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40 flights set for Hajj pilgrims' return to Kuwait

## Kuwait Amir, Crown Prince congratulate Saudi King on Hajj success

### Amir wishes joyous Eid to citizens and residents

KUWAIT CITY, June 18, (KUNA): The Amiri Diwan on Friday relayed Eid Al-Adha greetings from His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah to Kuwait's citizens and residents, wishing them happy Eid amid amity, security and safety.

The Amiri Diwan seized this blessed opportunity to convey Eid greetings to His Highness the Amir, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah and His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah.

His Highness the Amir also wished both Arab

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KUNA photo His Highness the Amir gives a recorded statement during the inauguration of the new branch of George Bush Library.

### Envoy honors Bush's legacy

## Amir commends Bush Foundation's vital role

WASHINGTON, June 18, (KUNA): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah has affirmed the significant role played by George Bush H.W. Presidential Foundation for boosting noble values and expressed congratulations on the inauguration of its new branch in Texas.

In a recorded statement during the inauguration ceremony and the late US president's 100th birthday anniversary, His Highness the Amir addressed him and the present participants in the activity, stating, "On behalf of myself and the State of Kuwait, Government, and people, we are pleased to offer good congratulations to the United States of America, its friendly people and the gracious Bush family on the annual advent of the late president George Bush Senior's anniversary."



Sheikha Al-Zain

"We thank you for the invitation to partake in memorizing this anniversary while recalling with all pride the great alliance that had brought us together during the peak of the crisis that had been experienced by the State of Kuwait during the flagrant Iraqi aggression in 1990.

"Due to the sincere efforts that had been masterminded by President George Bush Senior, our partners under the leadership of the friendly United States expressed serious readiness to defend ideal values, justice and freedom, international laws, and Kuwait's legitimacy.

"We in the State of Kuwait deeply admire President George Bush (Senior), his sagacious stands, sacrifices of the American soldiers, and the American people's support for our state; these are the most prominent chapters in the history of the distinguished and historic relations between the two friendly countries.

"Moreover, we express our deep appreciation of the George Bush Foundation for its continuous efforts for boosting the noble and ideal values and we offer heartfelt congratulations on the inauguration of the new branch of George Bush Library that constitutes a center for knowledge.

"In conclusion, we express our deep gratitude for the legacy of President George Bush and the friendly United States of America, appreciation of the spirit of solidarity, friendship, and our hopes for further progress and distinctiveness for everybody."

Meanwhile, the State of Kuwait Ambassador to the US Sheikhha Al-Zain Al-Sabah has recalled the role of the late President George H.W. Bush in mobilizing an international coalition to liberate the State of Kuwait from the Iraqi invasion in 1990.

Ambassador Al-Zain was speaking to KUNA during the

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### NewsWatch

**RIYADH:** Saudi Crown Prince and Prime Minister Prince Mohammad bin Salman called on the international community to take all measures to immediately stop the Israeli occupation aggression on the Gaza Strip and ensure the protection of Palestinian civilians.

This came during the annual Hajj reception ceremony at the Royal Court of the Mina Palace on Monday, Saudi Press Agency (SPA) reported.

The Crown Prince emphasized the need to implement recent UNSC resolutions for an immediate Gaza ceasefire and recognize Palestine as an independent state along the 1967 borders, with East Jerusalem as its capital. (KUNA)

**BAGHDAD:** Iraq and Saudi Arabia collectively called for the de-escalation of violence in the Gaza Strip amid talks between Prime Minister Mohammad Al-Sudani and Saudi Trade Minister Majid Al-Qasbi on Tuesday.

Baghdad and Riyadh backed all efforts aiming to halt the surging violence in the Palestinian enclave, subsequently allowing the delivery of urgent aid through "humanitarian corridors," according to a statement by the Iraqi prime minister's office.

Bilateral relations, covering an array of fields running the gamut from military cooperation to political and trade ties, was chief among the matters discussed, added the statement, heaping praise on Saudi Arabia for its strenuous efforts to ensure the success of the annual Islamic Hajj pilgrimage. (KUNA)

By Abdel Nasser Al-Aslami  
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff and Agencies

KUWAIT CITY, June 18: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah sent on Tuesday a cable to the King of Saudi Arabia Salman bin Abdulaziz Al-Saud, congratulating him on the success of the Hajj (greater pilgrimage) season.

His Highness the Amir lauded the huge effort by the Kingdom's leadership in facilitating the pilgrimage of millions from across the globe who came to Makkah to perform this sacred ritual, commending that the Saudi authorities for using the latest in technologies and services to aid pilgrims.

His Highness the Amir praised the efforts of Prince Khaled Al-Faisal bin Abdulaziz Al-Saud -- governor the Makkah region and head of the Hajj central committee -- and Prince Abdulaziz bin Saud bin Naif Al-Saud -- Minister of Interior head of the supreme Hajj committee -- for their endless efforts to facilitate Hajj for pilgrims.

He also wished the leadership of Saudi Arabia and people evermore success and prosperity.

His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah sent on Tuesday a cable of congratulations to Saudi King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al-Saud on the success of the Hajj (greater pilgrimage) season.

In the cable, His Highness Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled praised Saudi Arabia for using



Muslim pilgrims cast stones at pillars in the symbolic stoning of the devil, the last rite of the annual Hajj, in Mina, near the holy city of Makkah, Saudi Arabia, Tuesday, June 18, 2024. (AP)

the latest in technology and services to help pilgrims from all over the world to perform their Hajj with ease.

His Highness the Crown Prince praised the efforts of Prince Khaled Al-Faisal bin Abdulaziz Al-Saud -- governor the Makkah region and head of the Hajj central committee -- and Prince Abdulaziz bin Saud bin Naif Al-Saud -- Minister of Interior head of the supreme Hajj committee -- for their outstanding efforts to facilitate Hajj for pilgrims.

He also wished Saudi Arabia, leadership and people, all the success and prosperity.

His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah sent on Tuesday a congratulatory cable to King of

Saudi Arabia Salman bin Abdulaziz Al-Saud on the successful Hajj (greater pilgrimage) season.

On Sunday, Ambassador of Kuwait to Saudi Arabia Sheikh Sabah Nasser Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah Sunday praised the great efforts made by the Kuwaiti Hajj delegation in serving pilgrims.

Speaking to KUNA and Kuwait TV after his visit to the headquarters of the Kuwaiti Hajj delegation in Makkah that the Kuwaiti delegation and Kuwaiti pilgrimage agents are a source of pride, as they "have always been committed to serving the pilgrims of Kuwait."

He expressed his highest congratulations to King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al-Saud, and to the Crown Prince Mohammad bin Salman, for the success of the Hajj season and the blessed Eid Al-Adha, as well as Eid congratulations to the Saudi people.

He said that what Saudi Arabia is doing in all its sectors in serving the pilgrims of the Holy House of Allah is a tremendous effort, calling on the Almighty to reward them with all goodness.

Meanwhile, President of Kuwaiti Hajj Caravan Owners Union Ahmed Al-Duwaihi has announced that 40 flights will be operated starting from Wednesday for the return of pilgrims after performing Hajj rituals in Saudi Arabia.

He praised Allah for the safe return of the pilgrims, and for accepting their Hajj and good deeds. He reassured the public that the

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# Kuwait sweep nets expat violators in Bneid Al-Gar

Amnesty extended till June 30 amid crackdown

By Munif Naif

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff and Agencies

KUWAIT CITY, June 18: The Ministry of Interior recently carried out an intensive security campaign in Bneid Al-Gar, which resulted in the arrest of several expatriates who violated the Domestic Labor Law (Article 20) and were referred to the labor shelter in preparation for their deportation.

In a press statement, the ministry disclosed that these expatriates were arrested in an

accommodation for bachelors in Bneid Al-Gar and they were referred to the labor shelter where all their needs are provided and they are treated in a humanitarian manner.

Security sources confirmed to the daily that the ministry will block the files of sponsors of the expatriate workers arrested during the campaign. They stressed that violating the Residency and Domestic Labor laws leads to deportation, even if the residency permit is valid, as domestic workers are not allowed to work for another sponsor.

Sources said the security campaigns will continue in order to track down all those who violated the Residency and Labor laws indicating these campaigns will target violators, especially after the extended deadline for them to legalize their status or leave the country on June 30.

Earlier, First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defense and Interior Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousuf issued a directive to extend the deadline for violators of the Residency and Labor



Left: Kuwait's First Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Defense and Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousuf Saud Al-Sabah receives Philippine Congressman and Committee on Overseas Workers Affairs Chairman Ron P. Salo. (Mol photo) Right: Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousuf with Philippine Ambassador to Kuwait Jose Cabrera III and Congressman Salo.



laws until June 30 due to the official Eid Al-Adha holidays and the huge demand from violators who wish to leave the country or rectify their status.

The humanitarian deadline began in March and was supposed to end on June 17; but Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousuf ordered the two-week extension, so that a larger number of violators could benefit from the grace period.

Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousuf on Tuesday paid an inspection tour of the center of residency law violators.

During the tour, the minister underlined commitment to continuously providing all means of comfort to the facility's law-breakers and speeding up their deportation procedures, according to a Ministry of Interior release.

Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousuf

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Congressman Salo hopeful on Filipino workers' deployment ban reversal

## Philippine lawmaker champions OFW rights in Kuwait visit

By Marlon Aquino Malinao

Managing Editor, Arab Times

KUWAIT CITY, June 18: In an exclusive interview with the Arab Times, Philippine Congressman and Committee on Overseas Workers Affairs Chairman Ron P. Salo (KABAYAN Partylist) shared in-depth insights from his recent visit to Kuwait, focusing on his meeting with Kuwait's First Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Defense and Minister of Interior, Sheikh Fahad Yousuf Saud Al-Sabah. The discussions centered on addressing the concerns and improving the welfare of Overseas Filipino Workers

(OFWs) in Kuwait.

Congressman Salo began by elaborating on the outcomes of his meeting with Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousuf, highlighting the productive nature of their discussions. Reflecting on his impressions of the Public Authority for Manpower (PAM) Shelter, which he visited prior to their meeting, Salo expressed appreciation on the efforts of Kuwait in caring for Filipino workers. He particularly commended the officials and staff at the shelter for their dedication and support towards distressed Filipino runaways and their children.

Regarding the purpose and takeaways from his Kuwait visit, Congressman Salo empha-

sized the consultative nature of his trip, aimed at understanding the concerns of Filipino migrant workers in the Middle East and ensuring effective government response. He conducted a Town Hall meeting with the Filipino community (FilCom) at the Philippine Embassy Office in Surra, where issues such as the ongoing visa ban against Filipinos and the diplomatic impasse between the Philippines and Kuwait were discussed in detail.

Highlighting the challenges faced by OFWs, Congressman Salo acknowledged the significant impact of the visa ban on Filipinos wanting to work in Kuwait, as well as Filipino nationals engaged in overseas

employment and businesses in Kuwait. He mentioned the persistent pleas of OFWs who want to work in Kuwait but are unable to apply for work visas, as well as of OFWs in Kuwait who are unable to go home for fear that they cannot return. He also noted reports of Filipino-owned establishments, particularly restaurants, experiencing closures due to reduced Filipino clientele resulting from the visa restrictions.

In response to these challenges, the Philippine government has been actively advocating for measures to enhance the protection

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## Kuwait City up 12 spots in cost of living ranking

KUWAIT CITY, June 18: Kuwait City landed on the 119th spot in Mercer's Cost of Living City ranking for 2024 -- up by 12 notches compared to 2023 when it ranked 131st.

Mercer made the ranking based on the results of its study covering 226 cities around the world.

Among cities in Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) member states; Dubai ranked first and 15th internationally, followed by Abu Dhabi that ranked 43rd in the world, Riyadh ranked 90th, Jeddah ranked 97th, Manama ranked 110th, Kuwait City ranked 119th

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Left: Congressman Ron Salo visits a Filipino injured in Mangaf fire. Right: Congressman Salo in a group photo during a Town Hall meeting at the Philippine Embassy.



## Prayer Timings

Fajr ..... 03:13 Asr ..... 15:23  
Sunrise .. 04:48 Maghrib .. 18:50  
Zohr ..... 11:49 Isha ..... 20:22

# Local

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

## Weather

**Expected weather for next 24 hrs:**  
**By Day:** Very hot with light to moderate freshening at times northwesterly wind, with speeds of 15-50 km/h with a chance for rising dust.

**By Night:** Hot to rather hot with light to moderate freshening at times northwesterly wind, with speeds of 12-40 km/h.

| Station     | Max Exp | Min Rec |                |    |
|-------------|---------|---------|----------------|----|
| Kuwait City | 48      | 36      | Kuwait Airport | 49 |
|             |         |         | Abdaly         | 49 |
|             |         |         | Jahra          | 50 |
|             |         |         | Salmiyah       | 45 |
|             |         |         | Nuwaisib       | 47 |
|             |         |         | Wafra          | 48 |

## HH Crown Prince and Prime Minister send greetings

# HH Amir congratulates Iceland president on National Day

KUWAIT CITY, June 18, (KUNA): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah sent a cable of congratulations to President of Iceland Gudni Thorlacius Johannesson on the occasion of his country's National Day.

In the cable, His Highness the Amir wished the president of Iceland good health, and for Iceland further progress and prosperity.

Meanwhile, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad

Al-Sabah sent a cable of congratulations to President Gudni Thorlacius Johannesson on the occasion of his country's National Day.

His Highness the Crown Prince wished Iceland's president lasting health and wellbeing.

His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah also addressed a cable of congratulations to President Johannesson on the occasion of his country's National Day.

## 'Eid Al-Adha greetings'

# PM receives congratulation from Pakistani counterpart

KUWAIT CITY, June 18, (KUNA): His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah received on Monday a phone call from his Pakistani counterpart Mohammad Shehbaz Sharif, congratulating His Highness on Eid Al-Adha.

During the phone call, the Pakistani premier wished the two brotherly countries,



Sheikh Ahmad

their people and both Arab and Muslim nations, happy and blessed Eid Al-Adha, conveying his greetings to His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, wishing them good health and well-being, and Kuwait eternal security and stability.

The Kuwaiti Prime Minister, on his part, thanked his Pakistani counterpart for this good gesture, which reflected deep relations between both countries, and wished him good health, and progress and prosperity for Pakistan.

## Other Voices

# My 'mahram' and neckties

By Ahmed alsarraf

My journey with neckties began six decades ago while I worked at a bank that required bank employees to wear either the national dress for Kuwaitis or a suit with a tie for others. Since that time, the suit and my affection for cravats have remained constants in my life.

The most memorable tie purchase occurred in 1968, when I acquired one from Harrods for the hefty sum of 41 pounds sterling. Even after 56 years, this remains a significant expenditure for me. Interestingly, the purchase wasn't driven by generosity or a sudden windfall, but rather by a serious misreading of the price tag. Perhaps out of embarrassment or a desire to save face in front of my companions at the time, I refrained from admitting my mistake.

This incident underscores how personal pride and social dynamics can influence our decisions, even in something as seemingly trivial as buying a tie.

Amir Muharemi Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Croatia, had extended me an invitation to attend an exhibition at Al Hamra Tower that delved into the history of neckties and Croatia's significant role in their evolution.

In his book about Kuwait, which he generously shared with his government and others curious about Kuwait's history, particularly new ambassadors, he highlighted Croatia's historical connection to neckties.

The word "Al-Karfa" derives from Croatia, the homeland of the Croats, who were among the first to wear a piece of cloth around their necks. This practice likely began in the seventeenth century during the Ottoman wars. In French, the tie was referred to as "cravat" or cravat, originating

from the word "Croat", the French name for Croatia.

The Croatian necktie captured the interest and admiration of the French aristocracy and swiftly became a fashion statement at the French court.

It soon spread throughout Europe, endorsed by King Louis XIV of France, thereby embedding the term and the tie itself into various European languages.

Today, Croats celebrate their necktie heritage as a proud part of their national identity. October 18th marks a special day in Croatia dedicated to honoring the history of the necktie.

Interestingly, in Iran, neckties are often frowned upon or prohibited among officials and sometimes even the general populace due to their perceived association with colonial powers, symbolizing Western influence represented by countries like America.

Today, the global market value of neckties stands at approximately \$3.5 billion and continues to expand. This growth is propelled by several factors including evolving fashion trends, a growing demand for formal attire, and an increasing preference for luxury and high-quality designer neckties.

The United States is a significant market, alongside Asia and the Pacific, driven by the rising number of professionals and the influence of Western fashion norms.

The advent of e-commerce has further stimulated sales, reaching new markets beyond traditional retail boundaries.

The manufacturing of neckties and their prestigious brands is concentrated in regions renowned for their textile industries, notably China, Italy, and India. Iconic names in the industry include Hermès, Brioni, Canali, Brooks Brothers, and Valtino, the latter of which, as mentioned earlier, made a significant dent in my budget back in 1968, leaving me financially stretched for the remainder of the month.

□ □ □  
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## Event held under CSC's supervision

# PAS organizes governance workshop

KUWAIT CITY, June 18: The Public Authority for Sports (PAS) has organized a workshop on institutional governance for supervisory positions in the government sector under the supervision of the Civil Service Commission (CSC), reports Al-Seyassah daily.

In a press statement, PAS disclosed that this is part of a series of workshops it has been conducting to enhance the concept of governance in the government sector with the participation of its officials.

In addition, this is one of the strategies of CSC to improve institutional governance for the administrative system in order to achieve the vision and mission of government agencies in developing national manpower at the

State level.

The authority pointed out that implementing governance in government agencies and various State institutions contributes to the elimination of bureaucracy, guaranteeing justice for all, enhancement of transparency, and raising Kuwait's rankings in global indicators and reports as a development step toward the realization of the vision of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah.

The authority indicated that the objectives of the workshops organized by the Corporate Governance Team include improving professional performance and the quality of public services and to increase the citizens' trust in the employees of government agencies.

## HH Crown Prince, PM send similar cables

# HH Amir congratulates outstanding high school students

KUWAIT CITY, June 18, (KUNA): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah sent cables on Friday to outstanding high-school students.

His Highness the Amir commended the students for their phenomenal performance and great efforts, wishing them best of luck in their future.

Meanwhile, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah sent cables to outstanding high-school students.

His Highness the Crown Prince commended the students for their phenomenal performance and great efforts, wishing them best of luck in their future.

Also, His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah sent cables to outstanding high-school students.

His Highness commended the students for their phenomenal performance and great efforts, wishing them best of luck in their future.

# Amir congratulates Saudi Crown Prince on successful Hajj season

Kuwait's Crown Prince, PM, Mol send congratulations

KUWAIT CITY, June 18, (KUNA): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah sent Tuesday a cable to Saudi Crown Prince and Prime Minister Mohammad bin Salman Al-Saud, congratulating him on the success of this year's Hajj pilgrimage season.

His Highness the Amir lauded the efforts made by all Saudi ministries and bodies as well as the Advisor to the Saudi King and Governor of Makkah Region and Chairman of the Central Hajj Committee Prince Khaled Al-Faisal bin Abdulaziz Al-Saud, and Minister of Interior and Chairman of the Supreme Hajj Committee Prince Abdulaziz bin Saud bin Naif Al-Saud in ensuring inter-agency cooperation during the implementations of Hajj plans.

His Highness the Amir prayed to Allah the Almighty to accept and reward all involved in the pilgrimage, and to grant Saudi Arabia and its people progress and prosperity under the wise leadership of King Salman bin Abdulaziz.

Meanwhile, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah Tuesday sent a cable to Saudi Crown Prince and Prime Minister Mohammad bin Salman Al-Saud, congratulating him on the success of this year's Hajj pilgrimage season.

In his cable, His Highness the Crown Prince extended his congratulations on the successful Hajj season, praising the efforts and generous care of the Saudi leadership.

## Praised

He further praised the dedication of Saudi government agencies and sectors towards the faithful pilgrims, ensuring their safety and convenience while performing Hajj.

His Highness the Crown Prince spoke highly of the diligent efforts by the Advisor to the Saudi King, Governor of Makkah Region and Chairman of the Central Hajj Committee Prince Khaled Al-Faisal bin Abdulaziz, and Minister of Interior and Chairman of the Supreme Hajj Committee Prince Abdulaziz bin Saud bin Naif Al-Saud.

His Highness the Crown Prince prayed to Allah the Almighty to accept and reward all involved in the pilgrimage, and to grant Saudi Arabia and its people progress and prosperity under the wise leadership of King Salman bin Abdulaziz.

His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah also sent a cable on Tuesday to Saudi Crown Prince Mohammad bin Salman Al-Saud, congratulating him on the success of this year's Hajj pilgrimage season.

Also, Kuwait's First Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Defense and Minister of Interior Affairs Sheikh Fahad Yousef Saud Al-Sabah congratulated on Tuesday Saudi's Interior Minister Prince Abdulaziz bin Saud Al-Saud on a successful Hajj season this year.

The ministry said in a press statement that Sheikh Fahad sent a congratulatory cable expressing his sincere blessings on the success of the Hajj season.

He thanked the continuous efforts made by the Saudi minister and security personnel that led to people performing Hajj rituals with complete ease, wishing the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia long-lasting stability and security and further prosperity.



Some of the Kuwaiti pilgrims arriving home after successful Hajj. Photo by Mohammad Morsi



Eid Al-Adha prayers being performed. KUNA photo

## Dr Al-Awadhi ensures top healthcare standards during Eid

# Faithful perform Eid Al-Adha prayer across all governorates; defense min congratulates PM

KUWAIT CITY, June 18, (KUNA): In an atmosphere imbued with profound faith and the resonant chants of "Allahu Akbar... Allahu Akbar... Allahu Akbar" (God is great), multitudinous congregations of worshippers solemnly performed the Eid Al-Adha prayer last Sunday across Kuwait's governorates. Worshippers converged upon mosques, designated prayer grounds, public squares, youth centers, and sports stadiums as specified by the Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs to partake in the ritual prayer, extending felicitations to one another on the momentous celebration of Eid.

Meanwhile, First Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Defense and Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad Yusuf Al-Sabah on Saturday expressed congratulations to His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah on Eid Al-Adha.

Kuwait Fire Force said in a press statement that Sheikh Fahad Yusuf addressed the Eid cable to His Highness the Prime Minister, beseeching His Almighty so that the occasion may recur "and Your Highness enjoying utmost good health and wellbeing."

He also wished that the occasion may come again with dear Kuwait, the faithful citizens, and the Arab and Muslim nations living amid bounties and heavenly blessings.

The statement added that Sheikh Fahad noted in his cable that the Fire Force personnel affirmed their unwavering keenness on doing their best to save lives, conserve public and private properties and the community's security and sanctity, guided by the instructions of their Highnesses, the Amir, and the Crown Prince.

In the meantime, Minister of Health Dr. Ahmad Al-Awadhi assured that the ministry has made all necessary arrangements to ensure uninterrupted healthcare services throughout the Eid Al-Adha holiday.

He confirmed in a statement Sunday that medical and technical staff are available in all hospitals and health centers, working around-the-clock to meet patient needs.

Dr. Al-Awadhi expressed gratitude to healthcare workers, including doctors, nurses, technicians, and administrators, for their dedicated service during Eid, noting their commitment to maintaining high healthcare standards.

On this occasion, he extended sincere congratulations and blessings to His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, His

## Lieut-Gen Sheikh Salem 'inspects' security bodies during Eid Al-Adha

KUWAIT CITY, June 18: Within the framework of the interest of the senior leadership in the Ministry of Interior in communicating with members of the security establishment on holidays and occasions, the Undersecretary of the Ministry of Interior, Lieutenant General Sheikh Salem Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, Monday -- the second day of the Eid Al-Adha holiday -- made an inspection tour to the Qasr and Saad Al-Abdullah police stations and the labor shelter center, reports Al-Jarida daily.

The purpose was to get first hand information of readiness, preparedness, and knowledge of the workflow.

At the beginning of his tour, Lieutenant General Al-Nawaf conveyed the greetings and congratulations of the First Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Defense and Minister of Interior, Sheikh Fahd Al-Yousef, to employees of the public security sector on the occasion of Eid Al-Adha.

Lieutenant General Al-Nawaf was briefed on the preparations of members of the public security sector and their readiness for field work, in a way that increases efficiency and achieves the desired goal of preserving the security and safety of the country.

He also made an inspection tour of the labor shelter center and was briefed on the work mechanism, and stressed the need to provide all means of comfort and adherence to the humanitarian aspect.

The Undersecretary of the Ministry of Interior expressed his pride in the security men, and praised the efforts they make to maintain the security and safety of the nation, praising their implementation of the tasks and duties assigned to them, and calling on them to be more careful and vigilant.

Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, and the people of Kuwait.

He prayed to Almighty Allah for everyone's well-being, prosperity, and the protection of Kuwait, wishing for continued security, prosperity, and tranquility.

# diwaniya ديوانية

A DIGEST OF PUBLIC OPINION

## 'Mangaf fire & facts that should not be forgotten'

"DISASTERS often stem from overlooked or forgotten facts. When disaster strikes, blame is hastily assigned to officials, ignoring these fundamental truths," columnist **Ahmed Yaqoub Baker** wrote for *Al-Jarida* daily.

"The initial truth is that small infractions, due to influence, intervention, or neglect, escalate unchecked. Such violations, initially ignored, burgeon over time across many buildings, accumulating in homes and basements. Addressing violations in areas like Jleeb and others becomes daunting and costly; the Mangaf incident merely scratches the surface.

"A second fact is that violations accumulate when legitimate alternatives are lacking.

As housing issues worsen, illegal renting and storage problems in private homes proliferate due to inadequate, affordable storage options. Despite legislation such as the Warehouses and Border Crossings Law passed in November 2006 under my tenure as Chairman of the Finance Committee, effective implementation remains elusive.

"The third fact, well-documented in economic reports, highlights how political instability undermines economic progress. Over recent years, changing governments and frequent parliamentary dissolution have stymied development. Projects initiated by ministers often stall or regress with each new administration, a setback I experienced firsthand in the Ministry of Commerce.

"Beyond these, corruption, vested interests, parliamentary interference, weak governance, undefined roles for officials, and flawed economic legislation exacerbate matters. True resolution demands root cause eradication, not scape-goating leaders during crises. As predecessors cautioned, "If innovations aren't condemned, they become norms."



