have achieved this milestone, restoring Kuwait's presence in continental competitions and bringing happiness to our people."

Al-Shaheen concluded, "We have closed the chapter on these qualifiers and are now focused on developing a technical plan that aligns with our future ambitions. While we recognize the strength of our competition, we are determined and hopeful. We will not be distracted by naysayers and will work as a united Kuwaiti federation to ensure the success of



The Kuwaiti players celebrate their qualification for the Asian Cup finals in Saudi Arabia.

Al-Azraq."

Team coach Rui Pinto stated that Kuwait deserved to win and qualify, attributing the success to the players' relentless efforts and the tremendous public support. In the post-match press conference, Pinto highlighted the improvement in Al-Azraq's performance since he took over, leading to their qualification for the Asian Cup finals.

Eid Al-Rashidi, who scored the

winning goal against Afghanistan, was named the best player of the match. Al-Rashidi commented, "The match was difficult, but we achieved our goal. Thank you to the fans for their unwavering support."

He added, "We face a tough challenge in the decisive round of the World Cup qualifiers, which requires high concentration and exceptional preparation."

### So can Germany

## Turkey can expect strong support from Turkish-German community at Euro '24

**DUESSELDORF, Germany, June 12, (AP):** Six years ago, Ilkay Gündogan's place on the German national team was in question over a photograph with Turkey's president. Now he's the team captain.

When Gündogan leads the German national team out against Scotland in the European Championship opener Friday, he will be its first captain of Turkish heritage at a major tournament.

To some in the large Turkish-German community, the Barcelona midfielder embodies a "hybrid identity" that is gaining ground even in the face of political gains for the anti-migration far right, said Caner Aver, researcher at the Center for Turkish Studies and Integration Research in the German city of Essen.

While Gündogan had to choose which country to represent on the field, fans can support both. As the tournament nears, Aver bought one German and one Turkish national team shirt for

his 6-year-old son, cut them in half, and stitched the halves together to make his own hybrid kit.

"I think there will be a lot of people who support both national teams and who would probably be pleased if they were to meet at some point in the semi-finals or final," Aver told The Associated Press.

One of those supporting both Germany and Turkey is Osman Eroglu, who is a goalkeeper and board member at Türkücü Ratingen, a Turkish community soccer club on the outskirts of Euro 2024 host city Düsseldorf.

"For us, for people with a migration background in the third or the fourth generation by now, it's a European Championship in our own country too, after all," Eroglu told The AP. "It's double the joy because Turkey is represented this year too, so there are two teams straight away that you can support and cross your fingers for."

Others question whether players from minority groups might be scapegoats for German fans or the media if the team falls short. Some even see choosing Germany over Turkey as an act of betrayal. Gündogan was particularly targeted with booing by some fans of the Turkish national team in a friendly game against Germany in Berlin last year that Turkey won 3-2.

When Gündogan and teammate Mesut Özil, another star Germany player of Turkish heritage, posed for photos with Turkey's president Recep Tayyip Erdogan in the run-up to the 2018 World Cup, they faced pointed criticism from the German soccer federation's president at the time, Reinhard Grindel, who said Erdogan didn't sufficiently share the organization's "values."

After the World Cup, Özil quit the national team, citing a "feeling of racism and disrespect" following anti-Turkish

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comments from far-right politicians and fans. Özil never played for Germany again and retired from soccer last year.

Younis Kamil is an academic and soccer coach of Sudanese and German heritage who is working with a major Turkish community organization in Germany and the national Olympic committee on a project around Euro 2024 and sports participation for people with a family history of migration.

Even with Gündogan as captain, there are few people of Turkish heritage and from other minority groups in coaching and authority roles in German soccer, Kamil said.

"There's still a gap between the the possibility of identification with the German national team, and I think one of the main reasons is the lack of representation in the decision-making structures, and also experiences of discrimination young people make in their daily lives," Kamil told the AP.

## Al-Nasr honors weightlifting team

By Khaled El Anzi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

**KUWAIT CITY, June 12:** The Al-Nasr Club's weightlifting team held a ceremony to honor the "Weightlifting" athletes for securing second place in the first Independence Championship. This was the weightlifter's first appearance since the team was formed less than a year ago. The honored athletes are Hadeel Al-Shammari, Fatima Al-Awadi, Amal Al-Sharifi, Anfal Al-Muzain, Haya Al-Sharhan, Abrar Al-Fahd, and Haya Al-Mayass.

Ahmed Al-Adwani, Director of Weightlifting at Al-Nasr Club, expressed his sincere gratitude to the Board of Directors for their ongoing support and interest in weightlifting. He emphasized that the women's achievement did not come by chance but was the result of significant effort by the Board of Directors, specifically Sultan Al-Mutairi, the technical and administrative staff, and the players over the past year.

Al-Adwani highlighted that honoring the female athletes

was well-deserved, given their impressive accomplishment of securing second place in the first women's weightlifting championship within such a short time frame.

Abrar Al-Fahd remarked on the team's rapid formation and success, achieving runner-up position in the first Al-Istiqal Women's Championship. She thanked her fellow athletes, the technical and administrative staff, and the club's management for their support.

### WEIGHTLIFTING

"Our ambition is great," she added, "Our goal is to place first in Kuwait and to compete in the Arab and West Asian championships."

Al-Nasr Club's weightlifting coach, Hussein Saeed, also expressed his happiness with the "Annabi Women" securing second place in the Independence Championship. He thanked the players for their full commitment to training and their honorable performance in the tournament.



The honored athletes display their certificates.

### Dutchman in negotiations to extend contract

## 'Ten Hag to keep job after performance review'

**MANCHESTER, England, June 12, (AP):** Erik ten Hag will stay on as Manchester United manager and is in negotiations to extend his contract, a person familiar with the situation told The Associated Press on Tuesday.

The person spoke on the condition of anonymity because the decision had not been publicly announced.

The decision ends months of uncertainty over Ten Hag's future after he oversaw United's worst league campaign in 34 years, but ended the season by winning the FA Cup with a victory over Manchester City.

United carried out an end-of-year review after last month's cup final and decided to stick with Ten Hag, who has won two trophies in as many seasons

since joining the club from Ajax in 2022.

The FA Cup followed the English League Cup, which the Dutchman won in his first year at Old Trafford. But his second season in charge saw the 20-time champion suffer its lowest Premier League finish - eighth - losing 19 times in all competitions.

### SOCCER

Ten Hag keeps his job in the face of a major overhaul of United's soccer operations by new co-owner Jim Ratcliffe.

British billionaire Ratcliffe bought a 27.7% stake in the club in February and has hired a new CEO and technical director, with a sporting director on

the way.

Ten Hag, who won three Dutch titles with Ajax, was Ratcliffe's last major call. He survived despite failing to meet Ratcliffe's challenge of securing Champions League qualification for next season.

Ten Hag is United's fifth permanent manager since Alex Ferguson retired in 2013 during a period of decline on the field. It has gone 11 years without winning the title.

David Moyes, Louis van Gaal, Jose Mourinho and Ole Gunnar Solskjær all failed to return the club to its past glories.

Ten Hag went into the cup final under intense pressure and it was not known if a win would be enough to save his job.



In this file photo, Turkey's fans celebrate at the KoelnArena-Dome prior to the soccer EURO 2008 semi-final match between Germany and Turkey in Cologne, western Germany. (AP)