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Opinion

Your Highness the Prime Minister... Electricity, here is the solution

By Ahmed Al-Jarallah

Editor-in-Chief, the Arab Times

YOUR Highness the Prime Minister, there is no doubt that electricity issue is not new. We have been suffering from electricity power cuts during summer over the past 40 years.

Rather, before summer begins, the system of local agents works to warn about it for reasons best known to them; and in an effort to achieve profits at the expense of the public and sovereign wealth.

The remedies to this problem are the same every time, without taking into account the real causes; because in the end, there is no permanent solution.

Therefore, from the position of Your Highness Prime Minister and you are an expert in economics, you realize what it means to exploit this kind of issue at a sensitive time for some companies to achieve their own goals.

Nonetheless, is it not more effective to investigate the reasons, and prevent those who propel turbines from exploiting this constant crisis and selling it at a very high price? Even if they do not meet the need, they set an exaggerated price.

Also, for the sake of transparency, a question arises: Is it inappropriate for the relevant ministry to study Kuwait's need to increase sources of power as a result of urban expansion, and to develop appropriate mechanisms to fill the shortage, or is it up to chance?

Is there regular maintenance and strengthening of the production network, or do stakeholders intervene and put pressure on ministry officials to prevent them from finding appropriate solutions?

Also, with the start of the war on corruption, officials distanced themselves from bearing the responsibility of signing plans so as not to fall under suspicion.

Your Highness the Prime Minister, it must be recognized that what is happening is a struggle over prices, benefits and gains; in addition to lack of planning and the absence of a vision.

So today, with temperatures rising in the hottest region in summer, what will be the situation in the coming years, with climate change causing our countries to suffer from a fiery summer?

In this regard, you have a golden opportunity, which His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, made available when he issued his decision to suspend the local agent.

This means that the Council of Ministers can seek the assistance of international companies working in this field, without the influence of certain individuals who exercise pressure, as was the case previously.

We must return to the electricity plan scandal in 2007. Did successive governments benefit from it and work to fill the shortage or did the situation continue as it is and thus the problem worsened?

Some experts said that Kuwait's need to get rid of this permanent crisis by building new generators and production plants that will serve the country in the future despite the urban expansion, and do not cost more than KD 150 million. Has this been taken into account?

What the State spends on subsidizing electricity alone can be saved by privatizing this sector, similar to what countries around the world do; meaning that the consumer is an owner, as the case with cooperative societies.

This reduces many of the burdens on public finances, as companies compete for services. It is a solution that has been proposed for a long time, considering that the current situation continues to revolve in a vicious circle. It is as if the crisis is emerging from the present and is not chronic, and the solutions are patchwork due to the failure to address the root causes of the disease.

Your Highness the Prime Minister, once the Council of Ministers realizes the geographical nature of Kuwait, and that the solutions must be realistic; there is no need for programmed power cuts or exploitation and blackmail that local agents do in this area which, unfortunately, applies to all sectors of the State.

This is why our issues remain pending. Electricity, water, and other basic needs cannot wait in a wealthy country like Kuwait, which has the capabilities to be immune from all these crises.

Finally, Your Highness the Prime Minister, Kuwait needs 3,000 megawatts. This amount exists, but it is idle due to the lack of maintenance of the turbines that produce it, while such maintenance costs KD 140 million. However, none of the ministers who passed