Ahmed Baqer

"The topic of removing street names made me happy, regardless of the identity of the person's name hung on a billboard in various suburbs of Kuwait," columnist **Iqbal Al-Ahmad** wrote for *Al-Qabas* daily.

"I personally am one of those who have been most enthusiastic about this topic for many years, and I have written articles on the topic since 2013, and many people shared it with me. I was close to despair, but I used to believe in the saying 'Only what is correct is correct' and today it has been decided. Removing street names and replacing them with numbers, except for historical figures.

"There are many huge and large paintings with the names of people, a few of which we know, and many that we do not know, have not heard of, and do not know their mark or role in our society. This was very far from the principle of equality among all the people of Kuwait.

"I imagined the decision to remove street names, with the exception of historical figures or those whose mark is very clear in the history of Kuwait, if it had been taken during the existence of the National Assembly, and how many objections and threats some members of the Assembly would make against the relevant minister or the competent authority, which would certainly lead to the cancellation or retraction of this decision, and how many exceptions would have been there, as we have become accustomed to over the past years.

"We thank God, today in Kuwait we are going through a period of relaxation from the states of distress and contraction that we have experienced in recent years, 80 percent of which may be due to the way some members of the National Assembly deal with societal issues that are far from politics, and cases of obstruction and procrastination according to the private interests of these representatives; nothing else.

"The decision to stop naming streets and replace them with numbers is a wise decision, because it spares us a lot of disorientation in streets whose names are difficult to understand and difficult to pronounce, unlike the numbers that make it easier for us and Google Maps to pronounce and infer them.

"It is very easy to replace street names that do not conform to street naming standards with numbers, and if the names are to be affixed to them, their numbers will be placed in a larger font above the name.

"This decision is clear evidence that the current resolute government realizes that many mistakes and transgressions were going unnoticed without efforts to reform and amend. It is time to stop and amend them as it should be.

"Thank you so much for the steps of reform and cleaning that we have finally begun to see in many areas, starting with the falsification of citizenship and the chaos of expressing one's opinion, which has turned into expressions of irresponsible inferiority, not to mention the infringement on the judiciary and the law in multiple areas.

"One word we say and we mean it well: Continue with serious reform,

and we are all with you and behind you, because for many years we have been praying and praying that God would transform our situation from one state to a better one."

"May Allah help the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia ... The service provided by the government of the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques to the guests of Allah -- the pilgrims in the Holy House of Allah -- is unparalleled in the whole world," columnist **Talal Al-Saeed** wrote for *Al-Seyassah* daily.

"Millions of people gather in one place, yet they never lack anything -- healthcare, round-the-clock care, security, free services and charity everywhere; including trucks that distribute cold water, milk and free snacks even in hot weather, being cooled by the cold mist.

"Some pilgrims from poor countries go to Makkah with nothing but their ticket, and leave laden with gifts from the charity they receive, without knowing the source!

"This is in addition to the recruitment of thousands of staff, including soldiers and volunteers, to serve the pilgrims. We will not talk about the expansion of the Grand Mosque and the Medina Mosque, as tongues are unable to describe what is seen!

"Despite all this, an Arab pilgrim who is in violation of the law comes out to you, cursing Saudi Arabia, and complaining of ill-treatment; forgetting that he himself is in violation of the law, and does not have a Hajj permit, or his permit is forged, or he is basically an infiltrator, or a violator in any way! All the obscene talk, insults and cursing come from certain Arabic communities, especially two communities that neither praise nor thank you and look for negatives to show to people!

"The biggest calamity is the slogan pilgrims who go for Hajj to spread their slogans and promote the party and doctrine, etc. They demand that Saudi Arabia allow them to spread their slogans that are prohibited even to the Saudi people themselves. What is worse is that they do not chant those slogans in their country, yet they want to practice them in our country.

"May Allah help Saudi Arabia and its people. They are working beyond their capacity, seeking the face of Allah Almighty, but these people will only be satisfied with what they came for, forgetting that a large number of pilgrims are under the responsibility of the Kingdom, and the situation cannot tolerate laxity and tampering. They must imagine what could happen. If the Hajj had been in their country, God forbid...it would have been nice."

"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 & Mahmoud Ateyieh**



The DGFD chief visits power centers on the second day of Eid Al-Adha to ensure safety.

## Fahd inspects fire force centers, extends Eid Al-Adha greetings

KUWAIT CITY, June 18: Major-General Khaled Fahd, the acting Chief of the General Fire Force, recently conducted inspections at several fire force centers to extend Eid Al-Adha greetings and ensure the readiness of the teams, reports *Al-Jarida* daily.

During his visits, he conveyed

the congratulations of Sheikh Fahd Al-Yousef, the First Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Defense, and Minister of Interior, emphasizing the importance of the fire force's role in safeguarding lives and property.

Major-General Khaled Fahd commended the dedication and efforts of the fire force personnel, who

are committed to maintaining societal security. His tour included stops at the Central Operations Department, the Support Center, the Sour Fire Station, and the Tahrir Fire Station, where he expressed pride in the high readiness levels exhibited by the firefighters to fulfill their duties diligently and effectively.

# 'Commerce' seizes \$33mn in counterfeit top brand goods

Expat falls to his death; man held over terror group link

KUWAIT CITY, June 18, (KUNA): The Ministry of Commerce and Industry (MoCI) has reported a significant seizure of counterfeit luxury goods worth over 10 million Kuwaiti dinars (approximately 33 million US dollars). The haul, totaling 623,762 items, includes accessories, bags, women's clothing, shoes, and other items from renowned international brands. This marks one of the largest seizures by the ministry in Kuwait, discovered in a warehouse located in Farwaniya Governorate.

Minister of Commerce and Industry and Minister of State for Communications, Omar Al-Omar, underscored the ministry's dedication to enhancing its commercial inspection and control systems. This commitment aims to uphold market stability, foster development, and safeguard consumers from violations. Al-Omar commended the diligent efforts of the national inspection teams in safeguarding the Kuwaiti market, emphasizing ongoing support for national cadres to bolster their capabilities. He expressed gratitude to the oversight and inspection teams at the Ministry of Commerce and Industry for their vigilant efforts in combating commercial fraud and violations.

The ministry disclosed that the counterfeit goods were traced following suspicions raised about their sale through social media accounts, which organized auctions or offered these products at discounted prices compared to their retail prices at official stores of these international brands in Kuwait. The source responsible for distributing these counterfeit products in large quantities was identified during surveillance operations. Legal procedures were swiftly enacted to facilitate the seizure, inspection, and documentation of the warehouse and its contents, which included illicit and fake merchandise.

**Surveyor falls to his death:** An unidentified expatriate born in 1995, working as a surveyor, fell to his death Monday morning while working on the house of a Kuwaiti citizen in Mutla'a, area "N9", reports *Al-Anba* daily.

According to the Kuwaiti informant, the expatriate was working inside the house and fell from the second floor. A case of falling from height resulting in death has been recorded.

**Man held for joining 'terror group':** The Public Prosecution has ordered the detention of a Kuwaiti citizen on charges of joining a group whose aim is to destroy the basic systems in the country, and receiving training in making fireworks and preparing poisons to achieve an illegal purpose, reports *Al-Rai* daily.

The daily said, the man had also shown the resolve to leave the country to fight with an extremist group, but was seized by the authorities before he could depart.

The prosecution added the accused has been confronted with the charges filed against him, and investigation procedures are being completed.

**Woman abuses police officers:** An investigator ordered the detention of an unidentified Kuwaiti woman pending investigation after a case was registered against her by police officers who accused her of verbal and physical assault, reports *Al-Anba* daily.

The incident occurred, according to a security source in the Salmiya area, where the citizen informed the Ministry of Interior operations that she had been subjected to a run-over attempt by an Indian driver of a half-lorry.

When the patrol arrived, she asked the securitymen to arrest the Indian and appeared to threaten them until she reached the point of hurling bad words at them and beating them.

The security forces then controlled her and referred her to the area police station. She is also charged with filming men in uniform with the help of her phone.

After investigating the parties, the investigator ordered her transfer to the central prison pending investigation.

**Driver threatens to stab farmer:** A person born in 1994 was arrested on charges related to reckless driving, damaging state property, and threatening to stab a farmer, reports *Al-Anba* daily.

The daily added, the suspect was arrested on the Subbiya Road near the Fattouh mosque after a video clip went viral showing the man doing stunts and endangering the lives of other road users.

A police patrol sent to the area found a black American vehicle colliding head on against the metal barrier (fence). No occupants were seen inside.

Subsequently, at 5:20 am, another report came from the owner of a farm indicating that an individual had entered his accommodation and was threatening to stab him. During the search of the area a person was spotted inside an abandoned farm holding two knives and appeared to be in an abnormal state.

## Maj-Gen Fahd holds border security tour

KUWAIT CITY, June 18: During the Eid Al-Adha holiday, Major General Mujbil Fahd, the Undersecretary of the Border Security Sector, conducted comprehensive inspections and field tours to assess the security preparedness at both land and sea borders, reports *Al-Jarida* daily.

Accompanied by Brigadier General Mubarak Ali Yousef Al-Sabah, the Director General of the General Administration of the Coast Guard, Major General Fahd embarked on a marine tour to inspect ships and naval boats under the department's jurisdiction to oversee operational workflows and monitor the security situation closely.

Additionally, Major General Mujbil Fahd conducted an inspection tour of the northern land border, where he met with Brigadier General Faisal Al-Subaier, the Director of the Northern Border.

During this visit, he received updates on the readiness of border security personnel in combating smuggling and infiltration activities.

Emphasizing the priority of border security within the national security framework, Major General Fahd conveyed Eid greetings and congratulations to Sheikh Fahd Al-Yousef, the First Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Defense and Minister of Interior.

He expressed gratitude for the efforts of security personnel and commended their unwavering vigilance in safeguarding the nation's security and maintaining peace.



A member of the MoCI inspection team during the seizure process.

## No casualties in shop fire

## Fire at waste site extinguished: KM

KUWAIT CITY, June 18, (KUNA): Kuwait Municipality (KM) announced on Sunday they extinguished a blaze at the waste site south of the Seventh Ring Road with municipal equipment present at the site.

Director of the Public Relations Department Mohammad Sandan said in a press release that the high increase in temperature in open areas with flammable waste led to the outbreak of fire.

Sandan reported a significant increase in the amount of rubble and waste removed from in front of commercial and residential

properties across all six governorates over the past two days. He revealed the waste removed on Thursday and Friday was approximately 568 tons, marking a 400 percent increase from the usual rate of 100 to 150 tons, most were flammable and exceeded the site's capacity.

**Shop fire put out:** On Monday evening, fire brigades controlled a fire in a sweets shop in the Shuwaikh Industrial Area. The fire was fought and extinguished, and the accident ended without any significant injuries, reports *Al-Anba* daily.



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# Ministers give update on Sabah Al-Ahmad projects

Focus on development and housing initiatives

KUWAIT CITY, June 18: Dr. Meshari Al-Othman, the Minister of Electricity, Water, and Renewable Energy, and the Minister of State for Housing Affairs, Mahmoud Bushahri, presented updates on various projects within Sabah Al-Ahmad City, particularly focusing on developments in the south and east sectors, as well as a vertical housing initiative in the investment suburb, reports Al-Jarida daily.

The senior officials from the Public Authority for Housing Welfare (PAHW) were present during the briefing.

The Minister was briefed directly on the progress of the South Sabah Al-Ahmad City project, highlighting that the work is on schedule with the planned timelines.

This phase of the project aims to create 20,380 plots. Additionally, the East Sabah Al-Ahmad City project, involving the development of 1,148 homes alongside public buildings, road infrastructure, and service networks, was reviewed. The completion rates for this sector were also reported to be meeting expectations.

Attention was also given to the vertical housing project within the investment suburb of Sabah Al-Ahmad City, comprising 60 buildings with a total of 1,110 apartments.

Progress has been significant, with electricity supply completed for 40 buildings, and efforts are underway to finalize the electrical connections for the remaining structures.

It is anticipated that these remaining connections will be completed within the next two months, enabling Kuwaiti families to soon benefit from these new residential options.



Minister of Housing during the tour.

## Farwaniya Governor 'meets' with Chinese envoy, eyes stronger ties

KUWAIT CITY, June 18: Farwaniya Governor Sheikh Athbi Nasser Al-Athbi met with Ambassador of the People's Republic of China to Kuwait Zhang Jianwei in his office at the governorate's general office recently, reports Al-Anba daily.

Jianwei congratulated Sheikh Athbi on gaining the trust of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, may Allah protect him, wishing him success in his career and tasks in the governorate.

During the meeting, Sheikh Athbi highlighted the close bilateral relations and cooperation between Kuwait and China and discussed frameworks for strengthening them

### Amiri Decree appoints Governor of Al-Ahmadi

KUWAIT CITY, June 18, (KUNA): An Amiri Decree was issued on Thursday appointing Sheikh Homoud Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah as Governor of Al-Ahmadi for four years' mandate with a minister's degree.

in various fields and at all levels.

At the end of the meeting, Jianwei thanked the governor for the warm reception and praised the depth of the relations between the two countries.

## Kuwait hails Oman's mediation that resulted in release of French citizen

KUWAIT CITY, June 18, (KUNA): The Ministry of Foreign Affairs on Thursday acclaimed understandings that had been reached within mediation by Oman with Iran, resulting in the release of a French citizen.

The ministry said in a statement that it values the positive contributions of Oman's mediation efforts, also appreciating the positive spirit of the discussions that had been held between Iran and France in this respect.

Society launches initiative in Gaza, Sudan

## KRCS distributes Eid meat to needy families, Syrian and Palestinian refugees in Lebanon

BEIRUT, June 18, (KUNA): Kuwait Red Crescent Society (KRCS) launched an initiative to distribute Eid Al-Adha meat to around 1,500 Lebanese families, and Syrian and Palestinian refugees in Lebanon.

Speaking to KUNA, the relief coordinator of the Lebanese Red Cross (LRC) Youssef Boutros said that the KRCS and the LRC began the annual process of distribution to 1,500 families, including affected Lebanese families, Syrian and Palestinian refugees in different parts of Lebanon.

KRCS distributed last week Eid Al-Adha packages containing clothes and other essentials to some 2,000 families including affected Lebanese families, Syrian and Palestinian refugees.

The KRCS is also continuing its humanitarian aid to 6,000 Lebanese families in the south of the country, affected by military confrontations, which began last October, the aid contains food and staple supplies, being distributed with the help of the LRC.

Meanwhile, the society has launched its largest cattle slaughter project covering Gaza and the West Bank.

Muheisen Atawneh, the head of the Palestinian society "wafa," tasked with executing the project said in remarks to KUNA, on Sunday, that the Kuwaiti society succeeded in carrying it out in Gaza despite hurdles placed by the occupation and futile bids to ban cattle entry into the strip.

Up to 50,000 Palestinians will benefit from the project, Atawneh said in remarks to KUNA, adding that the donated meat was distributed in Al-Mawasi, Khan Youness, Deri Al-Balah, southern and central Gaza.

He added that the residents were



Kuwait Red Crescent carries out largest meat distribution in Gaza, West Bank.




KRCS hands over Eid meat to needy families, Syrian, Palestinian refugees in Lebanon.

grateful for the State of Kuwait, hailing its humanitarian role and support for the population since early October.

Some of the meat had been kept in freezers in Egypt, pending distribution in Gaza after Eid Al-Adha, ending on

Tuesday.

Similarly, the society implemented a project to distribute meat to more than 1,500 families at displaced people shelters in the city of Port Sudan over two days on the occasion of Eid Al-Adha.



# EID AL ADHA

Special Promotion



### Room Promotion

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|   | 2 Bedroom Chalet (4 persons) per night | <b>BHD 153.222</b>    |
| <b>Book for Three nights and get 20% discount</b><br>(Inclusive of breakfast)<br>(Non-refundable/Non-Cancellable) | Queen Cabana (2 persons) per night.    | <b>BHD 61.000 net</b> |
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Minister of Information Abdulrahman Al-Mutairi with the ministry workers.

### Minister Al-Mutairi praises workers efforts

Minister of Information and Culture Abdulrahman Al-Mutairi affirmed on Sunday that workers in the ministry's various sectors showed great effort throughout the year to cover the news, especially in Eid Al-Adha.

In a statement to KUNA, Al-Mutairi congratulated his Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah and His Highness the Prime

Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah on the advent of Eid Al-Adha.

He urged the ministry's employees to keep providing information that enrich the public's knowledge, stressing the importance of conveying the image of Hajj and its religious values.

Al-Mutairi undertook an inspection tour of the ministry's sectors checking the work progress and congratulating his employees on Eid Al-Adha. (KUNA)

### Government agencies aim to expand green area

### PAAAFR biggest treated water beneficiary

KUWAIT CITY, June 18: The spokesman for the Ministry of Public Works, Ahmed Al-Saleh, said that the Public Authority for Agriculture Affairs and Fisheries Resources is the biggest beneficiary of the treated water produced by the Public Works at its stations, and that the Ministry and the Authority are in continuous coordination to increase the benefit of this water produced by the Ministry, reports Al-Jarida daily.

Al-Saleh said in a press statement that there is a trend by the ministry and plans to increase the benefit of this treated water.

He added that this cooperation between government agencies aims to expand the green area in the country and make optimal use of treated water in a way that ensures its use in many activities that benefit the country.

### Pilgrims looked after by Kuwait health delegates

KUWAIT CITY, June 18: Dr. Abdul Rahman Al-Mutairi, the Undersecretary of the Ministry of Health and Head of the Medical Services Team for the Kuwaiti Hajj Delegation, along with Dr. Hisham Kalender, the Assistant Undersecretary for Foreign Health Services Affairs, visited a pilgrim from Kuwait at King Abdullah Medical City Hospital, reports Al-Jarida daily.

The pilgrim had fallen ill and was transferred from the mission's clinic in Mina to the hospital for further treatment. Currently, her condition is stable, and she is receiving the necessary medical attention.

### Yemen Airways resumes direct flights to Kuwait

ADEN, June 18, (KUNA): Yemen Airways (Yemenia) resumed direct flights from Aden International Airport to Kuwait International Airport on Saturday, after nine years of disruption due to the civil war.

In a press statement, Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Yemen Airways Nasser Mahmoud commended Kuwait for facilitating the resumption of the direct flights.

Mahmoud pointed out that this important route serves Yemeni expatriates in Kuwait and their families.

It also facilitates mutual communication and official visits as well as promotes travel and trade exchange between the two Arab countries, he said.

Mahmoud announced that the company is preparing to launch direct flights to Doha and Dubai in the near future. This

is part of an ambitious plan to resume all air services that were in operation before the war including to a number of African countries.

Yemeni Minister of Transportation Abdulsalam Hamid thanked the Yemenia and the Ministry of Transportation for their efforts to resume direct flights to Kuwait.

He affirmed the Ministry of Transport's commitment to help the national carrier utilize its resources and assets and expand its air fleet.

Yemen Airways, which is owned equally by the Yemeni and Saudi governments, suspended its flights to most regional and international destinations since the outbreak of war in Yemen in 2015 and lost a number of its planes, but it has recently bolstered its fleet with a number of aircraft to restore key routes.

## Boushehri ensures stable electricity supply

## Minister assesses national grid's readiness for summer demands



KUNA photos

Left: Minister of Social Affairs with Australian Minister for Government Services and the National Disability Insurance Scheme. Right: Minister of Social Affairs with Singaporean Senior Parliamentary Secretary for Culture, Community and Youth and Secretary for Social and Family Development.

## Kuwaiti Minister Al-Huwailah meets Australian and Singaporean officials

NEW YORK, June 18, (KUNA): Kuwait Minister of Social Affairs, Family, Childhood, and Minister of Youth Dr. Amthlal Al-Huwailah discussed issues of common concern with Australian Minister for Government Services and the National Disability Insurance Scheme Bill Shorten.

Furthermore, Dr. Al-Huwailah met with Singaporean Senior Par-

liamentary Secretary for Culture, Community and Youth and Secretary for Social and Family Development Eric Chua, discussing bilateral ties related to disabilities between Kuwait and Singapore.

The meetings are on the sideline of the 17th Conference of State Parties to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

## Int'l accountability grows louder

## 56th UNHRC session to highlight Gaza's plight: Kuwait's UN envoy

VIENNA, June 18, (KUNA): The upcoming 56th session of the UN Human Rights Council (UNHRC) will look into several prominent issues including the alarming situation in the Gaza Strip, said Kuwait Permanent Representative at the UN headquarters and International Organizations in Geneva Ambassador Nasser Al-Hayen on Tuesday.



Al-Hayen

Speaking to KUNA on the sideline of the 56th session, which began today and lasts until July 12, Ambassador Al-Hayen indicated that the session would look into reports by the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and the Secretary General.

He pointed out that the situation in Sudan and the ongoing war there would be focused upon during the session in addition to other paramount issues such as the Rohingya refugees' plight.

In regards to human rights committee report on Palestine, Ambassador Al-Hayen indicated that some portions

of the report were unbalanced in terms of equating the suffering of the Palestinian victims to their tormentors the Israeli occupiers.

The rest of the document dealt positively with Palestine and how to handle the situation, added the Kuwaiti diplomat; however, he also insisted that the report had focused on Hamas and the operation on October seventh, 2023 equating that with the atrocities committed by the Israeli occupiers that killed around 38,000 individuals, considered as an act of genocide.

He called on the international community to take responsibility to ensure the implementation of international human rights laws in the Palestinian territories especially in East Jerusalem.

The UNHRC's report on June 12 concluded that the Israeli occupation was responsible for war crimes and crimes against humanity as a result of its military operation following Hamas assault on October 7, 2023.

The report based its findings on interviews with victims, information, forensic evidence, and satellite imagery.

The report revealed that the Israeli occupiers prevented international investigations into the matter, barring teams from entering occupied territories.

cost-of-living trends and inflation rates and seek input from employees on these issues to effectively manage their effects."

Rising housing costs in many cities around the world have made talent mobility a challenge for employers. Volatile inflation trends are also eroding the purchasing power of international assignees and putting additional strain on their compensation packages. These factors can make it difficult for employers to attract and retain top talent and can increase compensation and benefits expenses, limit talent mobility, and raise operational costs.

## Kuwait sweep

## Continued from Page 1

spoke highly of other state bodies' cooperation with the ministry for equipping the center and providing residency law violators with security and living requirements.

In other news, the Kuwaiti Municipality has pursued its unabated campaign against malpractices throughout the country with the latest action being the closure of four basements in Hawally Governorate.

The municipality said in a statement on Saturday that the inspection personnel closed the four basements and addressed 43 warnings in the governorate.

The search and remove campaign is proceeding intensively to penalize culprits misplacing scrap and unneeded objects in non-designated spots, it affirmed, stressing that landlords must cooperate and heed the relevant laws and regulations.

Earlier, the Kuwaiti Municipality on Saturday demanded people not to dump unused items involving old furniture before their apartment buildings, warning that fines would be imposed on violators as per the Municipal Law.

## Philippine lawmaker

## Continued from Page 1

and welfare of migrant workers in Kuwait. Congressman Salo commended Kuwait's efforts and reiterated the Philippine government's focus on resolving underlying issues leading to OFWs running away from their employers, such as unpaid salaries, overwork or maltreatment.

Congressman Salo also addressed a recent tragic fire in Kuwait that claimed the lives of three Filipino nationals, expressing gratitude for Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousuf's condolences and Kuwait's immediate financial assistance to the victims' families. He highlighted Kuwait's

KUWAIT CITY, June 18, (KUNA): The Minister of Electricity, Water, and Renewable Energy, and the Minister of State for Housing Affairs, Dr. Mahmoud Boushehri, inspected the National Control Center, Tuesday, to review the progress of work, the management of the national electricity network, and its readiness to handle high electrical loads during the summer period.

Minister Boushehri confirmed in a press statement issued by the Ministry of Electricity and Water that the electrical energy situation in the country is stable. He emphasized that the ministry, with all its capabilities and staff, is fully prepared to meet the country's electrical energy needs and to address any emergencies that may arise due to increased loads caused by high temperatures.

He urged citizens and residents to conserve energy during peak periods, which extend from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m., as this significantly impacts the



KUNA photo

Minister of Electricity, Water, and Renewable Energy and Minister of State for Housing Affairs, Dr. Mahmoud Boushehri, during his visit to the National Control Center.

sustainability of electrical energy.

The minister's visit included inspection of the computer room, com-

munications room, and the control, monitoring, and network operation room. These facilities are respon-

sible for monitoring the operations of power stations, water distillation, and main transfer stations.

## MoH's Nursing Director commends team's efforts during 'holiday rush'

'Nurses show remarkable dedication amidst Eid challenges'

KUWAIT CITY, June 18, (KUNA): Director of the Nursing Services Department at the Ministry of Health, Dr. Iman Al-Awadhi, confirmed the nursing teams' keenness to deal with all emergency cases, especially during official

holidays that require additional effort and preparation.

Dr. Al-Awadhi said in a press statement, after an inspection tour of Mubarak Al-Kabeer Hospital and Al-Amiri Hospital, that this tour comes within the framework of the keenness to follow up on the progress of work and provide the necessary support to the medical and nursing teams during the blessed Eid Al-Adha holiday.

She added that she reviewed the departments and wings to determine the needs of the nursing staff and the challenges they face in providing optimal health care to patients.

She indicated that she visited those injured in the Al-Mangaf Building fire accident at Mubarak Al-Kabeer Hospital to ensure that the necessary care was provided to them, stressing the importance of enhancing communication and coordination between all hospital departments to ensure the provision of the best health services to patients.

She expressed her thanks to the nursing staff for their efforts and dedication to work and for dealing with emergency and unexpected cases, while praising, at the same time, the spirit of unity in providing high-quality health care and ensuring the safety of patients.



KUNA photo

Director of the Nursing Services Department at the Ministry of Health, Dr. Iman Al-Awadhi, during an inspection tour of Mubarak Al-Kabeer Hospital and Al-Amiri Hospital.

## Amir commends

## Continued from Page 1

inauguration of the Bush Library and Museum in Texas and on the occasion to commemorate President George H.W. Bush's 100th Birthday.

Sheikha Al-Zain Al-Sabah said the audience was honored to listen to a recorded speech broadcast by His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah during the ceremony.

In his speech, His Highness the Amir expressed his deepest congratulations on opening the new library wing, also voicing Kuwait and its people's appreciation of the late president's great role in the liberation of the Kuwait war.

On this occasion, she stressed the importance of the legacy left by the late President George H.W. Bush and his role within the framework of the leadership of the International Coalition to Liberate the State of Kuwait, emphasizing the special place that the late President enjoyed in the hearts of Kuwaitis.

Sheikha Al-Zain also stressed the importance of remembering the role of leaders like the late President Bush, who take stances in making appropriate decisions to support the truth and promote international principles and laws.

The speech of His Highness the Amir received wide praise from the leaders of the Republican Party, led by former President George W. Bush, who lauded the distinguished and historical bilateral relations between the two friendly countries.

## Kuwait City

## Continued from Page 1

and Doha ranked 121st.

Mercer, a business of Marsh McLennan (NYSE: MMC) and a global leader in redefining the world of work, reshaping retirement and investment outcomes, and unlocking real health and well-being, today released its 2024 Cost of Living City Ranking. The ranking offers insights to help multinational employers plan compensation strategies for their international assignees.

Hong Kong retained the top spot in this year's ranking, followed by Singapore. Swiss cities Zurich, Geneva, and Basel round out the top five most expensive cities.

"Cost-of-living challenges have had a significant impact on multinational organizations and their employees," said Yvonne Traber, Mercer's Global Mobility Leader. "It is important for organizations to stay informed about

intensified efforts to enforce domestic safety regulations to prevent such incidents, underscoring ongoing measures to ensure the safety and well-being of all Filipinos residing in Kuwait.

Looking forward, Congressman Salo emphasized the importance of resumed discussions between the Philippine and Kuwaiti governments. "We are confident that as discussions between the Philippine Government and Kuwait Government resume, measures for greater protection of our migrant workers will be threshed out and adopted," Salo explained.

In conclusion, Congressman Salo conveyed a message of commitment to the Filipino community in Kuwait. "The Philippine Government and KABAYAN Partylist remain committed to promoting the rights and welfare of our OFWs. We are dedicated to ensuring that their concerns are addressed and that they receive the support they need," he assured.

Congressman Ron Salo's visit to Kuwait underscores the ongoing efforts to enhance the welfare of OFWs and strengthen bilateral relations between the Philippines and Kuwait. The positive developments from his meeting with Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousuf, combined with the commitment to addressing the challenges faced by OFWs, highlight the importance of continued collaboration between the two nations.

Rep. Ron P. Salo represents the KABAYAN Partylist in the 17th, 18th, and 19th Congress, serving from 2016 to the present. He graduated cum laude with a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology from the University of the Philippines - Diliman and later earned his law degree from UP Diliman. He pursued a Masters in International Law at University College London as a British Chevening Scholar, graduating with Merit, and obtained an Executive Doctorate in Educational Leadership from the Development Academy of the Philippines.

During the Arroyo Administration, Rep. Salo served as Undersecretary at the Office of the Executive Secretary. He has taught at UP College of Law and De La Salle College of Law, and currently serves on the Board of Philippine State College of Aeronautics (PhilSCA) and is a former board member of RTU, EARIST and Polytechnic University of the Philippines. He is also involved with the Chevening Alumni Foundation of the Philippines, Inc., having served as President.

Rep. Salo was a finalist for the Professional Achievement Award Category - UK Global Alumni Awards East Asia / Pacific in 2018 and recognized as the Transnational Higher Education Champion at the British Council's 45th Anniversary in April 2024. He is known

for his legislative contributions, including the Magna Carta of Filipino Seafarers, which protects seafarers' rights, and key bills such as the Department of Migrant Workers Law, Universal Health Care Law and Philippine Salt Industry Development Act.

In the 19th Congress, Rep. Salo authored significant bills such as the Philippine Midwifery Act of 2022, Magna Carta of Filipino Migrant Workers, establishment of Kabayan Pension Fund, and legislation on public health workers, mechanical engineering, and workers' benefits like the 14th Month Pay and Teacher's Salary Increase.

## Kuwait Amir,

## Continued from Page 1

pilgrims are safe and in good health. He affirmed that the coordinated efforts of the union and Kuwaiti Hajj Mission reflected in the comfort of the pilgrims as they performed their rituals with ease despite the hot weather. He expressed thanks and appreciation to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia for the excellent organization of Hajj and the hospitality provided to the pilgrims of the Holy House of Allah.

In a related development, the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) revealed that the abovementioned flights will start operating on Wednesday and will continue for three days - until all the pilgrims return to Kuwait.

Acting Deputy Director General of DGCA said the first flight will be that of Flynas Airlines (formerly Nas), while the last will be by Saudia Airlines on Friday. He added that around 8,000 pilgrims will be on board four Kuwait Airways and Saudi Airways flights.

Hajj pilgrims continued, Tuesday, performing the stoning rites in Mina on the third day of Eid Al-Adha and the second day of Al-Tashriq, and headed to the Holy Kaaba to perform the final circumambulation (Tawaf Al-Wadaa').

The faithful pilgrims followed the symbolic consecutive stoning of Al-Jamra Al-Sughra, Al-Jamra Alwusta and Al-Jamra Al-Kubra, with some pilgrims, in a hurry, heading to the Holy Kaaba before sunset to perform Tawaf Al-Wadaa' and leaving Makkah. On Wednesday, pilgrims not in any hurry would start heading to Al-Jamra sites to perform the stoning ritual on the third day of Al-Tashriq and the fourth day of Eid Al-Adha.

Crowds of pilgrims performed the symbolic stoning rites, Al-Jamra Al-Sughra, Al-Jamra Alwusta and Al-Jamra Al-Kubra, in Mina on the second day of Eid Al-Adha, the first

Al-Tashriq Day.

Five lanes have been allocated as access for the faithful to reach the Al-Jamarat site. They are linked to the Al-Mashaer Train and the regions in the vicinity of the pilgrims' camp in Mina. The pilgrims are entitled to perform the stoning rite Tuesday, the Second Tashriq Day, in line with the Sunnah. They can proceed from Mina if they are in a hurry -- called the First Nafla, where they are relieved of staying for the third day's stoning provided they exit Mina before sunset.

In the third Tashriq Day, falling on Wednesday, a pilgrim may hurl the three stones as he (she) did in the previous two days before departing Mina to Makkah, where the adherent circles the Kaaba upon leaving the city.

## Amir wishes

## Continued from Page 1

and Muslim worlds blessed Eid, security and stability, praying to Allah Almighty to protect Kuwait and its people from all evils and to grant them security and safety, noted a Diwan statement.

His Highness the Crown Prince's Diwan on Friday relayed Eid Al-Adha greetings from His Highness Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah to His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah on the blessed occasion.

His Highness the Crown Prince also wished Kuwait's citizens and residents happy Eid amid unity, security and safety, praying to Allah Almighty to protect Kuwait and its people from all evils and to grant them security and safety under the wise leadership of His Highness the Amir.

His Highness the Crown Prince also wished both Arab and Muslim worlds a blessed Eid Adha.

His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah on Saturday exchanged congratulations and greetings with kings and presidents of Arab and Muslim countries, as well as heirs apparent on the occasion of Eid Al-Adha.

In the congratulatory cables, His Highness the Amir expressed sincere wishes for the Arab and Muslim nations and for them to enjoy security, stability and progress.

His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah on Saturday extended Eid Al-Adha greetings to His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah on the blessed occasion.

In a cable, His Highness the Crown Prince prayed to Almighty Allah to

bestow utmost wellbeing upon His Highness the Amir, as well as wishing Kuwait's citizens and residents happy Eid.

His Highness also prayed to the Almighty to protect Kuwait and its people from all evils and to grant them security and safety under the wise leadership of His Highness the Amir. His Highness the Crown Prince also wished both Arab and Muslim worlds a blessed Eid Adha.

His Highness the Amir, in a reply cable, thanked His Highness the Crown Prince on such warm sentiments.

His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah on Saturday received cables of greetings from His Highness Chief of the National Guard Sheikh Salem Al-Ali Al-Sabah, His Highness Sheikh Nasser Al-Mohammad Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, His Highness Sheikh Jaber Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, His Highness Sheikh Ahmad Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, His Highness Dr. Mohammed Sabah Al-Salem Al-Sabah, and His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, on the holy occasion of Eid Al-Adha.

In their cables, the senior sheikhs and officials wished His Highness the Amir everlasting wellbeing and the dear nation more progress and prosperity.

In reply cables, His Highness the Amir thanked them and appreciated the sincere sentiments, expressing best wishes for them and the nation.

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## World News Roundup

## Europe

**Ukraine claims drones hit Russia oil facility:** Ukraine claimed responsibility Tuesday for an overnight drone attack on a Russian oil facility that started a massive blaze in the latest long-range strike by Kyiv's forces on a border region.

Ukraine has in recent months stepped up aerial assaults on Russian soil, targeting refineries and oil terminals in an effort to slow down the Kremlin's war machine. Moscow's army is pressing hard along the front line in eastern Ukraine, where a shortage of troops and ammunition in the third year of war has made defenders vulnerable.



Golubev

The attack set fire to an oil reservoir in Russia's Rostov region and more than 200 firefighters were at the scene, according to Rostov Gov Vasily Golubev.

The blaze covered an area of 5,000 square meters (55,000 square feet) but there were no casualties, Russia's Emergencies Ministry said.

A Ukrainian official, speaking on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to give the information to the media, said the attack was a special operation of Ukraine's Security Service, known as SBU. The drones targeted two Rostov oil depots that have 22 oil reservoirs, the official said. (AP)

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**Biden, Stoltenberg commend NATO Ukraine support:** US President Joe Biden and NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg met late Monday at the White House, discussing a variety of issues including further support to the Ukraine as well as an increase in the organization's military spending.

A statement by the White House revealed that the meeting came ahead of NATO's 75th Anniversary Summit in Washington, DC next month.

Biden welcomed steps by NATO Allies were taking to support Ukraine and to deepen partnerships, including in the Indo-Pacific.

President Biden and Secretary General Stoltenberg also discussed significant progress on defense spending, including that, a record 23 Allies will reach NATO's two percent spending threshold, a more than two-fold increase since President Biden took office.

The upcoming NATO anniversary summit in Washington comes amid fears amongst members of the organization in regards to a hypothetical Russian militaristic expansion in Europe if Moscow won the war in the Ukraine. (KUNA)

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**NATO allies hit defense spending target:** A record 23 of NATO's 32 member nations are hitting the Western military alliance's defense spending target this year, NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg said Monday, as Russia's war in Ukraine has raised the threat of expanding conflict in Europe.

The estimated figure is a nearly fourfold increase from 2021, when only six nations were meeting the goal. That was before Russian President Vladimir Putin's full-scale invasion of Ukraine in 2022.

"Europeans are doing more for their collective security than just a few years ago," Stoltenberg said in a speech at the Wilson Center research group.

After the speech, Stoltenberg met at the White House with President Joe Biden.

Stoltenberg noted that allies were buying more military equipment from the US.

NATO members agreed last year to spend at least 2% of their gross domestic product on defense. (AP)

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**64 missing, many rescued from shipwrecks:** Sixty-four people were missing in the Mediterranean Sea and several were rescued after their ship wrecked off Italy's southern coast Monday, United Nations' agencies said in a statement.

In a separate shipwreck, rescue workers evacuated dozens of suspected migrants but found 10 bodies trapped below the deck of a wooden boat off Italy's tiny Lampedusa island, the German aid group Resqship wrote on Monday on the X social media platform.

The boat that wrecked about 200 kilometers (125 miles) off Calabria had set off from Turkey eight days earlier, but caught fire and overturned, the UN agencies said, citing survivors.

The search-and-rescue operation started following a mayday call by a French boat, the Italian coast guard said in a statement. The survivors and people still missing at sea came from Iran, Syria and Iraq, the UN agencies said.

In the second shipwreck, the crew aboard Resqship's boat, the Nadir, found 61 people on the wooden boat, which was full of water. (AP)

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**Greece denies report of brutality to migrants:** Greece on Monday denied a new report that accused its coast guard of brutally preventing migrants from reaching Greek shores, which also alleged that the practice had resulted in dozens of deaths.

A BBC report said it had been ascertained that 43 migrants drowned - including nine who were thrown into the water - in 15 incidents off Greece's eastern Aegean Sea islands in 2020-2023. It cited interviews with eyewitnesses, following reports from media, charities and the Turkish coast guard.

Greek government spokesman Pavlos Marinakis insisted that there was no evidence to support the allegations.

Greece is a major gateway for migrants from the Middle East, Africa and Asia seeking a better life in the affluent European Union. Thousands slip into the country every year, mostly in small boats from neighboring Turkey. Relations with Turkey are often tense, and the two countries' coast guards have repeatedly traded accusations of mistreating migrants. (AP)

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**US, Cyprus embark on strategic dialogue:** Cyprus-US relations have reached their highest level yet after the two countries embarked on a strategic dialogue on key issues including defense, security, energy, crisis management and the fight against terrorism, officials said Monday.

US Secretary of State Antony Blinken hailed the development as a "powerful evidence of the strengthening, deepening (and) broadening of the relationship between our countries acting together in so many areas."

"It's a reflection of the fact that Cyprus is an important player in the region, and a partnership for the United States that we deeply value," Blinken said ahead of talks with Cypriot Foreign Minister Constantinos Kombos in Washington.

Kombos hailed the start of the dialogue as a hallmark for the east Mediterranean island nation's closest-ever ties with the US in a tumultuous region where Cyprus can be relied on as a credible partner. (AP)

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**Austria chancellor to remain in govt coalition:** Austrian Chancellor Karl Nehammer said his conservative Austrian People's Party would remain in the current government coalition with its Green party junior partner - even though the Green's environment minister voted on Monday for the so-called Nature Restoration plan, which Nehammer has opposed.

Environment Minister Leonore Gewessler's vote in a European Union ballot earlier on Monday came after months of domestic political debate and infuriated the senior partner in the coalition government ahead of a national election set for Sept. 29.

Before Nehammer's statement, speculation had been growing in Austria about whether he would break up the coalition government.

"The emotion would be there" for an end to the coalition, but Nehammer told journalists it was his "responsibility, as federal chancellor, to ensure an orderly path" until the parliamentary elections, Austrian public broadcaster ORF reported. (AP)

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**Candidate Cabinet ministers questioned:** Candidate Cabinet ministers in the Netherlands' incoming far-right-led government underwent questioning Monday to establish their suitability for office, as the monthlong process of forming a new administration neared its end.

Anti-Islam lawmaker Geert Wilders' Party for Freedom won elections in November and has been working since then to cobble together a four-party coalition to govern for the next four-year parliamentary term.

The negotiations have been tough. Last week, Wilders had to withdraw his candidate for minister for asylum and migration after a national security screening. The replacement candidate, Marjolijn Faber, prompted urgent discussions between the leaders of the coalition parties because of her past hard-right comments. (AP)



US Republican presidential candidate former president Donald Trump speaks at his birthday celebration, hosted by Club 47, in West Palm Beach, Fla on June 14. (AP)

## Politics

## Louisiana Rep Graves won't seek reelection

## Trump challenges Biden to cognitive test

WASHINGTON, June 18, (AP) - Donald Trump suggested US President Joe Biden "should have to take a cognitive test," only to confuse who administered the test to him in the next sentence.

The former president and presumptive Republican nominee referred to Texas Republican Rep. Ronny Jackson, who was the White House physician for part of his presidency, as "Ronny Johnson." The moment came as Trump was questioning Biden's mental acuity, something he often does on the campaign trail and social media.

## Healthiest

"He doesn't even know what the word 'inflation' means. I think he should take a cognitive test like I did," the former president said of Biden during a speech at a convention of Turning Point Action in Detroit.

Seconds later, he continued, "Doc Ronny Johnson. Does everyone know Ronny Johnson, congressman from Texas? He was the White House doctor, and he said I was the healthiest president, he feels, in history, so I liked him very much indeed immediately."

Jackson was elected to Congress in 2021 and is one of Trump's most vociferous defenders on Capitol Hill.

Trump, who turned 78 on Friday, has made questioning whether the 81-year-old Biden is up for a second term a centerpiece of his campaign. But online critics quickly seized on his Saturday night gaffe, with the Biden campaign - which has long fought off criticism about the Democratic president's verbal missteps - posting a clip of the moment minutes later.

Trump took the cognitive test in 2018 at his own request, Jackson told reporters at the time. The exam is designed to detect early signs of memory loss and other mild cognitive impairment.

The Montreal Cognitive Assessment that Trump took includes remembering a list of spoken words; listening to a list of random numbers and repeating them backward; naming as many words that begin with, say, the letter F as possible within a minute; accurately drawing a cube; and describing concrete ways that two objects - like a train and a bicycle - are alike.

Trump later said that he had to remember and accurately recite a list of words in order: "Person. Woman. Man.

## Half a mln immigrants could eventually get US citizenship under WH new plan

WASHINGTON, June 18, (AP) - US President Joe Biden is taking an expansive, election-year step to offer relief to potentially hundreds of thousands of immigrants without legal status in the US - aiming to balance his own aggressive crackdown on the border earlier this month that enraged advocates and many Democratic lawmakers.

The White House announced Tuesday that the Biden administration will, in the coming months, allow certain spouses of US citizens without legal status to apply for permanent residency and eventually, citizenship. The move could affect upwards of half a million immigrants, according to senior administration officials.

To qualify, an immigrant must have lived in the United States for 10 years as of Monday and be married to a US citizen. If a qualifying immigrant's application is approved, he or she would have three years to apply for a green card, and

receive a temporary work permit and be shielded from deportation in the meantime.

About 50,000 non-citizen children with a parent who is married to a US citizen could also potentially qualify for the same process, according to senior administration officials who briefed reporters on the proposal on condition of anonymity. There is no requirement on how long the couple must have been married, and no one becomes eligible after Monday. That means immigrants who reach that 10 year mark any time after June 17, 2024, will not qualify for the program, according to the officials.

Senior administration officials said they anticipate the process will be open for applications by the end of the summer, and fees to apply have yet to be determined.

White House officials privately encouraged Democrats in the House, which is in recess this week, to travel back to Washington to attend the announcement.

Camera. TV."

During the same speech in Detroit, Trump also referenced a video clip widely circulated online in Republican circles where Biden is seen during the recently concluded Group of Seven summit in Italy watching skydivers land with flags from different nations.

A cropped version of the video shows Biden stepping away from the leaders, turning his back and walking in the other direction. He flashes a thumbs-up but it's not clear who he is gesturing to. A more complete angle of the same scene, however, shows that the president had turned to face a skydiver who has landed.

## Also:

**BATON ROUGE, La:** US Rep Garret Graves, a Republican representing Louisiana, said on that he will not run for reelection after a new congressional map dismantled his district, transforming it into the state's second majority-Black district.

Up until now, the congressman, one of former-House Speaker Kevin McCarthy's close allies, had remained adamant that he would run again. But in a written statement on Friday, he explained his change of mind.

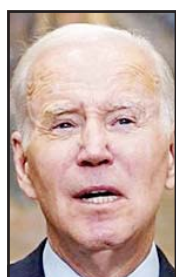
"After much input from constituents, consultation with supporters, consensus from family, and guidance from the Almighty, it is clear that running for Congress this year does not make sense," said Graves, of **Baton Rouge**.

The lawmaker went on to say that a run in any "temporary district" would cause "permanent damage to Louisiana's great representation in Congress."

Graves' exit clears the way for an open race in the new 6th District, where Democratic state Sen. Cleo Fields, of Baton Rouge, has already declared his candidacy, and virtually guarantees current 5th District Republican Congresswoman Julia Letlow, of Start, an easy path to reelection.



Britain's King Charles III attends the Order of The Garter Service at Windsor Castle in Windsor, England on June 17. The Order of the Garter is the oldest and most senior Order of Chivalry in Britain, established by King Edward III nearly 700 years ago. (AP)



Biden



Nethercutt

## North America

**Secret Service agent robbed:** A US Secret Service agent was robbed at gunpoint as US President Joe Biden was visiting Los Angeles for a fundraising event over the weekend, officials said.

The agent was returning from work Saturday night when he was accosted in a residential community in Tustin, about an hour's drive southeast of Los Angeles, according to the US Secret Service.

Someone called the Tustin Police Department shortly after 9:30 p.m. to report the robbery. Police said the agent had his bag stolen at gunpoint. The agent, who was not injured, fired his gun during the confrontation, police said. The Secret Service said they did not know if anyone was shot.

Tustin Police said Monday they had not found a suspect. Officers did find some of the agent's stolen belongings in the area. Police reported a silver Infiniti FX35 was seen leaving the scene.

Biden and former president Barack Obama held a star-studded fundraising event in Los Angeles on Saturday that brought in more than \$30 million for Biden's reelection campaign. (AP)

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**Plane crash kills 2:** Two people were killed when a twin-engine Cessna airplane crashed in a residential area in north-central Colorado on Monday, starting a fire that burned two mobile homes, officials said.

The pilot and a passenger died when the Cessna 421 went down near the Steamboat Springs Airport just before 4:30 p.m., Steamboat Springs police said. The airplane can have up to seven seats.

All residents of the mobile home park were accounted for, police said in a social media post. The fire also burned several out-buildings.

The plane was believed to have taken off from Longmont, Colorado, and was on its way to Ogdén, Utah, Steamboat Springs Fire Rescue said. The names of the victims were not immediately released.

Witnesses reported the airplane appeared to have mechanical issues, fire officials said.

The National Transportation Safety Board will investigate the cause of the crash. (AP)

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**Former Rep Nethercutt dies:** Former US Rep George Nethercutt, who was a

Spokane lawyer with limited political experience when he ousted Democratic Speaker of the House Tom Foley as part of a stunning GOP wave that shifted national politics

to the right in 1994, has died. He was 79.

Nethercutt died Friday near Denver of progressive supranuclear palsy, a rare, neurodegenerative brain disease, his son said in



Some of the 11 migrants saved from the sea after their sailboat sank in the Mediterranean Sea between Italy and Greece on June 17 are assisted in Roccella Ionica, southern Italy where they were brought by the Italian Coast Guard. (AP)

an email Monday.

"He lived a life based in faith, family, community, and service, never sacrificing his principles as a statesman," Elliott Nethercutt wrote.

The 1994 midterm elections, which came halfway through President Bill Clinton's first term, were a resounding victory for Republicans, who won control of both houses of Congress for the first time since the early 1950s.

Nethercutt was the chairman of the Spokane County Republican Party and had served in the 1970s as chief of staff to Alaska Sen. Ted Stevens but had not run for office before challenging Foley.

Foley had represented the district for 30 years - the last five as speaker of the House. (AP)

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**3 adults killed in Toronto:** A man and woman were shot to death and a male suspected as the attacker also died Monday at a north Toronto office space near a daycare center and a school, authorities said.

The shooting prompted a lockdown of both the daycare facility and the Catholic all-boys elementary school, and parents rushed to the area to pick up their children.

Detective Sgt Al Bartlett said the man and woman who were killed worked together in what he described as financial transaction business. (AP)

## Lat/Am

## El Salvador rains kill 7

## 'Polls show support for judicial reforms'

MEXICO CITY, June 18, (AP) — In a move reminiscent of her political mentor, incoming Mexican President **Claudia Sheinbaum** on Monday displayed a series of surveys commissioned by her political party that she said show a wide majority approve of controversial judicial changes.

Sheinbaum said the surveys were just "informational." She said the polling was done over the weekend and included face-to-face interviews of thousands of eligible voters across Mexico.

Everyone should do "their own analysis of the results," she said.

The polls, which are not binding in any way, are a page from the playbook of her political mentor, President **Andrés Manuel López Obrador**, who will be succeeded by Sheinbaum on Oct. 1.

Critics have questioned the use of the public surveys, calling them more of a public relations ploy to help build momentum to pass legislation.

López Obrador carried out one of his own campaign promises six years ago when he submitted a partially built \$13 billion Mexico City airport project to a national consultation between his own election and taking office. That survey also came down on his side and he cancelled the project upon becoming president.

In another survey, respondents overwhelmingly supported his pet project, the Maya Train, which now carries tourists around the Yucatan Peninsula.

## Approach

When the National Electoral Institute conducted a national referendum in 2021 on whether former presidents should be prosecuted for wrongdoing, voter turnout was so low that it didn't approach the level necessary to make it binding.

López Obrador has said he would pursue 20 constitutional changes after his Morena party won a two-thirds majority in Congress in the June 2 elections. They include making all judges run for election and enshrining a series of unfunded benefit mandates in Mexico's constitution.

The country's judiciary has blocked several of López Obrador's previous reforms, ruling them unconstitutional.

Sheinbaum's surveys were conducted through private Mexican pollsters Enkoll and De Las Heras Demotecnia, in addition to her party's own commission of surveys. She said Morena did not intervene in any way with the different methodologies, giving them autonomy to conduct surveys throughout the country.

Each poll was based on between 1,000 and 1,500 face-to-face interviews conducted between June 14 and 16. They had margins of error of plus or minus three percentage points.

The surveys asked five questions, including whether participants knew the party is proposing judicial changes and whether they believe there is corruption within the judicial system.



**7 dead in El Salvador rains:** Seven people were killed Monday in separate events in El Salvador that authorities attributed to heavy rains that have persisted since the weekend.

In Tacuba, near the country's border with Guatemala, five people died after they were buried in landslides triggered by heavy rains. Juan Carlos Bidegáin, chief of the country's civil defense, said two of the victims were minors.

Two others were killed Monday when they lost control of their vehicle in western El Salvador.

That followed the deaths of one person in a landslide on Saturday and another on Sunday when a tree fell on his vehicle. Low pressure areas on Guatemala's Pacific coast and in the Gulf of Mexico are fueling heavy rains in the region.

El Salvador's government declared an emergency Sunday and opened some 100 shelters across the country as the risk of flooding increased. Schools will be closed Tuesday and Wednesday ahead of forecast rains. In Guatemala, authorities closed schools until Thursday due to the heavy rain that started over the weekend.