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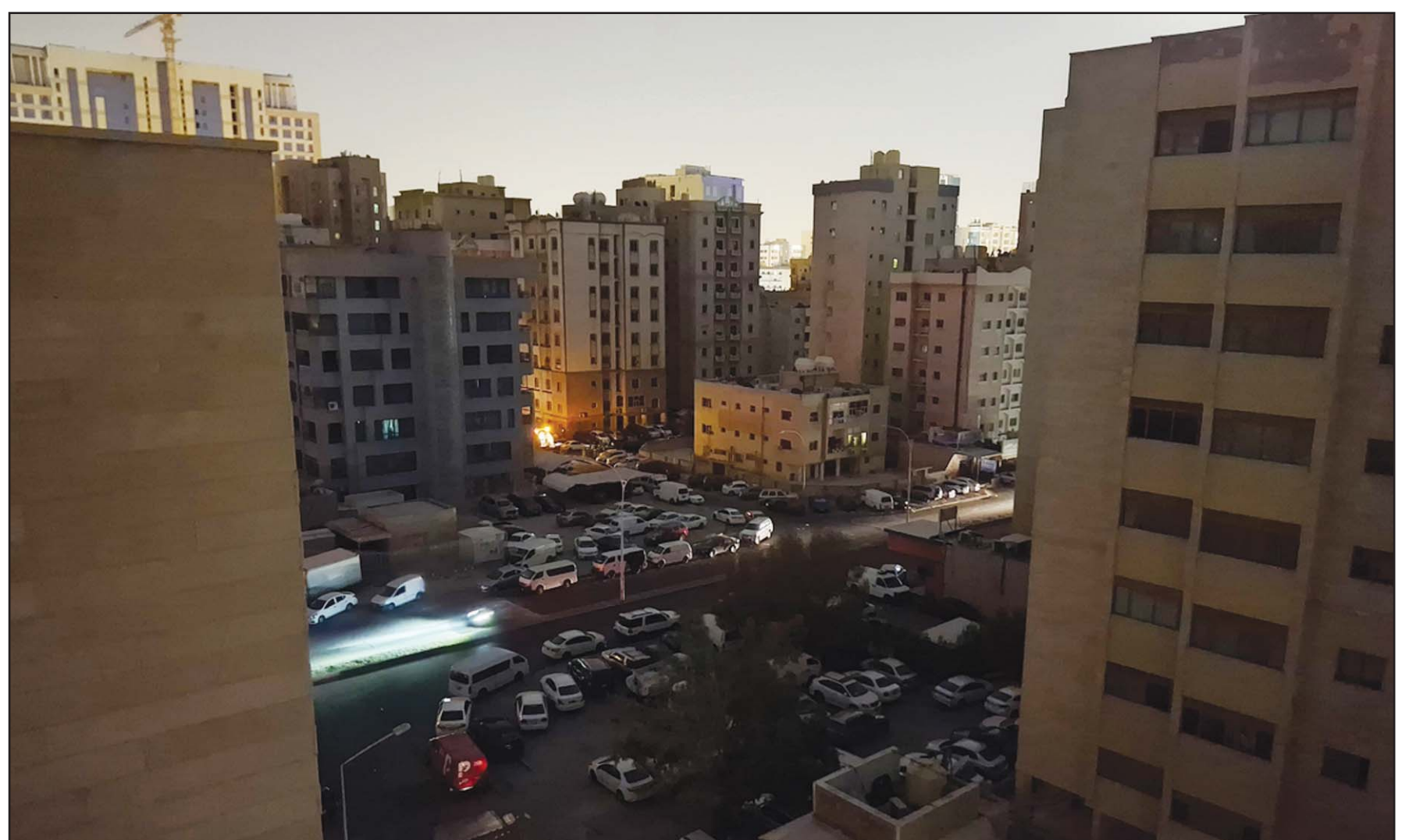
Kuwait Crown Prince to host citizens on Monday

KUWAIT CITY, June 22, (KUNA): The Amiri Diwan on Saturday relayed greetings of 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 to the citizens. The Amiri Diwan declared that His Highness the Crown

Prince would receive citizens on Monday between 7:30 a.m. and 9:30 p.m. at the residence of the gracious Al-Sabah Family at Bayan Palace.

Power interruption rattles Kuwait's agriculture sector



Residents of Hawally navigate through a power outage that struck the area at 3 am on Friday.

Photo by Rezk Tawfiq

Escalating outages prompt solar energy proposal

By Abdel Nasser Al-Islami

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff and Agencies

KUWAIT CITY, June 22: The repercussions of the programmed power cutoff have started to cast a shadow on the agricultural sector. Kuwait Farmers Union has confirmed that many farms refrigerate their produce to protect them from high temperatures, warning that the programmed power cuts will damage products and

inflict massive losses on their owners.