**Rescuers find more victims:** Rescue teams and some inhabitants searched the mud Monday looking for more victims of a landslide in central Ecuador that killed at least eight people.

Heavy rains over the weekend drenched several provinces of Ecuador, but the community of Baños was one of the most affected when a hill partially collapsed Sunday and swept over some houses and vehicles.

Ecuador's Risk Management office said in a press release that besides the eight confirmed deaths, 11 others were missing and 22 more were injured.

Baños, which is about 135 kilometers (84 miles) south of the capital, Quito, is known among tourists as a jumping-off point for adventures in the Amazon jungle.

"Pain, sadness, resignation for the family," one resident, Edgar Paredes, said in describing the loss of his son in the landslide.

Search teams and some inhabitants removed debris by hand, though heavy machinery was also put to use.

The initial death toll Sunday was six, but authorities reported Monday two more bodies had been removed.

As the searchers worked in the mud, some residents sought to recover furniture from damaged houses.



**Russia ships leave Havana port:** A fleet of Russian warships, including a nuclear-powered submarine, left Havana's port on Monday after a five-day visit to Cuba following planned military drills in the Atlantic Ocean. The exercise has been seen by some as a show of strength by Moscow against the backdrop of tensions as U.S. and other Western nations support Kyiv in Russia's war on Ukraine.

The submarine, a frigate, an oil tanker and a rescue tug slowly departed from the port on Monday morning.

It's unclear what the fleet's next destination is or where it will dock next in the Caribbean, although U.S. officials said days ago that the vessels could possibly also stop in Venezuela.

Officials with the Biden administration said last week that they were monitoring the vessels and confirmed that they did not pose a threat to the region or indicate a transfer of missiles. Still, the United States docked a submarine, the USS Helena, at its Guantanamo Bay Naval Base in Cuba.



Philippine navy ship BRP Sierra Madre is seen at the Second Thomas Shoal, locally known as Ayungin Shoal, at the South China Sea on April 23, 2023. A Chinese vessel and a Philippine supply ship collided near the disputed Spratly Islands in the South China Sea on June 17, China's coast guard said. Inset: Filipino fishermen and activists wear boat costumes to protest against alleged Chinese aggression at the disputed South China Sea as they stage a rally in front of the Chinese consulate in Makati, Philippines on June 11. (AP)

## US renews warning it's obligated to defend Philippines

The United States renewed a warning Tuesday that it's obligated to defend its close treaty ally a day after Filipino navy personnel were injured and their supply boats damaged in one of the most serious confrontations between the Philippines and China in a disputed shoal in the South China Sea, officials said.

China and the Philippines blamed each other for instigating Monday's hostilities in the Second Thomas Shoal, which has been occupied by a small

Filipino navy contingent aboard a grounded warship that's been closely watched by Chinese coast guard, navy and suspected militia ships in a years-long territorial standoff. There is fear the disputes, long regarded as an Asian flashpoint, could escalate and pit the United States and China in a larger conflict.

US Deputy Secretary of State Kurt Campbell discussed China's actions with Philippine counterpart, Maria Theresa Lazaro, in a telephone call. Both

agreed that China's "dangerous actions threatened regional peace and stability," State Department spokesperson Matthew Miller said.

Campbell reaffirmed that the 1951 Mutual Defense Treaty, which obligates Washington and Manila to help defend the other in major conflicts, "extends to armed attacks on Philippine armed forces, public vessels, or aircraft - including those of its coast guard - anywhere in the South China Sea," according to Miller. (AP)

## Asia

## Putin vows Russia, NKorea to beat sanctions together

## South Korea soldiers fire warning shots

SEOUL, South Korea, June 18, (AP) — South Korean troops fired warning shots to repel North Korean soldiers who briefly crossed the rivals' heavily fortified land border Tuesday for the second time this month, the South's military said. Both incursions were believed to be unintentional.

Around 20 to 30 North Korean soldiers who were doing construction work crossed the military demarcation line that serves as the border between the two countries in the Demilitarized Zone, according to South Korea's Joint Chiefs of Staff. The soldiers retreated after the South broadcasted warnings and fired warning shots, and the South's military didn't spot any suspicious activity after that, the joint chiefs said.

The border area is dense with overgrown trees and plants, and the North Korean soldiers may have not known exactly where the border was, according to the South's military, which said it doesn't believe the soldiers deliberately crossed into the South. The North did not return fire.

The intrusion comes as tensions rise between the rivals, who in recent weeks have engaged in Cold War-style psychological warfare and made it clear they are no longer bound by their landmark military agreement in 2018 to reduce tensions.

## Crossed

Troops from the South also fired warning shots on June 11 after another group of North Korean soldiers briefly crossed the border. The Joint Chiefs of Staff said that Tuesday's incursion occurred in a different area along the central front-line region.

The Koreans' heavily fortified border area, referred to as the Demilitarized Zone, has occasionally been a site of bloodshed and violent confrontations between the rivals. The military demarcation line marks the border between the two Koreas within the DMZ,

ing an unverified number of militants and forcing the rest to fall back, the statement continued. It is an unprecedented attack on the nearly 2000 km Niger-Benin pipeline which was designed to transport crude oil from Niger's Agadem field to the port of Seme in Benin. (KUNA)

which is 248 kilometers (154 miles) long and 4 kilometers (2.5 miles) wide.

The zone is strewn with an estimated 2 million mines and also guarded by barbed wire fences, tank traps and combat troops on both sides. It's a legacy of the 1950-53 Korean War, which ended with an armistice, not a peace treaty.

The South's military has observed increased North Korean activity along the border to install what appear to be anti-tank barriers, reinforce roads and plant land mines. The work has gone on uninterrupted despite several explosions caused by mines that killed or wounded an unspecified number of North Korean soldiers, said the South's Joint Chiefs of Staff.

The construction started around April and is possibly aimed at making it harder for North Korean civilians or soldiers to defect to the South as Pyongyang's leadership attempts to strengthen its control over its people, according to the joint chiefs.

**Putin thanks North Korea:** Russian President **Vladimir Putin** thanked North Korea for supporting his actions in Ukraine and said their countries will cooperate closely to overcome U.S.-led sanctions as he headed to Pyongyang on Tuesday for a summit with North Korean leader **Kim Jong Un**.

Putin's comments appeared in an op-ed piece in North Korean state media hours before his expected arrival for a two-day visit as the countries deepen their alignment in the face of separate, intensifying confrontations with Washington.

In the North Korean capital of Pyongyang, the streets were decorated with Putin's portraits and Russian flags. A banner hung on a building said: "We warmly welcome the President of the Russian Federation."

Putin, who will be making his first

trip to North Korea in 24 years, said he highly appreciates its firm support of his military action in Ukraine. He said the countries would continue to "resolutely oppose" what he described as Western ambitions "to hinder the establishment of a multipolar world order based on justice, mutual respect for sovereignty, considering each other's interests."

Putin also said Russia and North Korea will develop trade and payment systems "that are not controlled by the West" and jointly oppose sanctions against the countries, which he described as "illegal, unilateral restrictions."



**Ex-Thai PM Thaksin indicted:** Former Thai prime minister **Thaksin Shinawatra** was granted release on bail hours after he was formally indicted Tuesday on a charge of defaming the country's monarchy in one of several court cases that have rattled Thai politics.

Thaksin, an influential political figure despite being ousted from power in a coup 18 years ago, reported himself to prosecutors Tuesday morning and was indicted, **Prayuth Jeingruna**, a spokesperson for the Office of the Attorney General, said at a news conference.

Thaksin, 74, voluntarily returned to Thailand last year from self-imposed exile and served virtually all of his sentence on corruption-related charges in a hospital rather than prison on medical grounds. He was granted release on parole in February.

Since then, Thaksin has maintained a high profile and is seen as the unofficial power behind the party leading the government, **Pheu Thai**. He has traveled the country making public appearances and political observations that could upset the powerful conservative establishment that was behind his 2006 ouster.

ing Corporation said on Monday.

Fourteen others, three of whom were in critical condition, have been hospitalized, the broadcaster said, quoting National Shrines Chairperson of the Anglican Church **Edwin Selemani**.

Zimbabwean Police Spokesperson **Paul Nyathi** told Xinhua Monday morning that he is heading for the scene of the tragedy and would give more details later. (Xinhua)



**5 parties to join GNU:** The African National Congress (ANC) said on Monday that a total of five political parties have officially signed a statement of intent to participate in the government of national unity (GNU).

The five parties are the ANC, the Democratic Alliance, the Inkatha Freedom Party, GOOD, and the Patriotic Alliance, the ANC said in a statement.

The collective represents 273 seats, or 68 percent of the seats in South Africa's National Assembly, according to the statement.

"The GNU's priorities and minimum program are fully aligned with the ANC's long-standing commitments and policies. We are dedicated to achieving rapid, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, job creation, land reform, industrialization, and infrastructure development. Our objective is to create a just society that addresses poverty, spatial inequalities, food security, and the high cost of living, while protecting workers' rights and delivering quality basic services," said the ANC. (Xinhua)



Residents and rescue workers waded along a road covered in mud after intense rain triggered a landslide in Banos, Ecuador on June 17. Rescue teams and some inhabitants searched the mud Monday looking for more victims of a landslide in central Ecuador that killed at least eight people. (AP)



Chilima



Chakwera

## Africa

**Malawi VP laid to rest:** Malawi Vice President **Saulos Chilima** was laid to rest Monday in his village south of the capital, following a funeral where President **Lazarus Chakwera** called for an independent probe into his death in a plane crash.

Chilima and nine other people died in the plane crash last week in Malawi's northern region of Mzimba. The state funeral was held at the Bingu Bingu National Stadium in Lilongwe on Sunday, where Chakwera and other dignitaries paid their final respects to the late vice president.

In his address, Chakwera called for an independent investigation into the crash.

"Our tears are about the desire to know what delayed the search for this plane. ... I would like to assure you, Malawians, that this accident will be investigated by an independent expert," Chakwera said amid boos and jeers from the crowd.

Hundreds of soldiers, police officers and forest rangers had searched for more than 24 hours before the wreckage was discovered in a forest plantation south of Mzuzu.

The plane was on a short flight from Lilongwe to the northern city of Mzuzu when it went missing last Monday morning. Chakwera had said earlier that air traffic controllers had told the plane not to land in Mzuzu because of bad weather and poor visibility and to return to Lilongwe. Air traffic controllers then lost contact with the plane.

Chakwera on Sunday called for unity and patience as the investigations continued, saying, "We need answers, but we must remain calm and supportive of each other during this difficult time." (AP)



**6 soldiers killed in Niger:** Six soldiers were killed on Monday following a militant attack on the Niger-Benin oil transport pipeline monitoring unit, the military announced.

In a statement released by Niger's military said that the dead soldiers were a part of an operation against militant groups that have been patrolling the southeastern Dosso region for years, nearby the Niger Benin borders.

The soldiers responded effectively, kill-



Malawian President Lazarus Chakwera, Malawi's Vice President Saulos Chilima, in Nsipe, Malawi on June 17. Chakwera called for an independent probe into his death in a plane crash. (AP)

| Market | Change  | Closing pts | Market      | Change | Closing pts |
|--------|---------|-------------|-------------|--------|-------------|
| JAPAN  | -       | Nikkei 225  | PHILIPPINES | -      | PSEI        |
|        | +379.67 | 38,482.11   |             | -14.90 | 6,368.80    |

## Project aims to enhance Gulf states' electrical network

### KFAED inks \$114.2 mln loan for GCC electricity grid expansion

KUWAIT CITY, June 18, (KUNA): The Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development (KFAED) signed a Thursday the second KD 35 million (about USD 114.2 million) loan agreement with the Gulf Cooperation Council Interconnection Authority (GCCAI).

The loan aims to finance the development of the GCC electricity grid and link it to the southern Iraq electricity network.

The agreement was signed by Kuwait Minister of Foreign Affairs and KFAED Board Chairman Abdullah Al-Yahya and the CEO of the GCCAI Ahmed Al-Ibrahim at the KFAED headquarters in Kuwait, in the presence of the GCC Secretary-General Jassem Al-Budaiwi.

Following the signing ceremony, Al Budawi commended the agreement, noting that the GCC countries are making great efforts to towards integration at all levels. He added that this project will benefit the GCC countries and Iraq.

KFAED signed a first loan agreement with GCCAI in March 2022 at a value of KD 35 million Kuwaiti (about 114.2 million dollars).

For his part, KFAED Acting Director General Waleed Al-Bahr said the GCC electrical interconnection project has great technical and economic benefits for all member states.

The project will increase the capacity and efficiency of the electrical networks of member states, he clarified.

Al-Bahr noted that Kuwait will be one of the largest beneficiaries of the project, as the capacity of the electricity network will be increased to 2,500 megawatts to meet the needs of the National Electricity Transmission Grid of Kuwait.

He stated that this agreement would help support the southern Iraq network with no less than 500 megawatts from the GCC interconnection system.

The project aims to strengthen the connectivity of the national electrical networks of the Gulf States that are members of the Gulf Interconnection Authority and increase their reliability to ensure the sustainability of electrical energy at all times, he indicated.

Al-Bahr pointed out that the project will contribute to achieving a number of sustainable development goals and is expected to be complete in 2026.

He disclosed that the project to expand the GCC network to Kuwait and then to the southern Iraq network would cost KD 245 million (about USD 800 million) to which

the KFAED contributed to KD 70 million (about USD 228.4 million), representing 28 percent of the total costs.

Al-Bahr unveiled that KFAED's two loans repayment time is 12 years, including a grace period of three years and the interest rate is 1.5 percent annually, in addition to a fee of 0.5 percent annually to cover the costs of management and services for implementing the loan agreement. They will be repaid in 18 semi-annual installments, he said.

In Baghdad, the Iraqi Minister of Electricity Ziad Ali praised the KFAED second loan agreement with the GCCAI.

Minister Ali described the signing of the agreement as a strategic step towards enhancing the stability of the electrical network in southern Iraq.

"It also embodies the fruitful Iraqi-Gulf cooperation in the energy sector," the Iraqi news agency quoted Minister Ali as saying.

He said that the project will contribute to improving energy efficiency and meet Iraq's energy needs.

## Kuwait eyes food security

### Salzburg meetings develop economic ties with Kuwait

VIENNA, June 18, (KUNA): Ambassador of Kuwait to Austria and its Permanent Representative to the International Organizations in Vienna, Talal Al-Fassam, discussed with senior officials in Salzburg, investment opportunities in various fields, particularly renewable energy, food security and tourism.

Following his meetings, Ambassador Al-Fassam told KUNA that he conducted discussions with senior local officials, including Stefan Schnoll, the Deputy Governor of Salzburg responsible for economy, commerce, and tourism.

Additionally, Al-Fassam said he met with Vice President of the Salzburg Chamber of Commerce, Andrea Stifter, and

officials of the State Police Directorate.

Al-Fassam expressed Kuwait's aspiration to enhance bilateral cooperation, and diversify its sources of food security and encourage direct investment, as Austria has fertile lands for agriculture and is distinguished with various industries.

Ambassador Al-Fassam highlighted Kuwait's attractiveness for international investors, citing its political stability and transparency in financial and commercial transactions.

Salzburg, the birthplace of the famous classic musician Mozart, is a major tourist destination year-round, renowned for its international music festivals and winter tourism.

# Kuwait's sovereign rating reaffirmed at 'A+' by S&P

Kuwait's economy heavily dependent on oil

**KUWAIT CITY, June 18: The recent report by Standard & Poor's reaffirming Kuwait's sovereign rating at A+ with a stable outlook highlights several critical points about the country's economic situation, reports Al-Jarida daily.**

The report, consistent with previous assessments by Moody's and the International Monetary Fund (IMF), underscores Kuwait's heavy reliance on oil as its primary economic driver. This dependency exposes Kuwait to fluctuations in global oil markets, impacting its economic performance significantly.

The key points from the report include:  
Economic Dependency on Oil -- Oil exports account for 90% of Kuwait's export earnings, 90% of general budget revenues, and about 50% of GDP. This high dependence makes Kuwait more vulnerable to fluctuations in oil prices and production levels dictated by OPEC+ agreements.

Economic Contraction -- The Kuwaiti economy contracted by approximately 1.8% in 2023, with expectations of a further 2.3% contraction in 2024. This downturn is primarily attributed to declines in oil production and prices under OPEC+ agreements.

Financial Reserves -- Kuwait's financial reserves, estimated by Standard & Poor's at around 418% of GDP

(or approximately \$715 billion), highlight significant financial buffers. However, there are discrepancies in estimates, with the Sovereign Fund Institute suggesting a higher figure of \$923 billion. This variance may stem from different calculations concerning liabilities associated with these reserves. Banking Sector Stability -- The report acknowledges the solvency and effectiveness of Kuwait's local banking sector, emphasizing the robust supervision by the Central Bank of Kuwait.

Challenges and Future Outlook -- Despite the substantial financial reserves, Kuwait faces challenges due to its entrenched reliance on oil. Future economic growth projections (2.4% for 2025-2027) are contingent on Kuwait gradually restoring its oil production share within the OPEC+ framework. However, these projections do not indicate reforms but rather rely on geopolitical and market factors.

Reform Challenges -- The report criticizes Kuwait for its limited efforts in financial and economic reforms, noting that current policies exacerbate structural economic gaps. There is concern that delaying reforms could make future adjustments increasingly difficult.

Overall, the report echoes longstanding advice from international bodies and local experts urging Kuwait to diversify its economy away from oil dependence. Without substantive reforms, Kuwait risks prolonged economic vulnerability despite its substantial financial reserves.

## Kuwait's market indices show slight declines

### Market indices across GCC states portray mixed picture

KUWAIT CITY, June 18: Last week, the performance of financial market indices across Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries showed a mixed picture, with three indices rising and four declining, reports Al-Jarida daily.

The Qatar Stock Exchange index stood out as the top performer for the second consecutive week, increasing by 1.41% with a gain of 134.59 points, reaching 9667 points.

Despite this recent surge, the Qatar market remains the worst performer in the GCC for the first half of 2024, showing a year-to-date loss of 10.67%, though this has improved from a 3.6% decrease in the past two weeks.

In Kuwait, all indices showed slight declines last week. The general market index dropped by 0.16%, the Premier Market index fell by 0.19%, and the 50 major market index decreased by 0.24%. Despite these declines, Kuwait's market indices have shown gains for the year, ranging from 2.3% to 5.8%.

Market activity slowed down in the week preceding Eid al-Adha, typical as

traders anticipate holiday-related market movements. Key stocks in Kuwait, such as KFH and Watani, saw marginal declines, while Gulf Bank benefited from its decision to convert to Islamic banking, resulting in a 7% increase in its shares.

Meanwhile, the Bahrain market index experienced modest growth of 0.26% during the week before the Eid al-Adha holiday. Most markets suspended trading for three sessions, except for the Saudi market, which will resume after the holiday.

The Dubai market index saw minimal change, edging up by only 0.04% to close at 3983.78 points, maintaining a year-to-date loss of 1.87% despite positive trends in global markets such as the Nasdaq and SSE.

The volatility in cocoa prices, along with changes in global economic and geopolitical conditions, continues to influence market sentiment.

Looking ahead, market participants are awaiting the mid-year results and closely monitoring global economic indicators and regional developments for potential impacts on market dynamics.

## Kuwait capital market revitalization by Gulf Bank, says Lamia Karam

### Gulf Bank reinforces commitment to regional capital markets at Mideast Bonds, Loans & Sukuk Conf. 2024

KUWAIT CITY, June 18: As part of its ongoing efforts to enhance its role in developing the local capital market and maintain engagement with the business community in the region, Gulf Bank participated in the Middle East Bonds, Loans & Sukuk Conference 2024, held in Dubai earlier this month. The event attracted over 1,400 banking and investment executives from the region, featuring around 75 speakers and experts.

On this occasion, Gulf Bank's General Manager of Treasury, Ms. Lamia Karam, stated, "We are committed to participating annually in the Middle East Bonds, Loans & Sukuk Conference, as it is a prestigious event in the Middle East that brings together decision-makers in the banking and major investment sectors in the region."

She added, "Our goal in participating in the conference is to strengthen ties and relationships with major institutions in the Middle East, engage in strategic discussions about capital markets, and stay continuously updated on the latest trends and developments in



Deputy CEO of Customer Support Services, Sami Mahfouz, stands with the bank team in a group photo inside the Gulf Bank pavilion.

this field, especially with the ongoing growth of bonds and Sukuk issuances in the region."

Ms. Karam also mentioned that the conference provides an ideal platform for communication and the exchange of views between banks and investment companies, exploring potential cooperation and growth opportunities. Our annual participation highlights Gulf Bank's firm commitment to expand-

ing its presence in the dynamic capital markets of the region and achieving its strategic goals.

Ms. Karam also mentioned that Gulf Bank is actively working to strengthen its pivotal role in revitalizing the Kuwaiti capital market and providing exceptional investment opportunities for clients. Establishing its investment arm, "Invest GB," is a significant step in this direction, offering a comprehen-

sive range of distinguished investment products and services.

She noted that Gulf Bank has successfully participated in managing bond issuances for several major banks and companies in Kuwait recently. She expressed her anticipation of managing more deals in the capital market in the upcoming period, thanks to the dedicated team at Gulf Bank, which spares no effort in achieving the best returns for all the bank's esteemed clients.

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

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

## Other Voices

### Struggle for oil price stability amid global 'supply' surplus

By Kamel Al-Harami  
Independent Oil Analyst

The ongoing disagreement between the two organizations — one representing oil-producing and exporting countries, and the other representing international oil-consuming countries — revolve around oil statistical figures and numbers.

Each side has their own point of view regarding the current and future projections for the next five years or maybe more. We hope this disagreement does not go out of control.

The main concern now is the surplus availability of crude oil, which is expected to impact future trends in oil prices. However, OPEC+ is seeking higher and better oil prices over the long term, due to the heavy reliance of many member states on oil as their main source of income, until the time they diversify and move away from this jewel in the crown, which is the lifeline of OPEC+.

According to the International Energy Agency (IEA), the world will see a surplus of oil by the end of 2030, mainly from the USA, Brazil, Canada, Argentina, and Guyana. These countries are increasingly targeting the traditional markets of the Arabian Gulf region.

Despite this surge in oil supply, there is not enough global demand. This is prompting OPEC+ to consider giving up its strategy of reducing its oil production for stabilizing the prices at a certain acceptable level.

Meanwhile, new consumers are taking full advantage of OPEC quotas and other measures to achieve some sort of stability. With the supply being ample, and in search for new distant markets, OPEC+ has already curtailed production by more than 6.5 million

barrels per day. The possibility of releasing about two million barrels per day from October is under consideration, but it may not work without adversely affecting the current oil price, which hovers around \$83 per barrel and is insufficient for OPEC+ to balance its budget. The desired price range of \$90 - \$95 per barrel is most likely not possible this year or the next.

OPEC+ and the IEA may disagree on the total demand and supply figures, with each side pushing for its own point of view. However, there are questions about the fact that the world will experience a surplus of crude oil in the coming few years.

It is hard to agree on a single unified figure, but OPEC alone currently holds 6.5 million barrels in storage that are ready for distribution, along with the additional output from countries like Iraq and Russia.

Meanwhile, other OPEC members such as Kuwait and Iran are still working on increasing their production by more than three to four million barrels per day, which requires the need to find new markets. Producers who are not part of OPEC+ are also ramping up their oil output. With supply outstripping demand, the prospect of reaching \$100 per barrel seems increasingly impossible. Marginal producers are adjusting with a barrel price of \$50 to \$60 per barrel, and pushing to reduce production costs further.

OPEC+ countries are embarking on finding new sources of income to realize their ambitious plans and reduce dependence on oil for revenues. This may require international borrowing or divesting some of some of their ownerships of their jewel in the crown, which seems to be a reality.

OPEC+ is set to face huge challenges in the future with more member states still working on developing new fields.

There are hard times ahead of us, so OPEC+ must diversify and move away from oil gradually.

□ □ □  
email: nafitkuwaiti@yahoo.



Al-Harami

## Challenges to net zero agendas

### OPEC's Al-Ghais dismisses peak oil demand forecasts

VIENNA, June 18, (KUNA): Peak oil demand not on the horizon, said OPEC Secretary General Haitham Al-Ghais.

In an article posted on the Organization's website, Al-Ghais; from Kuwait, said that he does not see peak oil demand on the horizon. "Just as peak oil supply has never transpired, predictions of peak oil demand are following a similar trend," he said.

In the 1990s and 2000s, the world regularly saw column inches devoted to the theory of peak oil supply, amplified by voices like Colin Campbell and Matthew Simmons. Decades later, however, it has still not come to pass, as enhanced economics and constant improvement in technology have helped lower costs and open up new frontiers to expand the resource base, he noted.

The past decade or so has witnessed a shift to talk of peak oil demand, with some forecasters increasingly pushing theoretical scenarios that have decided before any data is analyzed that oil should not be part of a sustainable energy future, he pointed out.

This is evident in some net zero scenarios, with suggestions that oil demand will peak before 2030, or more dramatically, that oil demand will drop by more than 25% by 2030, and with calls to stop investing in new oil projects, he carried on saying.

However, and according to Al-Ghais, "This narrative was repeated only yesterday when the IEA published its Oil 2024 report in which it once again stated that oil demand would peak before 2030. It is a dangerous commentary, especially for consumers, and will only lead to energy volatility on a potentially unprecedented scale."

"We have also heard similar types of narrative before. Ones that have proven to be wrong. The IEA suggested that gasoline demand had peaked in 2019, but gasoline consumption hit record levels in 2023, and indeed continues to rise this year. It also stated that coal demand had peaked in 2014, but today coal consumption continues to hit record levels."

"Many net zero futures focus almost exclusively on replacing hydrocarbons, which make up more than 80% of the global energy mix today. Rather than adding new energy sources to the mix, the focus is on substituting energy sources, which flies in the face of the history of supplying energy to the world. The emphasis is on rhetoric over reality; constraint over consumer choice."

Today, he explained "wind and solar supply around 4% of global energy, with electric vehicles (EVs) having a total global penetration rate of

between 2% and 3%, even though the world has invested over \$9.5 trillion in 'transitioning' over the past two decades. OPEC welcomes all the progress made in renewables and EVs, but it is nowhere near close enough to replace 80% of the energy mix. Furthermore, electricity grids, battery manufacturing capacity and access to critical minerals remain major challenges.

"We should also remember that the development of renewables and EVs require some oil-related products. Their future expansion will add to oil demand. Of course, we all want to lower emissions, but at the same time, we all need ample, reliable and affordable supplies of energy."

The two cannot be decoupled. Instead, our energy futures must focus on the full picture and not on a partial, incomplete one."

In this respect, Al-Ghais signified three key facts worth bearing in mind. Firstly, future energy and oil demand growth primarily lies within the non-OECD developing world, driven by increasing populations, an expanding middle class and growing economies. From now until 2045, non-OECD oil demand is set to expand by over 25 million barrels a day (mb/d), with China and India contributing over 10 mb/d alone. We should also remember that billions of people in the developing world still lack access to modern energy services. For these people, their energy future is not about net zero, deciding on the purchase of an electric vehicle, or ruminating over the costs and benefits of energy sources. Instead, it is about achieving the energy basics that the developed world takes for granted, such as being able to turn on a light, cook on a clean stove or have motorized transport to move to and from work or school.

Secondly, oil demand continues to increase. At OPEC, we see oil demand growth of 4 mb/d over the two years of 2024 and 2025, with other forecasters also seeing an expansion of over 3 mb/d. Even the IEA sees growth of 2 mb/d over this period, followed by growth of 0.8 mb/d in 2026. It then dramatically drops off a cliff to almost no growth in the next four years through 2030. This is an unrealistic scenario, one that would negatively impact economies across the world. It is simply a continuation of the IEA's anti-oil narrative. Given the real trends we see today, we do not see peak oil demand by the end of the decade.

Thirdly, many parts of the world are witnessing a consumer pushback as populations comprehend the implications of ambitious and unrealistic net zero policy agendas.



Bank participates in the Forum of Major State Development Projects

KFH ... A strategic partner for National Development Plans

KUWAIT CITY, June 18: Kuwait Finance House (KFH) Kuwait's Chief Executive Officer, Khaled Yousef AlShamlan, reiterated the Bank's commitment to offering innovative and diverse financing solutions that meet the needs of major development projects and contribute to achieving sustainable development. He also stressed KFH's pioneering role as a strategic partner for developmental initiatives and achieving Kuwait's 2035 vision.

AlShamlan participation was during the Forum of Major State Development Projects, recently organized by the Kuwaiti Federation of Engineering Offices and Consultant Houses (KFEEOH). 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 has played a significant role in financing major development projects in Kuwait," he added. "For instance, the bank supported the financing for the new airport project, constituting 50% of the funded value. Additionally, KFH financed the recently inaugurated Duqm Refinery, the biggest joint investment project between Oman and Kuwait, with a USD 500 million financing."

"KFH emerged as the largest Islamic financial contributor to the clean fuel project. It participated in a long-term syndicated financing deal valued at KWD 900 million for Kuwait Petro-



Part of the discussion session.

leum Corporation and its subsidiaries," added AlShamlan.

He added that currently, Kuwait has a number of major development opportunities and projects. These include South Al Mutlaa City that has 30,000 residential units, schools and other facilities, which has estimated budget of KWD 6.0 billion, South Saad Al-Abdullah Residential City 24,500 residential units and related infrastructure west of Kuwait, Petrochemical Facility at Al-Zour, with an estimated budget of KWD 2.0 billion, Azzour North 2 & 3 2700 MW power projects with water producing capacity of 120 Million imperial gallons Per Day (GIMD), Shagaya Renewable Energy Complex, with an esti-



KFH Chief Executive Officer, Khaled Yousef AlShamlan.

**Khaled Yousef AlShamlan:** KFH continues its pioneering role in supporting sustainable development initiatives and contributing to achieving Kuwait's vision

mated budget of KWD 2.0 billion with a renewable power capacity of 1,100 MW which is part of master program of renewable

energy of Kuwait, in addition to Kuwait Airport Expansion project to increase the annual handling capacity of the airport to 20 million passengers and new runways and infrastructure expansion.

"These projects are floated by the Kuwaiti government as private public partnership project (PPP) whilst other projects self-funded by the government," noted AlShamlan.

He affirmed KFH's role as a key partner of major developmental projects in providing required finances through cash or non-cash facilities. Thanks to its expertise, solvency, high creditworthiness, in addition to various competitive advantages which include a global presence that

spans across 12 countries, topping companies listed on Boursa Kuwait in terms of market capitalization (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, granted KFH with a high creditworthiness to finance major projects in the infrastructure and oil sectors and participate in mega financing deals.

He went on to say that the existing PPP Law in Kuwait is sufficient to promote and create enabling environment for public private partnership projects as it evident by already implemented two project Shamal Azzour Al Oula which is USD 1.8 billion investment to produce and maintain MW 1500 and water up to 107 MIGD and Umm Al Hayman for waste water treatment with a capacity of 500,000 m3/d.

To further improve public private partnership projects, AlShamlan hoped that the relevant authorities will enhance investment promotion policies, increase investment spending, improve business environment and invest in human capital. In addition, understanding all stakeholders, such as banks and developers, needs are important in floating RFP process so that the projects will be mutually beneficial to all the parties. This will also assist them in achieving their sustainable development goals, generating employment opportunities for youth, and attracting long-term investment opportunities which will positively impact the social and economic spheres of Kuwait.

\$50b to be raised in the process

The IRS wants to end another tax loophole for the wealthy

WASHINGTON, June 18, (AP): The IRS plans to end a major tax loophole for wealthy taxpayers that could raise more than \$50 billion in revenue over the next decade, the U.S. Treasury Department says.

The proposed rule and guidance announced Monday includes plans to essentially stop "partnership basis shifting" - a process by which a business or person can move assets among a series of related parties to avoid paying taxes.

Biden administration officials said after evaluating the practice that there are no economic grounds for these transactions, with Deputy Treasury Secretary Wally Adeyemo calling it "really just a shell game." The officials said the additional IRS funding provided through the 2022 Inflation Reduction Act had enabled increased oversight and greater awareness of the practice.

"These tax shelters allow wealthy taxpayers to avoid paying what they owe," IRS commissioner Danny Werfel said.

Due to previous years of underfunding, the IRS had cut back on the auditing of wealthy individuals and the shifting of assets among partnerships and companies became common.

The IRS says filings for large pass-through businesses used for the type of tax avoidance in the guidance increased 70% from 174,100 in 2010 to 297,400 in 2019. However, audit rates for

these businesses fell from 3.8% to 0.1% in the same time frame.

Treasury said in a statement announcing the new guidance that there is an estimated \$160 billion gap between what the top 1% of earners likely owe in taxes and what they pay.

Miles Johnson, a senior attorney adviser and partnership tax specialist at the Tax Law Center at NYU Law, said "these transactions effectively make income disappear from the tax system by creating depreciation deductions or other tax reductions that don't reflect any true economic cost."

He said the proposed rule and guidance shows that the IRS wants to stop these sorts of transactions "by eliminating their tax benefits and better identifying them to the IRS as without substance."

Monday's announcement is part of the IRS's ongoing effort to zero in on high-wealth tax cheats who manipulate the tax code or don't pay their taxes at all.

Initiatives announced in the past year have included pursuing people and businesses that improperly deduct personal flights on corporate jets and collecting back taxes from delinquent millionaires.

The IRS plans to raise audit rates on companies with assets above \$250 million to 22.6% in 2026, from an 8.8% rate in the tax year 2019. It also plans to increase audit rates by tenfold on large complex partnerships with assets over \$10 million.

Germany's biggest industrial union seeks 7% raise for mlns of workers

Germany's biggest industrial union said Monday it will seek a 7% pay increase for millions of workers in negotiations starting later this year, arguing that companies including automakers and machinery manufacturers are in a position to afford it.

The IG Metall union's leadership said it was recommending a hefty raise demand for 3.9 million workers in view of "a persistently high price level." It said that companies have well-filled order books and that, even though prices are no longer accelerating as quickly as they were, one-time payments agreed in the last settlement have been eaten up by inflation.

In the last round of pay talks, IG Metall and employers agreed in late 2022 to raises totaling 8.5% over two years plus one-time payments totaling 3,000 euros (about \$3,200) each, meant to cushion the effect of sky-high inflation.

The government, which wanted to address the impact of rising prices

while preventing an inflationary spiral, was keen to promote such tax-free payments.

IG Metall called for a 7% raise and a one-year deal this time. It said it understands that some companies are in a volatile situation, but argued this doesn't detract from the industry's overall solidity and an improving economic outlook.

In Germany, wage deals are typically hammered out in negotiations between employers organizations and unions that cover a whole sector, and an agreement reached in one region is generally applied nationwide. IG Metall's current agreement expires at the end of September.

Germany's annual inflation rate stood at 2.4% in May, down from nearly 9% at the beginning of last year.

The country's economy, Europe's biggest, has been struggling to generate growth. Employers have argued that the economic situation doesn't allow for large wage increases. (AP)

High cost of living still biting United Kingdom

Many don't think election will change anything

**LONDON, June 18, (AP): Dominic Watters watches his gas and electricity meter like a hawk. He topped it up a few days ago, but now there's just 1.85 pounds (\$2.40) of credit left. That may determine what kind of dinner he and his teen daughter get tonight, he says.**

Watters, a campaigner for better access to nutritious food, is a single dad in Canterbury in southern England who relies on government welfare. He knows microwave meals don't compare to home-cooked dinners, but sometimes he simply cannot afford to use the gas stove or oven.

"It's become more and more of a struggle, especially for single parents on benefits," he said. "It leaves you feeling stranded. It doesn't allow you enough to pay for fresh fruit and vegetables, and also to pay for the gas and electric to cook the food."

Since calling a general election for July 4, British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak has been at pains to repeat a key message on the campaign trail: The economy is turning a corner. Inflation is down. Things are looking up.

That's not the reality for Watters and millions across the U.K. still feeling the squeeze from high food, energy and housing prices. The persistent cost-of-living crisis is a top concern for voters in the parliamentary election, when they will choose lawmakers to fill all 650 seats in the House of Commons, and the leader of the party that can command a majority - either alone or in coalition - will become prime minister.

While Sunak's Conservatives are widely expected to lose after 14 years in power, the dire state of the economy - combined with a deep disillusionment with politics and politicians among voters - means that the prevailing mood ahead of the election is one of malaise, not excitement or hope for change, even if the opposition Labour Party wins.

Although inflation has returned to near-normal levels after skyrocketing in recent years, energy bills and items on store shelves still cost more than they did before the pandemic, when they started their steep climb. And while wages are starting to rise, mortgages and rents have soared along with interest rates, taking large chunks out of many household incomes.

Coral Dyer, a psychologist who has a young child, was among shoppers lining up to buy 1-pound (\$1.30) bowls of fresh vegetables at a bustling street market in Lewisham in south London on a recent day.

"It's much cheaper than the supermarket, and you get a lot more," she

How Musk's \$44.9b Tesla pay package compares with the most generous plans for other US CEOs

Even though the median U.S. CEO pay package last year was nearly 200 times more than a worker in the middle of their company pay scales, Elon Musk's record-setting Tesla compensation dwarfs them by comparison.

Tesla shareholders on Thursday voted overwhelmingly in favor of restoring Musk's 10-year pay plan, valued by the company in April at \$44.9 billion. It was worth more early in the year, but Tesla's stock value has fallen about 25% since then.

The all-stock package, approved by the board and shareholders in 2018, rewards Musk for hitting milestones that include raising Tesla's market value, pretax income and revenue.

It had been tossed out by a Delaware judge in January who said the process for approving it was "deeply flawed." The court ruled that Musk controlled the company's board, and shareholders weren't fully informed.

But the company said Musk deserves the pay because he turned Tesla into the top-selling electric vehicle maker in the world, increasing its market value by billions.

Even with the reapproval vote, Musk won't get access to the stock options just yet. Tesla is expected to

ask the judge to revisit her decision in light of the vote, and if she doesn't, the company probably will appeal the ruling to Delaware's Supreme Court. The whole process could take months.

No matter the outcome, Musk's package - the largest award to a CEO of a U.S. public company - is far above what's been granted to other chief executives. Here's how the package compares:

**With the median CEO pay**

The median pay package for an S&P 500 U.S. CEO last year was \$16.3 million, according to data analyzed for The Associated Press by Equilar. If you multiply that by 10 to get \$163 million for a decade of work, Musk's earnings still would be 275 times greater.

In her January ruling that struck down the package, Delaware Chancellor Kathaleen St. Jude McCormick wrote that Musk's package, then worth about \$56 billion, was 250 times larger than the median peer CEO's pay plan.

**With individual CEOs**

The top earner in the AP's survey was Hock Tan, CEO of artificial intelligence company Broadcom Inc. His package, mostly consisting of stock awards, was valued at about

\$162 million, when given to Tan at the start of fiscal 2023. Thanks to a surging stock price, Broadcom in March valued Tan's pay package, plus older options he hadn't yet cashed in, at \$767.7 million. That's an amount easily eclipsed by Musk's potential haul of 304 million shares worth almost \$45 billion.

Other CEOs at the top of AP's survey are William Lansing of Fair Isaac Corp. (\$66.3 million); Tim Cook of Apple Inc. (\$63.2 million); Hamid Moghadam of Prologis Inc. (\$50.9 million); and Ted Sarandos, co-CEO of Netflix (\$49.8 million).

Technically, Musk got no compensation last year because he didn't get any stock options. But he stands to get even richer if his pay package goes through.

**With Tesla workers**

It's difficult to calculate what Musk's annual pay would have been last year. The company says he got nothing. But if his compensation package makes it through the courts, his pay will be in the billions. According to the company's proxy filing this year, the median annual pay of a non-CEO Tesla employee last year was \$45,811. (AP)

said. Money's becoming tighter, she added, with her income just about covering high day care fees.

Dyer, 37, laughed and shook her head when asked if she agreed with Sunak's upbeat message.

"I don't really feel that way, no," she said. "I think we're being more conscious of buying in bulk, to shop and eat in different ways to save some money. It's becoming less of a choice and more of the way we have to do things."

Like other countries, Britain experienced a double economic shock when it was hit by surging prices, first stoked by supply chain issues during the coronavirus pandemic and then by Russia's invasion of Ukraine in 2022.

Inflation in the U.K. hit a peak of 11% in late 2022, the highest the country had seen in four decades. For most, especially public sector workers, take-home pay failed to keep up with spiraling prices.

The Institute for Fiscal Studies, a leading think tank, said in March that the current parliament has overseen the worst growth in living standards since at least 1961. It added that from 2019 to 2023, the number of adults who reported being unable to adequately heat their homes more than doubled.

Sunak is keen to point out that the worst appears to be over: Inflation is now down to 2.3%, and average wages

are also rising after more than a decade of low income growth following the 2008 financial crisis.

But there's little to be jubilant about. The latest official figures published last week showed that economic growth was flat in April, after rising 0.6% during the first quarter of the year.

The IFS and many economists have warned that whoever wins the election will face tough choices to raise taxes or cut public spending because they will need to wrestle with a huge debt burden while trying to take Britain out of economic stagnation.

For those on benefits or low incomes, talk about change or growth feels distant when it's a daily struggle to afford food staples and heating. Britain's poorest have been disproportionately hit by the cost-of-living crisis because they spend a much larger share of their incomes on essentials.

More people are falling into poverty and more are turning to food banks, according to the Trussell Trust, which runs more than half of all U.K. food banks. The charity said it provided 3 million emergency food parcels to people in need last year - a record number for the trust - including to over 300,000 people who used a food bank for the first time.

At the Community Food Hub in Hackney in east London, a rapidly

gentrying area that nonetheless still has one of the highest child poverty rates in the U.K., volunteers say their workload has not lessened in recent years as they packed up bread and canned food for patrons.

"I'm hoping that these elections are going to prove to be fruitful. I personally doubt it," said Michelle Donnelly, who has run the service since the pandemic. "I've kind of given up hope with these politicians and them understanding the common people, the working class people. I am kind of fed up that they won't take the time out to come and see what it is that we're doing and how people are living."

While Labour has a significant lead in polls and they're widely expected to win by political commentators and members of the public, there is a deep lack of optimism or belief among voters that either Sunak or his rival, Keir Starmer, can bring material change.

Watters, the food campaigner, said things won't get better until those in power take time to listen to struggling families.

"I think that it's been so bad for so long that people are trying to hold out hope for a change," he said. "But there is a kind of shared sense of hopelessness within my estate (social housing block) of whether change will actually happen, no matter what government, gets in."

## Innovative tracks offered in stc Kuwait's inspireU program

# stc Kuwait launches 2nd intake of 'inspireU' program for tech startups

KUWAIT CITY, June 18: Kuwait Telecommunications Company stc, a leader in digital transformation and innovative services in Kuwait, in collaboration with inspireU from stc group, announced the launch of the second batch of the inspireU program to support tech startups, enhancing stc's role as a digital enabler and contributor to the digital economy. inspireU from stc group was established about 10 years ago, and stc Kuwait has worked closely with the accelerator on a special collaboration within the general program's 10th intake for Kuwaiti tech startups, where the first batch included several leading tech startups.

All ambitious entrepreneurs who have innovative concepts and startups can apply for the "inspireU" program by filling out the application form on [www.stc.com.kw](http://www.stc.com.kw). It is worth mentioning that registration for the program is for a specific period only, as seats are limited. This is a key step for applicants to share their Service/Product in a structured approach, where only complete applications will be evaluated according to the program criteria.

Danah AlJasem, General Manager of Corporate Communications at stc Kuwait, said: "We are pleased to collaborate with inspireU from stc group to enable more Kuwaiti tech startups following the success of the first edition. The program aims to equip entrepreneurs with the tools and guidance needed to turn their ideas into successful projects, fostering a culture of innovation and entrepreneurship to create new job opportunities and enhance sustainable growth, in line with stc's vision for digital transformation."

The program includes several tracks, such as fintech with STC Bank, gaming with stc play, cybersecurity with sirar by stc, and IoT with iot squared. The incubated startups will be enrolled in a six-month training program that provides financial support and workspaces in Kuwait and Saudi Arabia, along with guidance, training courses, networking opportunities, and participation in international conferences.

Since its inception, inspireU has enabled over 110 tech startups across various fields and sectors, some of which have become unicorns, creating more than 650,000 jobs in the digital economy and serving over 50 million users with their innovative solutions.

stc is one of the biggest supporters of Kuwaiti tech startups and continues to support initiatives that highlight and empower local entrepreneurs to create added value for the group, contributing to the region's digital economy.

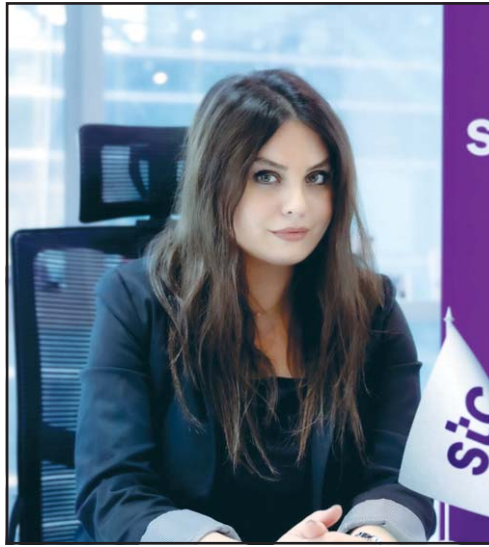
### AlJasem:

■ The success stories from our first intake are a clear indicator of the potential and talent present within our community

■ Since its inception, inspireU has enabled over 110 tech startups across various fields and sectors

■ Some of these startups created more than 650,000 jobs in the digital economy

■ and served over 50 million users with their innovative solutions.



Danah AlJasem



'inspireU' program

## Key insights from Kuwait state projects forum by Dr. Abdulaziz Sultan

# Kuwait Forum emphasizes collaboration for economic growth

KUWAIT CITY, June 18: Dr. Abdulaziz Sultan recently addressed the timely Kuwait State Development Projects Forum, organized by the Union of Kuwaiti Engineering Offices and Consulting Houses and esteemed sponsoring institutions. Held on June 10, 2024, the forum coincided with Kuwait's ambitious launch of major development initiatives aimed at enhancing the business environment to attract both local and foreign investors.

In his keynote address, Dr. Sultan emphasized the critical need for collaboration among public sector institutions, private companies, and citizens to achieve the goals of Kuwait's development program. He highlighted the challenges hindering progress, particularly the mutual lack of trust between public sector entities and private enterprises. Drawing parallels with historical precedents, Dr. Sultan cited Japan's 1949 establishment of the Ministry of International Trade and Industry (MITI) as a model for regulatory coordination between government and industry.

Proposing solutions, Dr. Sultan recommended Kuwait adopt clear policies affirming the necessity of public-private cooperation, supported by dedicated task forces empowered to implement these directives



Dr. Abdulaziz Sultan

effectively. Rebuilding local investor confidence, he stressed, is pivotal to enhancing Kuwait's appeal to foreign investors.

Addressing investor concerns about future policy impacts, Dr. Sultan advocated for robust, well-researched decision-making processes to reassure stakeholders of Kuwait's commitment to stability and growth. He underscored the role of education and human capital development in sustaining these efforts, calling for enhanced collaboration

between public and private sectors to foster innovation and economic resilience. In conclusion, Dr. Sultan emphasized the imperative of unified action between Kuwait's public and private sectors to navigate current challenges and achieve sustainable development. He expressed gratitude to the forum organizers and sponsors for facilitating this vital discussion, affirming Kuwait's readiness to embrace a brighter future through collaborative efforts.



Glimpse of the attendees

The forum's outcomes underscore a renewed commitment to overcoming obstacles and fostering an environment conducive to long-term prosperity, signaling Kuwait's resolve to navigate its developmental journey with clarity and cohesion.

This article synthesizes Dr. Abdulaziz Sultan's insights from the Kuwait State Development Projects Forum, focusing on collaborative efforts and strategic initiatives to enhance Kuwait's economic landscape.



Photos from the event.

## Motorola powers LuLu Hypermarket's tech bonanza

# 'LuLu Let's Connect' promotion offers incredible smartphone deals

KUWAIT CITY, June 18: LuLu Hypermarket's exciting 'LuLu Let's Connect' promotion, powered by Motorola, which ran from 13 June to 22 June at all outlets of the hypermarket offered a bonanza of deals on mobile phones and accessories.

The official launch of 'LuLu Let's Connect' took place on 13 June at the LuLu Hypermarket Egaila outlet. Graced by the presence of popular tech influencers and vloggers, alongside LuLu's top management, the event fostered valuable dialogue and collaboration between LuLu and leading voices in the tech space.

The 'LuLu Let's Connect' promotion provided customers with an opportunity to upgrade their smartphone experience at unbelievable prices through amazing deals and discounts on smartphones and accessories. Customers were treated to the smartest deals on a wide range of popular smartphone devices, while the active participation of popular tech vloggers and influencers who explained new technologies and special deals at the promotion further enriched the experience.

During the ten-day promotion, LuLu Hypermarket became a hub for tech enthusiasts, nurturing connections not just between customers and amazing deals, but also between people and the ever-evolving world of mobile technology. The energetic launch event and insightful contributions from tech influencers left a lasting impression, ensuring that 'LuLu Let's Connect' goes down as a resounding success. The event powered up customer satisfaction and left them excited for the next big tech adventure at LuLu Hypermarket.

### The Conversation

# Cities convert office buildings to apartments amid housing shortages

By John Weigand  
Miami University

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

It took a global pandemic to convince American businesses that their employees could work productively from home, or a favorite coffee shop. Post-COVID-19, employers are struggling to find the right balance of in-office and remote work. However, hybrid work is likely here to stay, at least for a segment of workers.

This shift isn't just changing lifestyles - it's also affecting commercial spaces. Office vacancy rates post-COVID-19 shot up almost overnight, and they remain near 20% nationwide, the highest rate since 1979 as tenants downsize in place or relocate. This workspace surplus is putting pressure on existing development loans and leading to defaults or creative refinancing in a market already plagued by higher interest rates.

Office tenants with deeper pockets have gravitated to newer and larger buildings with more amenities, often referred to as Class A or "trophy" buildings. Older Class B and C buildings, which often have fewer amenities or less-desirable locations, have struggled to fill space. High vacancy rates are forcing developers to get creative. With reduced demand for older buildings, along with housing shortages in many American cities, some downtown buildings are being converted to residential use.

These projects often include some percentage of affordable housing, underwritten by tax incentives. In October 2023, the Biden administration released a list of federal loan, grant, tax credit and technical assistance programs that can support commercial-to-residential conversions.

As an architect, I'm encouraged to see these renovations of older commercial buildings,

which are more economical and sustainable than new construction. In my view, they are fundamentally changing the character of our cities for the better. Even though only about 20% to 30% of older buildings can be profitably converted, architects and developers are quickly learning how to grade these structures to identify good candidates.

Converting commercial buildings to apartments didn't start with the pandemic. In the decade leading up to the outbreak of COVID-19, developers converted more than 110,000 apartments from outdated hotels, office buildings, factories, warehouses and other buildings across the U.S. According to industry data, more than 58,000 apartments are currently being converted from office buildings.

Several characteristics of older Class B and C buildings make conversion particularly attractive. These buildings typically have smaller floor plates - total square footage of space per floor. Importantly, they also have shorter "core-to-shell" distances - the distance from the building core that contains stairs and elevators to the window wall.

Residential building codes generally require that natural light reach most rooms. Since living spaces, bedrooms and bathrooms are often separated by walls, a smaller core-to-shell distance allows more rooms to access natural light, making the conversion easier.

In contrast, typical new office buildings have larger floor plates and core-to-shell distances that sometimes can exceed 50 feet. This makes them more difficult to convert to residences.

But it's not impossible. One creative solution involves moving the window wall inward by several feet to create outdoor decks. That's an appealing amenity, but also an extra cost. In some conversions where the core-to-shell depth is greater than needed, developers have added interior vertical shafts or window wells to bring daylight to interior spaces.

Many older commercial buildings also offer

higher ceilings, which are especially desirable in the residential market. Apartments and condos typically don't need to conceal mechanical and electrical services with suspended acoustic tile ceilings, as offices do, so they can provide 12 feet or more of clear ceiling height.