Vice President of the union Majed Al-Huwaila pointed out that the farmers' losses will be in the millions if the power outage in farms continues. He asserted that electricity is an artery for everyone, especially the agricultural products.

President of the Dairy Producers Union Abdul Hakim Al-Ahmad asked Minister of Electricity, Water and Renewable Energy and Minister of State for Housing Affairs Dr. Mahmoud Boushahri to exclude farms from the planned power cuts.

In a press statement, Al-Ahmad said his appeal stems from the total dependence of farms on electricity for milking cows and refrigeration of produce. "In the event of a power outage, even

for a minute; the milking connections will fall to the ground, and be exposed to pollution and epidemic. Around 25,000 cows produce 250 tons of milk in Sulaiybiya farms daily. The 50 farms operating in Sulaiybiya do not affect the power load monitored and tracked by the ministry, as they have alternatives to power generators. Other sites affect the power load," he argued.

He asserted that the ministry should inform farm owners about the programmed power cut at least two hours in advance in order to prepare electrical alternatives like generators and other,

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NewsWatch

'Stick to facts or face legal action'

KUWAIT CITY, June 22, (KUNA): The Ministry of Information has urged the media and the press to abstain from publishing rumors and false information.

The assistant undersecretary for the press, publishing and printing at the ministry, Lafi Al-Subaiee, called on all media outlets to adhere to professional norms and remain keen on credibility and national interests.

Some visual, readable and electronic outlets have recently broadcast false news about some measures taken by ministries and government departments, he said, indicating that legal action could be taken against such offenses.

The offenders will be submitted, without warning, to the information offenses committee to take legal action.

Kuwait recoups KD 2.08mn in irregular staff payments

KUWAIT CITY, June 22, (KUNA): The Ministry of Education has retrieved KD 2.08 million (USD 6.5 million) that had been irregularly paid to staff and workers, Minister of Education Dr. Adel Al-Adwani announced on Saturday.

Dr. Al-Adwani, also the Minister of Higher Education and Scientific Research, said in a statement that these sums had been reclaimed in the last quarter of the fiscal year 2023-2024, adhering to circulars by

the Ministry of Finance and the Civil Service Commission to tighten auditing on state funds.

He affirmed the ministry's adherence to the financial overseeing on all transactions, and commitment to apply the bylaws equally to all personnel for sake of protecting the homeland resources. He lauded the personnel in the financial sector for their efforts that helped in slashing expenditures and speeding up the tasks.

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Other Voices

World cannot afford another Gaza

By António Guterres
Secretary-General of the United Nations

I felt compelled today to voice my profound concerns about escalation between Israel and Hezbollah along the Blue Line.

Escalation in continued exchanges of fire. Escalation in bellicose rhetoric from both sides as if an all-out war was imminent.

The risk for the conflict in the Middle East to widen is real -- and must be avoided.

One rash move -- could trigger a catastrophe that goes far beyond the border, and frankly, beyond imagination.

Let's be clear: The people of the region and the people of the world cannot afford Lebanon to become another Gaza.

On both sides of the Blue Line, many lives have already been lost, tens of thousands of people have been displaced, and homes and livelihoods have been destroyed.

Bushfires sparked by explosions are further devastating communities and the environment.

Unexploded ordnance and remnants of war litter the landscape.

These pose additional threats to people in both Israel and Lebanon and to United Nations and humanitarian personnel.

The parties must urgently recommit to the full implementation of Security Council resolution 1701



Guterres

and immediately return to a cessation of hostilities.

Civilians must be protected. Children, journalists and medical workers should never be targeted. And displaced communities must be able to return to their homes.

The world must say loudly and clearly: immediate de-escalation is not only possible -- it is essential. There is no military solution.

Further military escalation will only guarantee more suffering, more devastation to communities in Lebanon and Israel, and more potentially catastrophic consequences for the region.