Some older buildings, including many made of brick or stone, have large windows, which also are desirable in residential use. Conversely, smaller windows or higher sill heights may be disincentives to conversion.

Many older buildings were constructed before air conditioning was widely available, so they have operable windows. This is yet another plus for residential conversion, since occupants typically desire natural ventilation in their dwelling unit.

Some characteristics of older buildings can make residential conversion more difficult. For example, location always matters. Buildings that are far from other amenities, such as restaurants or grocery stores, may be less desirable.

Buildings with more unusual floor plates or geometric forms that work for office use may be difficult to carve up into residential units. Older structures that contain asbestos or lead paint can require expensive remediation.

Zoning laws may bar residential use or otherwise limit what can be done with a building. Cities can play an important role in encouraging residential conversions by revisiting zoning codes or offering tax incentives to developers.

One of the biggest costs of a residential conversion is the need to replace building systems such as plumbing and heating. Plumbing requirements in commercial office spaces, for example, are largely met with restroom facilities in the building core. Apartments or condos each require their own bathroom and kitchen, adding significant cost.

Despite these challenges, if residential conversions bring people and energy back to downtowns outside of the workday, stores, restaurants, entertainment and other amenities of a

vibrant lifestyle will follow.

Architects, planners, developers and politicians are increasingly interested in "walkable cities" or "20-minute cities." Both of these concepts allude to providing necessary amenities like grocery stores, schools and restaurants that are accessible to residents on foot, reducing the need to own a car and promoting a more sustainable lifestyle.

Walkable cities aren't a new idea. Throughout the 19th century, people in U.S. cities like New York and Chicago lived, worked, shopped and socialized within mixed-use neighborhoods.

The growth of car ownership post-World War II separated these uses into residential suburbs, office parks, shopping malls and cineplexes. Many critics view suburbanization as a failed experiment that has promoted sprawling development, reliance on cars and economic inequality.

As more downtown office buildings are converted to residential use, many of them are likely to house restaurants, day care facilities, grocery stores and other service businesses, typically on their ground floors. These amenities contribute to the financial success of a project and to the vibrant lifestyles of its residents.

All of these shifts prompt questions. Can architects and developers find ways to design buildings that serve multiple uses over several centuries, rather than a single targeted use that becomes obsolete in 100 years? Can mid- and high-rise buildings be envisioned as flexible structural grids, with lower-cost and easily changeable modular inserts? Such structures could accommodate ever-changing needs, some of which we may not yet know will be critical to the urban infrastructure.

Architects, planners and developers are beginning to explore these questions. Converting downtown offices to residential use could be just the starting point. And it's a reminder that dynamic cities can reinvent themselves in response to challenges. (AP)

# Murakami excited about animated adaptation of his works

TOKYO, June 18, (Agencies): Renowned Japanese author Haruki Murakami expressed joy with how several of his short stories were adapted in American director Pierre Földes' animated film "Blind Willow, Sleeping Woman", adding he wanted to see future interpretations of his work with filmmakers' own spin.

The Japanese language version of the 2022 film will be released for the first time in Japan on July 26. It is the first animated adaptation of Murakami's work.

After screening the film Saturday at his alma mater Waseda University in Tokyo, Murakami - joining Földes at a talk session - admitted that while he wasn't a fan of animated films, he watched it twice.

The filmmaker was inspired by six of Murakami's short stories: "Super-Frog Saves Tokyo" and "U.F.O. in Kushiro" - from "After the Quake," collection, written after the fatal 1995 Kobe earthquake - and "Birthday Girl," "Dabchick," "The Windup Bird and Tuesday's Women."

"Blind Willow, Sleeping Woman" is set in Tokyo in the aftermath of the March 2011 earthquake, tsunami and the Fukushima meltdowns. It focuses on three main characters - Katagiri, a diligent but lonely and confidence-lacking banker who teams up with a giant talking frog to save Tokyo from an imminent second quake, his unenthusiastic younger colleague and his wife Kyoko, who - depressed and glued to earthquake news on TV - leaves him. Through recollections and dreams, the three eventually find peace and the ability to start anew.

Murakami praised the animated version of the intelligent green Frog, voiced by Földes, saying it matched how he imagined the character to be.

"What I would like to see is not a mere film version of what I wrote, but something added to it and becoming something new," Murakami said during the talk.

Földes said his approach "is to be faithful to my interpretation of things of my inspiration," which obviously worked for Murakami.

### Inspired

The American filmmaker said he didn't have a definitive plan when he picked six stories that "I just love." But things started to build "like different crops growing together," he told Murakami. "Little by little all these links appeared and this is how I combined all your stories into one story with other stories inside."

The popular writer's works previously inspired several award-winning works, including Japanese director Ryusuke Hamaguchi's 2021 "Drive My Car" and South Korean director Lee Chang-dong's 2018 thriller "Burning."

Murakami cited both films and Földes' animation as examples that successfully achieved his and the directors' goals.

"Making a film based on short stories would require directors creativity to add own materials, which tends to help the creation of an interesting product," he said, noting that adapting a film from a full-

length novel could require the opposite to make it in a two-hour production.

Murakami also said his "Underground," his non-fiction long-form investigative work which is based on interviews with people affected by the 1995 terrorist poisonous gas attack on the Tokyo subway system, would make a fascinating film.

"Blind Willow, Sleeping Woman" received a nomination for best-animated film at the 2024 Lumieres Awards.

### Also:

**BEIJING:** Japanese sports anime "Haikyu!! The Dumpster Battle" maintained its dominance at the box office chart on the Chinese mainland on Monday, securing the top position for its first three days of release, data showed.

The film generated 5.57 million yuan (about 782,900 US dollars) in ticket sales on Monday. Based on one of the most successful manga of the past decade "Haikyu!!," it tells the story of **Shoyo Hinata**, a boy determined to become a great volleyball player despite his small size.

Domestic teen comedy "Be My Friend" came in second with a daily box office earning of 5.33 million yuan.

"Break Through the Darkness," a crime action movie featuring China's fight against organized crime, ranked third on the daily revenue chart, grossing 4.95 million yuan on Monday.

## Variety



Members of the company of 'The Outsiders' perform during the 77th Tony Awards on Sunday, June 16, in New York. (AP)

## Theater

Hillary Clinton and Jay-Z wow crowd at Tony Awards

# 'Outsiders,' 'Stereophonic' rule Tonys

NEW YORK, June 18, (AP): "The Outsiders," a gritty adaptation of the classic young adult novel, became the essence of a Broadway insider on Sunday, winning the Tony Award for best new musical on a night when women made strides.

The musical based on the beloved S. E. Hinton book is about rival gangs of haves and have-nots in 1960s Oklahoma. The win meant Angelina Jolie, a producer, landed her first Tony, too.

Producer Matthew Rego, in his acceptance speech, thanked Hinton, in the audience at Manhattan's Lincoln Center: "Susie, I'm here to tell you that your story and its eternal message of love and family and staying gold has forever changed all of our lives."

"Stereophonic," the play about a Fleetwood Mac-like band recording an album over a turbulent and life-changing year, won best new play and had the night's most total awards at five. It was written by David Adjmi, with songs by former Arcade Fire member Will Butler.

"Oh, no. My agent gave me a beta blocker, but it's not working," Adjmi said. He added the play took 11 years to manifest.

"This was a very hard journey to get up here," he said. "We need to fund the arts in America."

Two special guests electrified the crowd - Jay-Z and Hillary Rodham Clinton. The latter, a producer of a musical about suffragettes, presented "Suffs."

"I have stood on a lot of stages, but this is very special," Clinton said. "I know a little bit about how hard it is to make change."

In the first musical presentation, Alicia Keys appeared at a piano as the cast of her semi-autobiographical musical, "Hell's Kitchen," presented a medley of songs. She sang her and Jay-Z's 2009 smash "Empire State of Mind," joining the rapper on interior steps to wild applause.

Later, newcomer Maleah Joi Moon won best leading actress for "Hell's Kitchen," brushing aside a challenge from veteran Kelli O'Hara. The 21-year-old, who plays a role loosely based on Keys' life, dedicated her award to her parents.

Danya Taymor - whose aunt is Julie Taymor, the first woman to win a Tony Award for directing a musical - became the sixth woman to win the same award for "The Outsiders."

Then Shaina Taub, only the second woman in Broad-

way history to write, compose and star in a Broadway musical, won for best score, the ninth woman to do so. The "Suffs" creator had already won for best book earlier in the night.

"If you are inspired by the story of 'Suffs,' please make sure you and everyone you know have registered to vote and vote, vote, vote!" she said. Taub said the win was for all the loud girls out there: "Go for it."

Jeremy Strong took home the first big award of the night. The "Succession" star landed his first Tony for his work in the revival of Henrik Ibsen's 1882 political play "An Enemy of the People." The award for best lead actor in a play will sit next to his Emmy, Screen Actors Guild Award and Golden Globe.

### Revival

Kara Young, the first Black performer to be nominated for a Tony three consecutive years in a row, won this time as best featured actress in a play for "Purlie Victorious," the story of a Black preacher's plan to reclaim his inheritance and win back his church from a plantation owner.

"Thank you to my ancestors," she said, giving thanks to a list that included playwright Ossie Davis and co-star Ruby Dee, who originated her role.

"Harry Potter" star Daniel Radcliffe cemented his stage career pivot by winning featured actor in a musical, his first trophy in five Broadway shows. He won for the revival of "Merrily We Roll Along," the Stephen Sondheim-George Furth musical that goes backward in time.

"This is one of the best experiences of my life," Radcliffe said. "I will never have it as good again." He also thanked his parents for playing Sondheim in the car growing up.

"Merrily" was also named best musical revival and earned Jonathan Groff his first Tony, for leading actor in a musical. Groff - previously nominated for "Spring Awakening" and "Hamilton" - thanked co-stars Lindsay Mendez and Radcliffe, both emotional in the audience.

Groff, who said he used to watch the Tonys in Pennsylvania as a kid, also thanked his parents and brother for letting him act out scenes from "I Love Lucy" as a child.

"Thank you for always allowing my freak flag to fly without ever making me feel weird about it," he said.

Kecia Lewis, who plays a formidable piano teacher in "Hell's Kitchen," took home her first Tony, too. The 40-year veteran made her Broadway debut at 18 in the original company of "Dreamgirls."

"This moment is the one I dreamed of for those 40 years," she said. "Don't give up!"

"Appropriate," Branden Jacobs-Jenkins' show centered on a family reunion in Arkansas, was named best play revival. Jacobs-Jenkins also thanked Davis, saying there would be no "Appropriate" without "Purlie Victorious."

"Appropriate" star Sarah Paulson added a best leading actress in a play Tony to her awards cabinet. Paulson said she was thrilled to be able to interrogate the human condition: "This is the heart and soul of what we do and I am so honored to be amongst you."

Three-time Tony-honored Chita Rivera got a special tribute from Audra McDonald, Brian Stokes Mitchell and Bebe Neuwirth. Images of her work in "Chicago," "Kiss of the Spider Woman" and "West Side Story" were projected while dancers performed her hit numbers. Host Ariana DeBose, who won an Oscar in Rivera's "West Side Story" role of Anita, joined in.

DeBose, a three-time host, also co-choreographed the opening original number, "This Party's for You." The song cheered those who sacrifice for their art and took a gentle swipe at other entertainment types: "You'll learn that film and TV can make you rich and make you famous. But theater will make you better."

The performances also included an intense, creepy version of "Willkommen" from the "Cabaret" revival led by Eddie Redmayne, Pete Townshend playing guitar for "The Who's Tommy" and a messy rumble from "The Outsiders" that included falling water, buckets of dirt, various carpets and an onstage truck.

The telecast teased upcoming shows, inviting Nicole Scherzinger - slated to star in a "Sunset Boulevard" revival - to sing the "In Memoriam" section. Nick Jonas and Adrienne Warren - announced today as stars of 2025's "The Last Five Years" - presented.

Scherzinger sang "What I Did for Love" as the names appeared, including playwright Christopher Durang and actors Alan Arkin, Glenda Jackson, Louis Gossett Jr., and Treat Williams.

# Features

## ARABIC TIMES

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 19, 2024

**LONDON:** Actor Ian McKellen is expected to make a full recovery after he toppled off a London stage during a fight scene and was hospitalized, producers said.

McKellen, 85, was in "good spirits" after doctors said a scan showed he was expected to fully recover from the fall on Monday night, a spokesperson for the production at the Noel Coward Theatre said.

Tuesday's performance was canceled but McKellen was expected to be back onstage Wednesday, producers said.

The stage and screen veteran, who played Gandalf in the "Lord of the Rings" films, cried out in pain after the fall, according to a BBC journalist at the theatre.

McKellen was playing the roguish John Falstaff in "Player Kings," an adaptation of William Shakespeare's two "Henry IV" history plays, directed by Robert Icke.

Theatergoers were startled when McKellen lost his footing and fell off the stage in a scene with Toheeb Jimoh's Prince Hal and Henry Percy, played by Samuel Edward-Cook.

"Sir Ian seemed to trip as he moved downstage to take a more active part in the scene," audience member Paul Critchley told the PA news agency, saying it was a shock. "He picked up momentum as he moved downstage which resulted in him falling off the stage directly in front of the audience." (AP)

**PARIS:** French actress Anouk Aimée, winner of a Golden Globe for her starring role in "A Man and a Woman" by legendary French director Claude Lelouch, has died, her agent said Tuesday. She was 92.

Agent Sébastien Perrolat said in an text message to The Associated Press that Aimée died Tuesday morning "surrounded by her loved ones." He did not give a cause of death.

Aimée's daughter Manuela Papatakis first announced her death in an Instagram post, saying: "We are extremely sad to announce the departure of my mother Anouk Aimée."

"I was beside her when she died this morning, at her home in Paris," she said.

Born in Paris to parents who both worked as actors, Aimée worked with an array of acclaimed directors, including Federico Fellini, Bernardo Bertolucci and Robert Altman.

She won the Golden Globe for best performance by an actress in 1967, for her role as a widow in a

complex romance in "A Man and a Woman," alongside French film legend Jean-Louis Trintignant, who died in 2022.

Aimée was also nominated for an Oscar for that role, as was Lelouch for his direction. The movie picked up two Oscar wins, for best foreign language film and for Lelouch's screenwriting.

Aimée's movie career spanned



McKellen



Aimée

eight decades, from the 1940s to a reunion with Trintignant in 2019, again under Lelouch's direction, in "The most beautiful years of a life." (AP)

**HOOVER, Ala.:** Hoyt Garland Harwell, a longtime reporter for The Associated Press who covered key events in the American South and was a mentor to young reporters,

has died. He was 93. Harwell died at home June 12 following a brief illness, according to his obituary.

Harwell worked for the AP for 42 years, including stints in Atlanta and also in Mobile and Birmingham, Alabama. He retired in 1993. He covered the aftermath of the 1963 bombing of 16th Street Baptist Church in Birmingham and the Freedom

Riders, civil rights activists who were protesting segregation in the American South.

While working as an AP reporter in 1988, Harwell was one of two reporters who volunteered to walk into a hostage situation in Alabama to help secure the rescue of elementary school students and a pregnant teacher being held by an armed man. (AP)

People & Places

MILAN  
a guy thing



Gucci



Giorgio Armani



Gucci



Giorgio Armani



Giorgio Armani



Gucci

Above and below: Models wear creations as part of Gucci, Giorgio Armani, Prada and Dolce & Gabbana Men's Spring Summer 2025 collection presented in Milan, Italy from June 15-17. (AP)

Timeless tailoring

De Sarno stuns with a colorful showcase

MILAN, June 18, (AP): It's been creative director musical chairs at some of Italy's top fashion houses, and the pressure is showing, at least on social media.

Gucci's Sabato De Sarno presented his third collection in Milan on Monday, still the most highly anticipated runway show of the week as Gucci undergoes a major style transition.

Hours earlier, Valentino, the fashion house that snapped up his predecessor Alessandro Michele, launched images on social media of Michele's first resort collection for Rome-based Valentino, which previews its collections in Paris. Commentators couldn't help but notice the similarities to his Gucci years.

Anyone with complicated family dynamics can understand just how fraught the timing was. Gucci is owned by the French conglomerate Kering, which has a 30-percent stake in Valentino, an important but not determinant share. Add to that, De Sarno is a Valentino alum, whose recent resort collection included a pussy bow that was one of the codes Michele brought to Gucci.

Michele's runway debut for Valentino is expected in Paris for womenswear previews in September.

Some highlights from the fourth and final day of Milan Fashion Week, mostly menswear previews for Spring-Summer 2025:

Sabato De Sarno's sophomore menswear collection for Gucci was all about precise silhouettes saturated in color. A long, acid-green bonded leather coat over thigh-baring shorts and a netted shirt set the tone for an outing that was both rigorous and edgy.

Tribute

Models strode through the atrium of Milan's Triennale design museum, in tribute to De Sarno's view of museums as "nourishing" spaces. In that vein, he invited 400 fashion students to watch the show, and was meeting with them afterward. Part of the brand's relaunch has been moving to spaces away from the sprawling Gucci Hub on Milan's outskirts, as De Sarno lays claim to Italy's fashion capital one venue at a time.

His Spring-Summer 2025 collection featured wearable elements easily composed to one's desire, reflecting De Sarno's wish "that people feel free and welcomed in my clothes."

Amid the structure of the bonded leather jackets and crisp poplin suits, there was a lot of movement, in undulating, vivid repeating prints of surfers and dolphins on boxy bowling shirts, shimmering beaded fringe jackets in shades of lemon or lime, and long-sleeve hand-knit polo shirts sparkling with embedded sequins. A subtle jacquard was a rare sign of the Gucci logo.

Fresh styling conceits included chunky sunglasses that, when not worn, could be strapped backward around the neck with a brightly colored Gucci cord. Highly constructed bags were inspired by archival luggage, and include detachable pieces. Sneakers and scuba slip-ons featured molded soles.

Media-shy De Sarno said in press notes that the collection "speaks about freedom."

"I feel free when there is no distance between my words and my thoughts, between my actions and my heart," he wrote.

De Sarno has the full endorsement of Serena Williams, who sat in the front row between Kering boss Francois-Henri Pinault and her sister Venus.

Style



Giorgio Armani



Prada



Giorgio Armani



Dolce & Gabbana

Fashion

to UK events cancelling funding from finance firm Baillie Gifford.

Some argue that starves the arts of much-needed funds, but Klein said she "wanted to use the platform to call for more courage from cultural institutions." (AP)

LOS ANGELES: Some of Hollywood's brightest stars headlined a fundraiser for President Joe Biden that took in a record \$30 million-plus for a Democratic candidate, according to his campaign, in hopes of energizing would-be supporters for a White House contest they said may rank among the most consequential in US history.

George Clooney, Julia Roberts and Barbra Streisand were among those



Roberts



Klein

who took the stage at the 7,100-seat Peacock Theater in Los Angeles on Saturday night. Late-night host Jimmy Kimmel interviewed Biden and former President Barack Obama, who both stressed the need to defeat former President Donald Trump in a race that's expected to be exceedingly close.

During more than half an hour of discussion, Kimmel asked if the country was suffering from amnesia about the presumptive Republican nominee, to which Biden responded, "all we gotta do is remember what it was like" when Trump was in the White House.

Luminaries from the entertainment world have increasingly lined up to help Biden's campaign, and just how important the event was to his reelection bid could be seen in Biden's decision to fly through the night across nine time zones, from the G7 summit in southern Italy to Southern California, to attend.

He also missed a summit in Switzerland about ways to end Russia's war in Ukraine, instead dispatching Vice President Kamala Harris who made a whirlwind trip of her own to represent the United States there, a stark reminder of the delicate balance between geopolitics and Biden's bid to win a second term. (AP)

VALLETTA: Beethoven's masterpieces came together with texts by a renowned Chinese translator on Sunday night for a concert in Malta called: "Harmony in Translation: Fu Lei Meets Beethoven."

The performance by a trio featuring Niu Ruixin and Pierre-Henri Xuereb on the viola, and Pascal Mantin on the piano was held at the China Cultural Center in Malta.

Fu Lei is famous for his contributions to Chinese literature as a translator of French classics, including works by Roland, Balzac, Voltaire, and Hippolyte Taine. One of Fu's first translations was Rolland's "Beethoven."

The audience enjoyed Beethoven's music, accompanied by excerpts from Fu Lei's translation of "Beethoven" and passages from "Fu Lei's Family Letters," a collection of correspondence between Fu and his two sons.

Audience member Nicholas Galea Testaferrata described the concert as a "fresh interpretation" of Beethoven's music, and an excellent opportunity for audiences to learn about Fu and his literary works. (AP)

Variety

LONDON: Author-activist Naomi Klein won the inaugural Women's Prize for Nonfiction on Thursday with "Doppelganger," a personal account of her plunge into the world of online misinformation.

Its sister award, the Women's

Prize for Fiction, went to US writer V. V. Ganeshanathan for her novel "Brotherless Night," about a family torn apart by Sri Lanka's long civil war. Both come with 30,000 pounds (\$38,000) in prize money.

Both winners referenced the conflict-clouded international situation, at a time when the arts world is grappling with divisions over the Israel-Hamas war and corporate sponsorship of the arts.

Klein, author of "No Logo" and "The Shock Doctrine," delves into her experience being mistaken for Naomi Wolf, author of "The Beauty Myth" and more recently a promulgator of anti-vaxx ideas and other conspiracy theories. Part memoir and part reportage, "Doppelganger" - subtitled "A Trip into the Mirror World" - investigates how online life has distorted reality, and asks what might be done about it.

Historian Suzannah Lipscomb, who headed a panel of judges for the nonfiction award, called Klein's book "a courageous, humane and optimistic call-to-arms that moves us beyond black and white, beyond Right and Left." Klein thanked the prize for "not shy away from controversy." She has backed calls for book festivals to stop taking money from companies with investments in fossil fuels or Israel's defense sector, a campaign that has led

## Study highlights safety and usage trends of nicotine pouches

## Oral nicotine pouches less toxic than cigarettes, but still unsafe

By Jamie Hartmann-Boyce, UMass Amherst and Nargiz Travis, Georgetown University

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

Oral nicotine pouches - like Zyn and Velo in the US - appear to be less toxic than cigarettes and deliver comparable levels of nicotine. This makes them an alternative for people who smoke. However, people who've never smoked are using them, too, and youth are open to trying them. These are key findings of our recent systematic review, published in the journal *Nicotine and Tobacco Research*.

Oral nicotine pouches are pre-portioned pouches sold in various flavors and nicotine strengths. They are similar in appearance and use to traditional 'snus', a form of smokeless tobacco placed between the gum and lip, which is popular in Scandinavia. However, unlike snus, nicotine pouches do not contain tobacco leaf. As a result, they are often marketed as "tobacco-free."

One of the studies in our review found that the "tobacco-free" label is confusing to some and may lead people to think nicotine pouches do not contain nicotine.

On average, studies in our review showed that nicotine pouches had fewer harmful chemicals, present at lower levels, than in cigarettes and smokeless tobacco, like snus.

## Flavorings

This varied by product, though. It could be that different flavorings have different levels of harmful chemicals. The most common reasons given for using pouches were curiosity, flavors and the perception that they were discreet and could be used where other tobacco products could not.

More people are using nicotine pouches than ever before.

While manufacturers claim to target people who smoke, we found that 35% to 42% of U.S. youth were aware of oral nicotine pouches. Of those who didn't use any form of nicotine, we found 9% to 21% open to trying pouches.

As public awareness of these products is growing - due to increased use and increased marketing - people want to know more about their effects. This includes people who smoke, who

might switch to them, people who don't smoke, who might use them recreationally, and policymakers.

Central to all of this is nicotine. Nicotine is not the component in cigarettes that causes disease and death, but it is the addictive one. Too much nicotine can make you sick, and people who don't smoke shouldn't use nicotine products.

At the same time, though, safer forms of nicotine have been helping people quit smoking for decades.

Cigarettes remain the leading cause of preventable disease and death worldwide and in the US. If they completely replace smoking, alternative nicotine products have the potential to bring substantial health benefits, both to people who smoke and the people around them.

## Therapies

There's a lot we researchers still don't know about nicotine pouches.

Hundreds of randomized trials show nicotine replacement therapies - like gum and patches - are safe and that they help people quit smoking.

There is also an ever-growing number of trials - currently 49 - showing that e-cigarettes with nicotine help people stop smoking and are substantially less harmful than smoking.

With oral nicotine pouches, however, only a handful of studies exist. Though most studies show that pouches expose users to lower levels of toxic substances than smoking, these studies were often small, and most were conducted by the tobacco industry, which has a long history of distorting science.

We know that smoking is remarkably lethal - cigarettes kill approximately half of regular users. It's probably reasonable to assume and not surprising to see data indicating that pouches are less harmful than smoking. That doesn't mean they are safe, though.

We need large, long-term independent studies to say anything for sure about the health effects of nicotine pouches. People's use patterns and the marketing need to be carefully monitored to ensure that products aren't being targeted at groups who don't smoke, and particularly aren't targeted at historically disadvantaged or marginalized groups, as they have been in the past. (AP)

'Go indoors and hydrate'

## Over 75 million people in the US under heat alerts

PHOENIX, June 18, (AP): Over 75 million people in the United States were under extreme heat alerts Monday as a heat wave moved eastward, and the mid-Atlantic and New England were likely to see highs in the 90s as the week progresses. Excessive humidity will make it feel even more oppressive.

The U.S. last year saw the most heat waves, consisting of abnormally hot weather lasting more than two days, since 1936. Officials again warned residents to take precautions.

Much of the Midwest and Northeast were under heat warnings or watches.

The heat has been especially dangerous in recent years in Phoenix, where 645 people died from heat-related causes in 2023, which was a record. Temperatures there hit 112 degrees Fahrenheit (44.4 Celsius) on Saturday. Weather service forecasters say the first two weeks of June in Phoenix have been the hottest start to the month on record there.

A meteorologist with the National Weather Service in Phoenix, Ted

Whitlock, advised reducing time outdoors between 10 a.m. and 6 p.m., staying hydrated and wearing light, looser fitting clothing. More than 100 cooling centers were open in the city and surrounding county, including two new overnight ones.

In neighboring New Mexico, the high in Roswell was expected to hit 107 F (41.6 C) on Monday, while temperatures in southern Colorado were expected to surpass 100 degrees (37.7 C).

In Southern California, firefighters increased their containment of a large wildfire in mountains north of Los Angeles on Monday after a weekend of explosive, wind-driven growth along Interstate 5.

The warming temperatures come amid growing concern about the effects of extreme heat and wildfire smoke.

The nonprofit Center for Biological Diversity on Monday sent a petition to the Federal Emergency Management Agency asking it to recognize extreme heat and wildfire smoke as major disasters.

Online platforms blamed for mental health crisis in youth

## US official calls for tobacco-like warnings on social media apps



Surgeon General Dr. Vivek Murthy speaks during an event on the White House complex in Washington, April 23, 2024. Murthy is asking Congress to require warning labels on social media platforms that are similar to those that appear on cigarette boxes. (AP)

NEW YORK, June 18, (AP): The US surgeon general has called on Congress to require warning labels on social media platforms and their effects on young people's lives, similar to those now mandatory on cigarette boxes.

In a Monday opinion piece in *The New York Times*, Dr. Vivek Murthy said that social media is a contributing factor in the mental health crisis among young people.

"It is time to require a surgeon general's warning label on social media platforms, stating that social media is associated with significant mental health harms for adolescents. A surgeon general's warning label, which requires congressional action, would regularly remind parents and adolescents that social media has not been proved safe," Murthy said. "Evidence from tobacco studies show that warning labels can increase awareness and change behavior."

Murthy said that the use of just a warning label wouldn't make social media safe for young people, but would be a part of the steps needed.

Social media use is prevalent among young people, with up to 95% of youth ages 13 to 17 saying that they use a social media platform, and more than a third saying that they use social media "almost constantly," according to 2022 data from the Pew Research Center.

## Safety

"Social media today is like tobacco decades ago: It's a product whose business model depends on addicting kids. And as with cigarettes, a surgeon general's warning label is a critical step toward mitigating the threat to children," Josh Golin, executive director at Fairplay, an organization that is dedicated to ending marketing to children, said in a statement.

Actually getting the labels on social media platforms would take congressional action - and it's not clear how quickly that might happen, even with apparent bipartisan unity around child safety online. Lawmakers have held multiple congressional hearings on child online safety and there's legislation in the works. Still, the last federal law aimed at protecting children online was enacted in 1998, six years before Facebook's founding.

"I am hoping that would be combined with a lot of other work that Congress has been trying to do to improve the safety and design and privacy of social media products," said Dr. Jenny Radesky, a developmental behavioral pediatrician at the University

of Michigan and leader at the American Academy of Pediatrics. "Those two things would have to go hand in hand, because there's so much that Congress can do to follow the steps of the United Kingdom and the European Union in passing laws that take into account what kids need when they're interacting with digital products."

Even with Congressional approval, warning labels would likely be challenged in the courts by tech companies.

"Putting a warning label on online speech isn't just scientifically unsound, it's at odds with the constitutional right to free speech," said Adam Kovacevich, CEO of the tech industry policy group Chamber of Progress. "It's surprising to see the U.S. Surgeon General attacking social media when teens themselves say it provides an important outlet for social connection."

Last year, Murthy warned that there wasn't enough evidence to show that social media is safe for children and teens. He said at the time that policymakers needed to address the harms of social media the same way they regulate things like car seats, baby formula, medication and other products children use.

To comply with federal regulation, social media companies already ban kids under 13 from signing up for their platforms - but children have been shown to easily get around the bans, both with and without their parents' consent.

Other measures social platforms have taken to address concerns about

children's mental health can also be easily circumvented. For instance, TikTok introduced a default 60-minute time limit for users under 18. But once the limit is reached, minors can simply enter a passcode to keep watching.

Murthy believes the impact of social media on young people should be a more pressing concern.

## Transparency

"Why is it that we have failed to respond to the harms of social media when they are no less urgent or widespread than those posed by unsafe cars, planes or food? These harms are not a failure of willpower and parenting; they are the consequence of unleashing powerful technology without adequate safety measures, transparency or accountability," he wrote.

In January the CEOs of Meta, TikTok, X and other social media companies went before the Senate Judiciary Committee to testify as parents worry that they're not doing enough to protect young people. The executives touted existing safety tools on their platforms and the work they've done with nonprofits and law enforcement to protect minors.

Murthy said Monday that Congress needs to implement legislation that will protect young people from online harassment, abuse and exploitation and from exposure to extreme violence and sexual content.

"The measures should prevent plat-

forms from collecting sensitive data from children and should restrict the use of features like push notifications, autoplay and infinite scroll, which prey on developing brains and contribute to excessive use," Murthy wrote.

Sens. Marsha Blackburn and Richard Blumenthal supported Murthy's message Monday.

"We are pleased that the Surgeon General - America's top doctor - continues to bring attention to the harmful impact that social media has on our children," the senators said in a prepared statement.

The surgeon general is also recommending that companies be required to share all their data on health effects with independent scientists and the public, which they currently don't do, and allow independent safety audits.

## Content

Murthy said schools and parents also need to participate in providing phone-free times and that doctors, nurses and other clinicians should help guide families toward safer practices.

While Murthy pushes for more to be done about social media in the United States, the European Union enacted groundbreaking new digital rules last year. The Digital Services Act is part of a suite of tech-focused regulations crafted by the 27-nation bloc - long a global leader in cracking down on tech giants.

The DSA is designed to keep users safe online and make it much harder to spread content that's either illegal, like hate speech or child sexual abuse, or violates a platform's terms of service. It also looks to protect citizens' fundamental rights such as privacy and free speech.

Officials have warned tech companies that violations could bring fines worth up to 6% of their global revenue - which could amount to billions - or even a ban from the EU.

Murthy's focus is on teens and social media, but Radesky noted that adults could use a warning label too.

"What we've heard from teens is that they want their parents to be on social media less and on their devices less," she said. "That's another behavior change we hope that parents will reflect on and think about - 'where could I cut down or create some boundaries to create more family time or sleep time?' - and not only hyper-focusing on what teens are doing, but really what all of us as a society are doing in terms of healthy relationships with technology."

## Device degrades safely, cuts infection risk

## China develops mini injectable for brain monitoring

WUHAN, June 18, (Xinhua): A Chinese research team has created a mini injectable ultrasonic sensor for wireless monitoring of intracranial signals, thereby providing an option which goes beyond the limitations of current clinical instruments.

The study was recently published in the journal *Nature*.

Physiological data are indicators used to determine the physiological state of the human body, which can help doctors diagnose, treat and detect diseases. Obtaining accurate physiological data concerning the human body in a safe and stable manner has long been a major focus in the medical monitor-

ing field.

The study noted that current wired clinical instruments that use percutaneous leads are susceptible to causing infection and potential surgical complications, while patient mobility is also affected.

Wireless implantable devices offer greater operational freedom but were previously subject to problems such as limited detection range, poor degradation and difficulty in terms of size reduction in the human body.

The research team, led by Prof. Zang Jianfeng from the Huazhong University of Science and Technology, developed an injectable, bioresorbable and

wireless metastructured hydrogel sensor for ultrasonic monitoring of intracranial signals.

According to the study, the sensors are cubes that are eight cubic millimeters in size, and they are made from biodegradable and stimulus-responsive hydrogels and periodically aligned air columns with a specific acoustic reflection spectrum.

Implanted into intracranial space with a puncture needle, the devices can deform in response to physiological environmental changes, resulting in peak frequency shifts of reflected ultrasound waves that can be wirelessly measured by an external ultrasound probe.

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## Dallas star Ogunbowale did not play

## McBride scores 19 and Lynx beat short-handed Wings

MINNEAPOLIS, June 18, (AP): Kayla McBride scored 19 points, Natisha Hiedeman added 17 off the bench and the Minnesota Lynx beat the short-handed Dallas Wings 90-78 on Monday night.

Minnesota (11-3) won its fourth straight game, while Dallas (3-10) lost its eighth in a row.

Minnesota pulled away early in the fourth quarter by making its first five shots to take a 76-65 lead after an 8-0 run. Hiedeman's fast-break layup, following Alanna Smith's block, extended Minnesota's lead an 84-74 lead.

Dallas star Arike Ogunbowale did not play due to a sore Achilles.

Ogunbowale, averaging a team-high 24.9 points, led Dallas in scor-

## BASKETBALL

ing each of the opening 11 games of the season before being held to a

season-low 11 on Saturday against Connecticut.

Napheesa Collier added 16 points, Alanna Smith had 12 points, nine rebounds and five steals, and Dorka Juhasz scored 11 for Minnesota.

Collier, who was coming off a 30-point performance on Friday,

started 1 for 9 from the field before her second make gave Minnesota a 39-37 lead late in the second quarter. Collier finished 5 of 17 from the field.

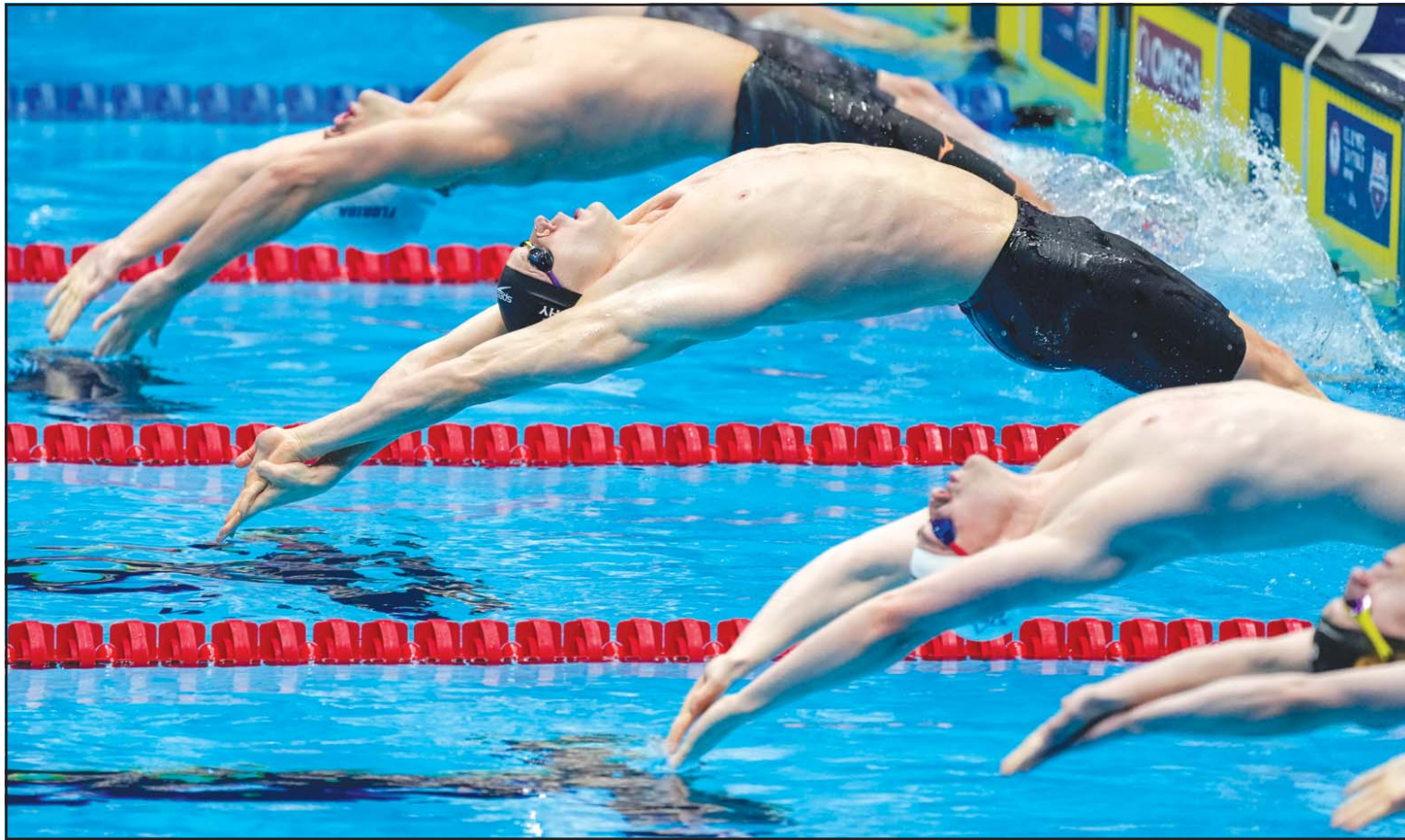
Sevgi Uzun and Maddy Siegrist each scored 17 points for Dallas. Monique Billings had 15 points, 10 rebounds and nine assists.

Jacy Sheldon made a 3-pointer early in the third to give Dallas its first lead at 48-47.

It was Minnesota's first home game on a Monday since Sept. 17, 2012.

The Lynx were 23 for 24 from the free throw line while the Wings made only one of three shots.

## A night of familiar names at US Olympic swim trials



Ryan Murphy swims during the Men's 100 backstroke finals at the US Swimming Olympic Trials in Indianapolis. (AP)

## Ledecky, Murphy, King and Grimes win

INDIANAPOLIS, June 18, (AP): It was a night for familiar names at the U.S. Olympic swimming trials.

American backstroke star Ryan Murphy is headed to his third Olympics. So is breaststroke queen Lilly King. And the most prominent name of all, Katie Ledecky, locked up a second individual race in Paris.

Let's not forget Katie Grimes, who'll be swimming indoors and outdoors at the Summer Games.

In a hectic session featuring five finals, Ledecky made it two-for-two in Indy by touching first in the 200-meter freestyle Monday.

Having already won the 400 free on the opening night of the trials, Ledecky showed her speed on the final lap to take the victory in 1 minute, 55.22 seconds.

Still to come for Ledecky, her two best events: the 800 and 1,500 freestyle.

She'll be joined in Paris by Claire Weinstein, runner-up in the 200 free at 1:56.18. Paige Madden and Erin Gemell are also assured of relay spots in the 4x200 free relay after finishing

third and fourth, respectively, with the next two -- Anna Peplowski and Alex Shackell - also in the mix for relay spots.

Murphy won the men's 100-meter backstroke to continue a run of excellence that dates to his breakout at Rio de Janeiro in 2016.

The 28-year-old Floridian touched in 52.22 and now gets a chance to add to his already impressive resume, which includes four golds, one silver and one bronze.

## SWIMMING

"I'll appreciate my career a little bit more when I'm done swimming," Murphy said. "Then I can zoom out. Now I'm really zoomed in on everything I'm doing on an every day basis." Murphy is fired up for these Olympics after setting for a silver and a bronze in his individual races at Tokyo.

"There's definitely no shortage of motivation on my end," he said. "I want to win every time I touch the water." Hunter Armstrong claimed the likely second Olympic spot in 52.72 - edging Jack Akins by two-hundredths of a second.

The 27-year-old King thrilled her home-state fans at Lucas Oil Stadium by taking the 100 breaststroke in 1:05.43.

She has said that her third Olympics will be her last. She's already got two gold, two silvers and one bronze in her stellar career.

"This is unbelievably special," King said, marveling at the massive home of the NFL's Indianapolis Colts, now the center of the swimming world. "You can hear your voice echo in here. I love swimming here." Emma Weber was the runner-up in 1:06.10 - edging Tokyo gold medalist Lydia Jacoby by 0.27, which means the Alaska native won't get a chance to defend her title in Paris.

Grimes has already clinched a spot in open water, which will be held in the Seine River. She added a pool spot with a victory in the women's 400 individual medley. Grimes built a big lead through the butterfly and backstroke legs, surrendered the top spot to Emma Weyant on the breaststroke, but rallied in the freestyle to take the guaranteed spot for Paris in 4:35.00.

At Tokyo, Grimes was the youngest member of the entire U.S. Olympic team at 15.

She's a veteran now.

Weyant, the silver medalist in this event at the Tokyo Games, took the expected second spot for these Olympics in 4:35.56.

Grimes also qualified for the final of the 200 freestyle, but she finished last in the eight-woman field.

The Olympic vets didn't hoard all the glory. Luke Hobson earned his first trip to the Summer Games with a victory in the men's 200 freestyle.

The 20-year-old Hobson, a college star at Texas, touched in 1:44.89. Chris Giuliano pulled a surprise from lane one, taking the second individual spot for Paris in 1:45.38.

Drew Kibler and Tokyo medalist Kieran Smith were third and fourth, respectively, guaranteeing a spot on the 4x200 relay at the Olympics. The next two, Brooks Curry and Blake Pieroni, will likely be on the team, as well.

Regan Smith broke her own American record in the women's 100 backstroke in a semifinal heat, setting herself up to go for an Olympic berth in the final Tuesday.

Smith, whose time of 57.47 eclipsed the mark of 57.51 she set a month ago, bounced back after just missing a spot in the 100 butterfly with a third-place finish.

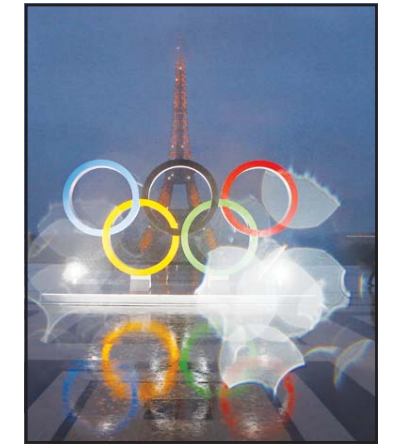
## Adapted to its iconic cityscape

## Paris gets into the groove for an historic Oly opening ceremony

SAINT-DENIS, France, June 18, (AP): The Paris Olympics are getting into the groove for the historic opening ceremony on the River Seine.

Dancers who'll jazz up the July 26 show under the artistic direction of prize-winning French theater director Thomas Jolly are putting finishing touches on a high-octane performance that will combine urban, contemporary, classic, and break dancing, complete with stomps, shouts, and body rolls.

The Associated Press got a behind-the-scenes look of one of their rehearsals, providing an advance peek into preparations for the opening show that is largely shrouded in secrecy. Dance director Maud Le Pladec instructed around 50 dancers on their twists and turns at a warehouse in the northern Parisian suburb of Saint-Denis. She spoke with pride of the rich cultural mix of her melting-pot troupe, declaring: "It represents the part of France I love."



In this photo taken with a lens with rain drops shows the Olympic rings on Trocadero plaza that overlooks the Eiffel Tower in Paris, France. (AP)

from Pont d'Austerlitz to Pont d'Iéna, in front of a 320,000-strong crowd is a huge challenge. About 45,000 security force members will be deployed and the airspace and all airports within a 150-kilometer (90-mile) radius around Paris will be closed for the extravaganza.

Tickets will be free for about 220,000 invited and security-screened spectators watching from upper tiers of the river's banks. About 100,000 paying spectators, including lavish hospitality packages, will watch from the lower riverside and around the Trocadero plaza - where the parade will end looking across to the Eiffel Tower.

Organizers hope the show will leave an indelible imprint on the massive global television audience and demonstrate French can-do and say it will aim to showcase France's heritage, history and creativity.

"It was, of course, a very audacious decision not to go into a stadium but into the city. It will mark the history of our country for quite a long time," said Tony Estanguet, head of the Paris Games organizing committee, who attended the dance rehearsal.

Organizers say a total of 3,000 dancers will feature in the opening and closing ceremonies for the July 26-Aug. 11 Olympics and the Paralympics that follow from Aug. 28 to Sept. 8.

Dancer Sharlyne Say, 22, described the prospect of performing on a global stage as a "dream come true."

"It will be crazy," she added, "because I'm not used to dancing outside."

## OLYMPICS

"We're in France but we're talking to the whole world," she said, "which means we have different identities, bodies, ages."

The grandiose open-air ceremony will be held during sunset and is expected to last nearly four hours, transforming the heart of Paris and its iconic landmarks into a giant stage for Jolly's artistic talents but also requiring a massive security effort.

"An opening ceremony has never been held outside of a stadium. There is no model, it's absolute creation," Jolly said in an interview published Tuesday by Le Parisien newspaper.

Detailing how he's had to revisit some of his ideas to fit the urban environment, Jolly said he'd imagined having a giant ballet with 200 dancers on one of the bridges that span the Seine but, after a study was done, "we were told that everyone doing the same step at the same time would endanger the bridge's solidity."

He also said: "I wanted to build an upside-down Eiffel Tower. I thought it would be pretty for lighting the Olympic flame. But it wasn't doable."

The initial overall concept for the ceremony has had to be adapted "so that the dream and the reality meet," he added.

For security services, the unprecedented decision to parade thousands of Olympians on boats along a 6-kilometer (3.7-mile) stretch of the Seine,

## Chinese anti-doping body slams the NY Times for violating media ethics

BEIJING, June 18, (Xinhua): The Chinese Anti-Doping Agency (CHINADA) has criticized a New York Times report suggesting that Chinese swimmers were involved in doping in 2016 and 2017, calling it "a violation of media ethics and morals." The New York Times reported last week that three Chinese swimmers tested positive for clenbuterol in 2016 and 2017 but were not suspended.

In response, CHINADA sent replies to the New York Times and AFP on Monday, stating that the three athletes had ingested clenbuterol through meat contamination inadvertently. According to world anti-doping rules, no public disclosure or sanctions are necessary under such circumstances.

In its reply to the NYT, CHINADA condemned the report, saying, "We have noticed the unauthorized disclosure of unpublished documents and information, and the privacy of the athletes (including minors) by media like the New York Times, who misinterpreted the positive findings for clenbuterol caused by meat contamination as intentional doping by the athletes." read the statement to the NYT. "This is a violation of the media ethics and morals, an attempt to mislead public understanding on anti-doping work and caused a severe damage on the reputation of WADA, CHINADA and the global anti-doping system." "CHINADA deplores and rejects this, and reserves its right to take legal action as appropriate against the New York Times and other media for their reports and statements that are contrary to basic facts," CHINADA said.

The agency pointed out that the misleading report showed bias and an attempt to politicize the doping fight. "Despite the fact that meat contamination with clenbuterol is not exclusively a Chinese issue, the New York Times and media alike only questioned the Chinese athletes, which show their serious bias against China's anti doping efforts, and that they are attempting to politicize the fight against doping by manipulating public opinion and misleading the public through the constant publication of distorted and confusing reports," CHINADA said in a statement to AFP.

CHINADA revealed that the three athletes underwent a total of 72 tests

## World Cup-winning striker, now also a senator

## Romário is back as player-chairman and a big fan of revitalized Brazilian soccer club

MESQUITA, Brazil, June 18, (AP): América, a once-great soccer club in northern Rio de Janeiro, was recently on the verge of folding due to years of mismanagement.

But then its most famous fan decided to come back from retirement at the age of 58. He brought sponsors, rebuilt part of the club's decrepit stadium, removed the weeds from the pitch, signed new players and came up with a plan to make it as mighty as it once was.

World Cup-winning striker

## SOCCER

Romário, now also a senator/lawmaker, became president of his boyhood club earlier this year not only to save it, but also to play a few matches for the Rio state's second division side with his 30-year-old son Romarinho.

Romário, the former Brazil, PSV and Barcelona striker, gathered a group of five top managers, including one who is not that interested in soccer. They helped to revive the club that was also one of the passions of Romário's late father, Edevair Faria de Souza.

So far, so good.

América is now among the leaders in Rio's second division and hoping to climb back to the top-flight division next year to compete with glamor teams like Flamengo and Fluminense.

Founded in 1904, América won sev-

en Rio state titles at a time that those could be considered almost as big as winning the Brazilian championship. The club's greatest moment was also one of its last; in 1986 it reached the semifinals of Brazil's main national championship.

It has been mostly mediocre since, but there is now room for optimism.

"The most important thing for me now is that America wins its matches. In some matches there will be a real chance that I play, I spoke to the coach about it. But sometimes it won't be the day for that," Romário said after

his team's 2-0 win against Petropolis in front of 1,800 fans at the Giulite Coutinho Stadium.

"I want to make fans happy on the pitch too, but it is not for that yet."

Since Romário took over at América, many of the 180,000 residents of the city of Mesquita have seen a drastic change.

An uncomfortable quiet in the stands has changed into an atmosphere with playful chants like "let's get the senator in" and "Romario is your terror." Locals are once again proudly wearing América shirts, bought in small news-

stands on streets nearby.

For players, joining Romário is a bonus. André - nicknamed Nightclub André by Brazilian soccer fans - scored five goals in his first five matches for América.

A former striker at Sporting Lisbon and several Brazilian clubs, the 33-year-old André wanted to please his soccer hero and share some time with him on the pitch.

"Romário just cornered me in a conversation and I ended up shaking his hand," André told media after an América match. "I never thought it would get this big."

Charismatic striker André is also one of the club's attractions on social media. With him and Romário, América jumped to more than 200,000 followers on Instagram after years with no more than 25,000.

América executives are now under pressure to expand the small stadium's capacity so more fans can see former retiree Romário in a match. The arena, still dusty and filled with cracks, also hosts meetings of club executives, as part of Romário's philosophy.

Some fans approve of Romário's arrival, but others don't think that is enough to assure the club will survive.

"The hole is too deep now," said Lauro Santos, 68, a retiree and Flamengo supporter who supports América as his second club. "I've always followed América too, and I find it hard that Romário at this age will change the club dramatically just with marketing."



Romario of América waves as he walks onto the pitch to compete in a second division state championship soccer match against Araruama, at the Giulite Coutinho stadium in Mesquita, Brazil. (AP)

**'It is not easy to compete again after winning it all'**

## Messi and Argentina eye 3rd straight major title in Copa America

NEW YORK, June 18, (AP): Lionel Messi and Argentina will try to match Spain's feat of three consecutive major titles when the Copa America kicks off Thursday night.

Coming off championships in the 2021 Copa America and the 2022 World Cup, Messi will be four days shy of his 37th birthday when the Albiceleste take the field against Canada at Mercedes-Benz Stadium in Atlanta. "I want to enjoy a couple of more matches being a world champion," Messi said after Argentina beat France on penalty kicks to win the 2022 World Cup final.

He has 10 goals in 10 international appearances since, raising his total to 108 in 182 games for Argentina's national team. He is either tied for second with Ali Daei or one behind, depending on whether a disputed goal by the Iranian is counted, trailing only Portugal's Cristiano Ronaldo at 128.

"It is not easy to compete again after winning it all," Argentina coach Lionel Scaloni said.

Argentina and Uruguay are tied with 15 Copa titles each, followed by Brazil with nine. No other nation has won more than two.

Brazil features an attack headed by Vinicius Junior and Rodrygo, just off a Champions League title with Real Madrid, and Raphinha. The emerging star is 17-year-old Endrick, who joins Real Madrid this summer.

"If you look at every position in their proposed starting 11, it's probably one of the world's best players," U.S. coach Gregg Berhalter said.

Spain is the only nation to win three consecutive major titles: the European Championship in 2008 and 2012



Lionel Messi (left), works out with team Argentina before a COPA soccer match in Kennesaw, Ga. Argentina plays team Canada on June 20, in Atlanta. (AP)

around the 2010 World Cup.

A look at the tournament:

There will be 16 teams, just as in 2016. The U.S., Mexico, Canada, Costa Rica, Panama and Jamaica join the 10 South American nations after qualifying from North and Central America and the Caribbean.

Ecuador was to host the tournament under the rotation of CONMEBOL, South American soccer's governing body, but declined. The tournament was then moved to the U.S., which also hosted the special centennial Copa America in 2016 as Chile won on penalty kicks over Argentina at MetLife Stadium in

East Rutherford, New Jersey.

Eleven NFL stadiums are being used, including eight of the 11 U.S. venues for the 2026 World Cup, plus three smaller MLS homes. The final will be at Miami Gardens, Florida, on July 14, starting five hours after the European Championship final in Berlin.

CONMEBOL says more than 1 million tickets have been sold for the 32 matches. The 2016 tournament drew just under 1.5 million, and the 2019 tournament in Brazil about 850,000. The 2021 Copa was played mostly without fans because of the coronavirus pandemic.

This will be the biggest test for the U.S. team before the World Cup - the Americans get an automatic berth as

### SOCCER

co-host along with Mexico and Canada - and most Europe-based players are expected to skip next year's CONCACAF Gold Cup.

Christian Pulisic, Tyler Adams and Weston McKennie are the core of a team that returns 18 players from the 2022 World Cup roster.

"A World Cup on home soil is the biggest thing that you know we'll probably do in our career," Pulisic said. "It's a special time for this sport in America."

In 2016, CONMEBOL partnered with the U.S. Soccer Federation, which was in charge of most of the logistics. This time, CONMEBOL is co-organizing the tournament with CONCACAF, the governing body of North and Central America and the Caribbean.

Unlike during the World Cup, the organizers have only short-term access

## Brazilian teenager Endrick gets No. 9 shirt for Copa America

SAO PAULO, June 18, (AP): The youngest player to score three goals for Brazil's national team was Pelé. Now another player, also 17 but a few days older than one of greatest of all time, did the same wearing the iconic yellow shirt.

Endrick scored the winner for Brazil in a 1-0 friendly victory over England at Wembley Stadium in March, netted another in a 3-3 draw against Spain at the Santiago Bernabeu Stadium, and gave his team a last-minute 3-2 win over Mexico on June 8 amid preparations for the Copa America.

How far can the teenage sensation go? Brazil coach Dorival Júnior, who took over in January, has offered a hint: Endrick is a possible starter for the tournament in the United States in the same No. 9 shirt previously donned by two-time World Cup winner Ronaldo.

The Brazilian public and former players are unanimously excited about Endrick, who is expected to develop further after he joins Real Madrid from Palmeiras next season. Many already see the striker as the team's target man for the 2026 World Cup, and possibly keeping that place for the next two decades. This month's Copa America

could provide a first glimpse of what Brazil's future could look like.

Endrick scored his three goals for the national team in about 100 minutes on the field and having only six shots on target during those three friendlies. He didn't score against the United States on Wednesday, but still had three chances in less than 30 minutes.

"We need to be calm, patient, avoid making any comparisons between Endrick and other athletes," Dorival Júnior said after Brazil's win over Mexico. "We need to be very careful about this boy. So much is happening in his life in such little time. What matters is that he doesn't lose his essence. This mark (equalling Pelé's initial tally) brings attention and just adds to what he has done, the accomplishments he has had in such little time."

The teenager has spoken like a veteran during his time with Brazil's national team. Earlier in June, Endrick said in an interview with The Associated Press that he still needs to introduce himself to fans. But his popped collar during games, lethal finishes in front of goal and evident confidence remind many of another Brazilian goal scorer, just an inch smaller - 1994 World Cup winner

Romário.

"He is a great striker, I am sure we can hope to see a lot from him in the future," Romário said in an interview with ESPN in March. "I agree it is too soon to make comparisons, especially with me. To reach Romario level he needs to do a lot of running."

Endrick became a beloved player at Palmeiras after 81 matches and 21 goals. The forward won the Sao Paulo championship title with his former club this year and in 2023. He was also part of the squad that won the Brazilian championship in 2022 and 2023. He will face tougher competition at European champion Real Madrid, but before that he wants a shot at securing his place in the national team.

He is already talking the talk to become a reference for the team in years to come.

"Pelé is Pelé. You should not make those comparisons, that's bad. Every one of us has their own story, their life, their reality. Just let history speak for itself," Endrick said after the match against Mexico. "I don't care about records, I only want to enjoy myself. Every time I step on the field it is my Disneyland, my amusement park."

"We can see every seat all the time. I think it serves as a good deterrent," said Daniel DeLorenzi, vice president of security and safety services. "We have three drone detection systems. ... Not only can we track the drone, but more importantly, we can track where the operator is."

## Al-Arabi strengthen squad for the 'upcoming' season

By Hassan Musa

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff  
KUWAIT CITY, June 18: Al-Arabi began recruiting local talent and strengthening its ranks for the new season early on, signing Yacoub Tararwa and Mohamed Khaled, along with Tunisian physical trainer Khalil Jebabli.

Tararwa has had several local experiences, starting his career with Kuwait Club and moving between Al-Tadamon, Kazma, Al-Nasr, Al-Fahaheel, and Khaitan clubs. Meanwhile, Khaled played for Al-Qadisiya, Kazma, and Al-Nasr clubs.

Jebabli previously worked with Tunisian coach Nabil Maaloul in training the Kuwaiti national team and was part of the technical staff at Kuwait Club. He also had a stint with Al-Arabi before moving to the technical staff at Al-Qadisiya.

Al-Arabi has given the green light to some of its local players to seek new opportunities. Issa Walid and Saif Al-Hashan were the first to leave, joining Salmiya, with other players expected to follow.



Khalil Jebabli

The transfer movement includes most clubs as they prepare for the new season starting in August, especially following the Football Association's decision to reduce the team roster to 25 players.

Al-Qadisiya, released Nayef Zuwaid, Dhari Saeed, Muhammad Khalil, Aziz Nasari, Sultan Salbukh, Talal Al-Ansari, Abdullah Mawi, and others, while signing Athbi Shehab and Moaz Al-Dhafiri.

Salmiya renewed contracts with Mahdi Dashti, Muhammad Al-Huwaidi, and Abdul Aziz Marawi, and signed Saif Al-Hashan and Issa Walid, while seeking replacements for Moaz Al-Dhafiri and Athbi Shehab.

Kazma renewed contracts with Nasser Faraj, goalkeeper Faisal Al-Subaie, Sharida Al-Shraida, Mohammed Al-Azmi, and Nasser Falih, and signed Al-Nasr's Colombian players, Hancel Zapata and Meshal Al-Shammari.

### SOCCER

Al-Tadamon's management contracted with Fahd Al-Rashidi and Naif Zuwaid, while monitoring Aziz Nasari and Talal Al-Ansari.

Al-Fahaheel renewed contracts with all its professionals, except Brazilian Julio Cesar, and also renewed goalkeeper Ahmed Adi's contract. They signed Brazilian professional Rodrigo, former Al-Jahra player, and Abdullah Mawi from Al-Qadisiya, and Mishal Fawaz from Al-Nasr.

Al-Nasr lost several key players in the transfer market, including Colombian Zapata, Algerian Ayman Lakjaa, and Libyan Moataz Al-Lafi, along with Meshal Fawaz, Meshal Al-Shammari, and Mohamed Khaled.

## Gundogan becomes irreplaceable for Germany at European Championship

BERLIN, June 18, (Xinhua): Barcelona midfielder Ilkay Gundogan seemed in the best possible mood in his team's base camp in Herzogenaurach in Bavaria. Ahead of Germany's second Group A encounter against Hungary this Wednesday, the 33-year-old went through all training exercises wearing a smile on his face.

The former Citizen midfielder is undoubtedly enjoying his new role in the newly formed 2014 world champions squad.

After 78 internationals in the German shirt, things seem to have significantly changed for the man who had harvested vast success with his clubs but failed to gain ground in the national team.

### SOCCER

A tactical change initiated by German coach Julian Nagelsmann opened doors to new happiness. While the German captain covered the job as a six together with Real star Toni Kroos in the UEFA Euro 2021, his upgrade to a ten turned things for the better.

While Kroos is taking care of the job as a conducting six, Gundogan slipped into the role of a leading servant up front right behind the last front line.

In the 5-1 victory in Germany's curtain raiser and Euro 2024 opening game, he became the man to take care of the inspiring source for the team's gifted youngsters such as Jamal Musiala and Florian Wirtz.

Having moved forward seems a perfect match as not only German coach

Nagelsmann is praising Gundogan's ability "to conduct our rhythm".

His former Manchester City coach Pep Guardiola, in a recent interview, called him "one of the most intelligent players I have ever worked with." The Spaniard called the German "the key to our success" after having won several Premier League championships and the 2023 Champions League.

"You have rarely a player implementing his task as he does. You tell him and he does perfectly no matter how intense the pressure is," the 53-year-old added. Guardiola predicted the midfielder is on his way to becoming "a great coach as he can read the game in every minute" after his active career.

Against Scotland, Gundogan perfectly orchestrated the game, and due to striker icon Thomas Muller "had his foot involved in all of our goals." Gundogan has never been a loudspeaker but silently cared for his teams. "I always considered what my teammates need to get better." Not acting as a self-marketing force, the Gelsenkirchen-born and Turkish-rooted earned doubts and critics.

TV pundits and German record internationals such as Lothar Matthaus questioned his contribution to the German game. Aside from others, Mattaeus mentioned that Bayern winger Leroy Sane might be the better choice.

With the start of Euro 2024, things seem to have changed. The midfielder has become irreplaceable and, for the first time, has reached a position where his skills fully bloom.

He feels the trust of the coach and team, Gundogan claimed.

## GROS ISLET, St. Lucia, June 18, (AP): Nicholas Pooran scored 98 runs from 53 balls as the West Indies made 218-5 and beat Afghanistan by 104 runs in the final match in the group stage at the Twenty20 World Cup.

Both teams already had qualified for the Super Eight stage but the West Indies finished unbeaten and atop Group C.

Obed McCoy took 3-14 as Afghanistan was bowled out for 114 in 16.2 overs and the West Indies sent a message to future rivals in the play-off stage. The West Indies play their first Super Eight match against the United States on Wednesday.

Pooran's total was the highest individual total at the tournament and carried him past 2,000 runs in Twenty20 internationals. He hit eight sixes and six fours in an explosive innings which propelled the West Indies to the highest team total at the tournament.

"There were many important moments and at the end of the day it's all about team success," Pooran said. "I felt like it was my day and I had to take the responsibility. When it's your day you have to make it your day."

Earlier, pace bowler Lockie Ferguson achieved the most economical bowling figures in Twenty20 internationals as New Zealand earned a consolation closing win against Papua

## New Zealand earn consolation closing win

New Guinea.

Pooran took advantage of perfect batting conditions at the Daren Sammy Stadium, launching shots to all parts of the ground and taking 62 runs from blows which pierced or cleared the boundaries.

Afghanistan had played its previous matches on difficult, turning pitches on which seamer Fazalhaq Farooqi and its spinners had dominated. It bowled out Uganda for 58, New Zealand for 75 and Papua New Guinea for 95.

The West Indies surpassed the highest of those totals Monday in fewer than seven overs.

After five overs the West Indies were 85-1 and 92-1 at the end of the

six-over power play, the highest total in a power play in T20 World Cup history.

Pooran hit sixes from the second and third balls of the 20th over to reach 97, the highest individual total in the World Cup so far. Just as a century seemed inevitable he was run out going back for a second run from the fourth ball, beaten by a direct hit at the striker's end.

### CRICKET

Farooqi who is the leading wicket-taker at the tournament finished with 0-38, captain Rashid Khan 0-45 and Omarzai 1-41. Gulbadin's 2-14 from two overs stood out as a shining light

among the gloom of the Afghanistan bowlers.

There was no reprieve for Afghanistan when it batted. Rahmanullah Gurbaz was out to the third ball of its innings, a wicket maiden bowled by Akeal Hossein. After its power play, Afghanistan was 45-1 and after 10 overs it was 66-5 as McCoy dismantled the top order.

"The way they batted, scoring around 90 runs in the power play, it is tough to come back from that," Rashid said. "It's good this loss happened at this stage, not in a do-or-die game."

Ferguson bowled four maiden overs and claimed three wickets as PNG was bowled out for 78 runs in 19.4 overs.

The target was run down by New Zealand at 79-3 in 12.2 overs. Devon Conway top-scored with 35.

Ferguson's figures were only the second instance of a bowler not conceding any runs in a four-over spell in T20s. The other was in 2021 by Canada's Saad Bin Zafar, who picked up two wickets for no runs in four overs against Panama.

"A tough wicket to bat on, nice to bowl on," Ferguson said.

PNG's batting failed against New Zealand's pace attack. Eight wickets were lost to fast bowling, with Tim Southee taking 2-11. Trent Boult returned 2-14 in four overs in his last T20 appearance for the Black Caps.

New Zealand finished third in Group C behind the West Indies and Afghanistan, while PNG went winless in its maiden T20 World Cup.



West Indies' Nicholas Pooran bats against Afghanistan during an ICC Men's T20 World Cup cricket match at Daren Sammy National Cricket Stadium in Gros Islet, Saint Lucia. (AP)



Sri Lanka's Charith Asalanka dives to safely make his ground during an ICC Men's T20 World Cup cricket match against the Netherlands at Daren Sammy National Cricket Stadium in Gros Islet, Saint Lucia. (AP)



Slovakia's Robert Bozenik (right), heads the ball next to Belgium's Zeno Debast during the Group E match between Belgium and Slovakia at the Euro 2024 soccer tournament in Frankfurt, Germany. (AP)

# Sports

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## Celtics win 18th NBA championship

Brown voted NBA Finals MVP



The Kuwaiti youth players pose for a group photo.

### Kuwaiti youth team heads to Cairo for a preparatory camp

KUWAIT CITY, June 18: The Kuwaiti soccer youth team delegation, led by Vice Chairman of the Kuwaiti Football Association Hayef Al-Mutairi, departed for Cairo to hold a preparatory camp, which includes a friendly match against the Egypt ahead of the West Asian Championship scheduled from June 25 to July 5 in Taif, Saudi Arabia.

Khorshid, Jassim Shamouh, Abdullah Al-Ayoub, Abdullah Fares, Miqdad Safar, Abdul-Wahab Jassim, Youssef Majed, Hussein Al-Kankouni, Talal Al-Matroud, Abdul-Wahab Al-Shallal, Jassim Matar, Abdulaziz Abdeen, Fadel Al-Sarraf, Ahmed Boodi, Muhammad Al-

#### SOCCER

After the West Asian Championship, the team, Al-Azraq, will resume training in Kuwait before heading to Serbia on July 17 for an external camp, lasting until August 6, in preparation for the Asian Cup qualifiers.

Oman, Turki Al-Yousef, Omar Al-Azmi, Muntaser Suleiman, Bandar Qannas, Eid Talal, Thamer Al-Sulaili, Khaled Al-Kharqawi, Abdullah Al-Sarraf, Muhammad Arhama, Muhammad Al-Surai, Saud Al-Kandari, and Jassim Al-Anazi.

Croatian coach Dario Pasic has called up 28 players.

Squad: Youssef Sabah, Ahmed

#### Liverpool travel to Ipswich

### City open title defense at Chelsea

LONDON, June 18, (AP): Manchester City manager Pep Guardiola will come up against a familiar face in his team's opening match of its Premier League title defense.



In this file photo, Leicester coach Enzo Maresca applauds fans at the end of English League Cup third round soccer match between Liverpool and Leicester City. (AP)

City will start the season away at Chelsea, whose new manager is Enzo Maresca - an assistant to Guardiola at City in the 2022-23 season.

Fabian Hurler's Brighton reign will begin away to Everton, while new West Ham manager Julen Lopetegui will welcome Aston Villa.

It's part of a tough start for City, which also hosts Arsenal and visits Newcastle away in the opening six games as the team begins its bid for a record-extending fifth straight English top-flight title.

The other opening weekend fixtures will see Arsenal host Wolves and Bournemouth head to Nottingham Forest on the Saturday, while Brentford face Crystal Palace on the Sunday.

The season will kick off on Aug. 16 when Manchester United hosts Fulham.

#### SOCCER

New Liverpool manager Arne Slot will travel to promoted Ipswich for his first game in charge in the early kickoff the following day.

Maresca left Leicester after leading the team back into the Premier League after just one season in the Championship, and his former club - which has yet to name a replacement for the coach - will host Tottenham in the Monday night game in the opening round.

Southampton, which won the Championship playoff final to clinch the third promotion spot, travels to Newcastle.

#### Best of the Rest

##### Fans brawl inside stadium:

Fighting broke out between fans of Turkey and Georgia inside Dortmund's Westfalenstadion ahead of the teams' European Championship match on Tuesday. The brawling took place at ground level in one corner of the stadium, with supporters seen throwing objects at each other as security attempted to intervene in pouring rain.

The fighting stopped when police officers in riot gear came between them. The officers have remained in place. The teams are meeting in Group F of Euro 2024.

It is Georgia's first ever match at a major soccer tournament. (AP)

**Palmeiras find groove:** Defending champions Palmeiras scored three

second-half goals en route to a 4-1 away win over 10-man Atletico Mineiro in Brazil's Serie A championship on Monday.

Anibal Moreno gave the visitors the lead at Arena MRV with a 25th-minute strike and the hosts suffered another blow six minutes later when former Brazil forward Hulk was sent off for violent conduct.

Joaquin Piquerez, Estevao Willian and Jose Lopez struck during their fifth win of the campaign.

After a shaky start to the season, Abel Ferreira's men have now won three consecutive matches, rising to fifth in the 20-team standings, two points behind leaders Botafogo. Atletico Mineiro are ninth, six points further back. (Xinhua)

Frenchman will need to wear a mask if he plays on at Euro 2024

## Mbappé suffers broken nose as France make winning start

DUSSELDORF, Germany, June 18, (AP): Kylian Mbappé suffered a broken nose during France's opening game at the European Championship and will have to wear a face mask if he plays on at the tournament.

The French Football Federation said Tuesday it had received "positive" news about Mbappé's chances of continuing at Euro 2024 as he will not need immediate surgery. But it did not specify how long it would be before he is able to play again.

"The news is rather reassuring so far as there are no operations planned for the immediate future. As for his participation in the rest of the tournament, it's a bit too early to give a timetable," federation president Philippe Diallo said.

The Federation said Mbappé was treated by Dr. Franck Le Gall at a Dusseldorf hospital following France's 1-0 win against Austria on Monday.

It said a mask would be made to allow Mbappé to "consider resuming competition after a period devoted to treatment."

"They tried to reduce the aftermath of his fracture, for him to be able to stay in the tournament," Diallo said. "We'll wait until the end of the day to see how things develop. But all in all, I'd say the information was pretty positive."

Mbappé stayed on the ground after his face collided with the shoulder Austria's Kevin Danso as he attempted a header during the Group D match at Dusseldorf Arena. His nose was badly swollen and blood poured from his face, turning parts of his white jersey red.

Austria goalkeeper Patrick Pentz signaled for urgent medical assistance.

"We're worried to see Kylian leave the field like that," France midfielder N'Golo Kante said afterward.

Mbappé's injury is a big deal for France, as the country's captain, its best player and one of the biggest stars of the tournament. It's a concern for Real Madrid, too, after he left Paris Saint-Germain as a free agent to sign for the Spanish club in the offseason.

Mbappé is widely regarded as the heir to Lionel Messi and Cristiano Ronaldo as the best player in the world and led his country to the World Cup title in 2018 at the age of 19.

He became only the second player in history to score a hat trick in a World Cup final four years later in Qatar as France was runner-up to Messi's Argentina.

Champions League winner Madrid ended its years-long pursuit of Mbappé earlier this month and he will join its roster of superstars, which included Vinicius Junior and Jude Bellingham.

France's priority will be to get him back on the field and leading its bid to win a record-equalling third Euros. Madrid will want him in peak condition for the start of the season and Mbappé already indicated this week that his new club did not want him to take part in the Paris Olympics, where the men's final is Aug. 9.

If he is to play on at the Euros, he will need to wear the type of protective face mask worn by Son Heung-min and Josko Gvardiol at the World Cup in 2022.

But the speed of his return will depend on the level of discomfort he feels.

A broken nose can take weeks to



Austria's Kevin Danso (left), challenges for the ball with Kylian Mbappé of France during a Group D match between Austria and France at the Euro 2024 soccer tournament in Dusseldorf, Germany. (AP)

heal and the National Health Service in the U.K. says sport should be avoided for "at least six weeks if there's a chance your face might be hit."

Mbappé, who has returned to the team's training camp with the rest of the squad, appeared to see the lighter side of his injury.

"Any ideas for masks?" he posted on X.

Two Romelu Lukaku goals were ruled out by video review and Belgium fell to a stunning 1-0 loss to Slovakia in wild Group E.

Slovakia struck in the seventh minute through forward Ivan Schranz then survived a string of misses by Belgium record scorer Lukaku, whose two second-half goals were overturned after first being given by the match officials, and all that playmaker Kevin De Bruyne could create.

Slovakia's deserved win also was preserved by defender Dávid

Hanco's brave goal-line block that left him sprawled in the netting with a face injury inflicted by a teammate's knee.

UEFA filed one disciplinary charge and opened a separate investigation into alleged discrimination by Serbia fans at the European Championship game against England.

The details were not specified by UEFA on Monday but followed a formal complaint by the soccer federation of Kosovo, which declared independence from Serbia in 2008 that its neighbor has never recognized.

#### SOCCER

UEFA's disciplinary panel will consider a charge against Serbia of its fans "transmitting a provocative message unfit for a sports event" and throwing objects during England's 1-0 win on Sunday at Gelsenkirchen.

Serbia fans displayed a national flag which included in its borders the territory of Kosovo, its former republic.

Kosovan soccer officials alerted UEFA to flags, chants and banners which they said contained "political, chauvinistic and racist messages" against their country.

The charges should be judged before Thursday, when Serbia plays its second Euro 2024 game against Slovenia in Munich. A fine would typically be imposed in such cases with stricter measures potentially imposed in a future competition.

UEFA gave no timeline for the investigation into alleged discriminatory behavior.

Serbia fans clashed with England fans in the city before the late evening game, but the strict liability federations have under UEFA rules for incidents at stadiums does not always include violent incidents elsewhere.

**BOSTON, June 18, (AP):** Jayson Tatum put his hands behind his head, with TD Garden fans standing on their feet cheering around him, and took it all in.

Walking to the bench, he wrapped both arms around Celtics coach Joe Mazzulla.

The journey was complete. The Boston Celtics again stand alone among NBA champions.

Tatum had 31 points, 11 assists and eight rebounds, and the Celtics topped the Dallas Mavericks 106-88 on Monday night to win the franchise's 18th championship, breaking a tie with the Los Angeles Lakers for the most in league history.

Boston earned its latest title on the 16th anniversary of hoisting its last Larry O'Brien Trophy in 2008. It marks the 13th championship won this century by one of the city's Big 4 professional sports franchises.



Boston Celtics guard Jaylen Brown (7) slams a dunk against Dallas Mavericks forward Maxi Kleber (left), during the second half in Game 5 of the NBA basketball finals in Boston. (AP)

"It means the world," Tatum said on stage after the team received the trophy from NBA Commissioner Adam Silver. "It's been a long time. And damn I'm grateful." Jaylen Brown added 21 points, eight rebounds and six assists, and was voted the NBA Finals MVP.

#### BASEBALL

"I share this with my brothers and my partner in crime Jayson Tatum," Brown said after the 107th career playoff game he and Tatum have played together - the most for any duo before winning a title.

Jrue Holiday finished with 15 points and 11 rebounds. Center Kristaps Porzingis also provided an emotional lift, returning from a two-game absence because of a dislocated tendon in his left ankle to chip in five points in 17 minutes.

They helped the Celtics cap a postseason that saw them go 16-3 and finish with an 80-21 overall record. That .792 winning percentage ranks second in team history behind only the Celtics' 1985-86 championship team that finished 82-18 (.820).

Mazzulla, in his second season, at age 35 also became the youngest coach since Bill Russell in 1969 to lead a team to a championship.

"You have very few chances in life to be great," Mazzulla said.

Luka Doncic finished with 28 points and 12 rebounds for Dallas, which failed to extend the series after avoiding a sweep with a 38-point win in Game 4. The Mavericks had been 3-0 in Game 5s this postseason, with Doncic scoring at least 31 points in each of them. He said the chest, right knee and left ankle injuries he played through during the finals weren't an excuse for Dallas struggling throughout the series.

"It doesn't matter if I was hurt, how much was I hurt. I was out there," he said. "I tried to play, but I didn't do enough." Kyrie Irving finished with just 15 points on 5-of-16 shooting and has lost 13 of the last 14 meetings against the Celtics team he left in the summer of 2019 to join the Brooklyn Nets.

Irving thinks better things are ahead for the Mavs.

"I see an opportunity for us to really build our future in a positive manner, where this is almost like a regular thing for us and we're competing for championships," he said.

NBA teams are now 0-157 in postseason series after falling into a 3-0 deficit.



Boston Celtics forward Jayson Tatum, center, holds the Larry O'Brien Championship Trophy as he celebrates with the team after the Celtics won the NBA championship with a Game 5 victory over the Dallas Mavericks in Boston. (AP)