It is time for reason and rationality. It is time for practical and pragmatic engagement by the parties to the diplomatic and political avenues available to them.

For our part, the United Nations is actively engaging to promote peace, security and stability, in line with Security Council Resolution 1701.

UN peacekeepers -- UNIFIL -- are on the ground working to de-escalate tensions and help prevent miscalculation in an extremely challenging environment. I deeply appreciate their service.

The cessation of hostilities and progress toward a permanent ceasefire is the only durable solution. The United Nations fully supports diplomatic efforts to end the violence, restore stability and avoid even greater human suffering in a region that has seen far too much.

And we do so as we continue to press for an immediate humanitarian ceasefire in Gaza, the immediate and unconditional release of the hostages and a real pathway to a two-State solution.

Thank you.

Prayer Timings

Fajr 03:14 Asr 15:24
Sunrise .. 04:49 Maghrib .. 18:51
Zohr 11:50 Isha 20:23

Local

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

Weather

Expected weather for next 24 hrs:

By Day: Very hot and relatively humid over coastal areas with light variable wind to southeasterly wind, with speeds of 08-32 km/h.
By Night: Hot to rather hot and

humid especially over coastal areas with light to moderate southeasterly wind to light variable wind, with speeds of 08-28 km/h.

Station	Max Exp	Min Rec
Kuwait City	48	37

Kuwait Airport	49	38
Abdaly	50	32
Jahra	50	38
Salmiyah	46	36
Nuwaisib	48	32
Wafra	49	36

Panel asked to scrutinize recommendations linked to contractual violations

Committee formed to probe Kuwait Int'l Airport project issues

By Mohammed Ghanem

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, June 22: Acting Undersecretary of the Ministry of Public Works, Eid Al-Rashidi, has issued an administrative decision mandating the formation of an investigation committee to examine the recommendations submitted by the fact-finding report on the Kuwait International Airport (T2) project and related facilities.

The report was initially compiled under Ministerial Resolution No. (20) of 2020 and headed by Ahmed Al-Saleh, Assistant Undersecretary for the Planning and Training Sector.

The decision outlines the committee's authority to investigate the reasons behind the non-completion of activating reserve items, critical for adhering to project

timelines.

It also focuses particularly on failures in contractor and consultant coordination that impacted timely activation.

Moreover, the committee has been asked to scrutinize recommendations involving contractual violations related to consulting services for the project.

This includes evaluating decisions to select consulting offices based on pricing criteria, potentially excluding lower-bid offices from contract consideration.

Moreover, the committee will review the procedural integrity of new consulting contracts managed by the Project Management Office (PMO) overseeing the airport development. This administrative move underscores efforts to ensure accountability and operational efficiency in major infrastructure projects vital to Kuwait's development goals.

Ambassador Byung-ha's impact on Kuwaiti-S. Korean ties hailed

Dean of Diplomatic Corps praises outgoing ambassador

By Fares Al-Abdan

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, June 22: Dean of the Diplomatic Corps and Ambassador of Tajikistan Dr. Zubaidov praised the work of the outgoing South Korean Ambassador to Kuwait Chung Byung-ha since the latter assumed the position on June 5, 2021.

Zubaidov made this statement at a farewell ceremony he held on the occasion of the end of Ambassador Chung Byung-ha's tenure in Kuwait recently, in the presence of a large number of heads of diplomatic missions.

Chung Byung-ha worked hard to strengthen bilateral cooperation, deepen economic relations, and expand cultural exchange between South Korea and the State of Kuwait during his tenure.

Consultations

Zubaidov pointed out: "Ambassador Chung Byung-ha resumed bilateral policy consultations that were delayed for five years due to coronavirus. He succeeded in organizing a meeting between the Prime Minister of South Korea and the then HH the Crown Prince of Kuwait in 2023."

He explained that Ambassador Chung Byung-ha contributed to strengthening cooperation between the two countries in the fields of energy and construction; which was embodied in the successful completion of the clean fuel project and the Zour refinery project, where South Korean companies played a pivotal role. He also expanded economic cooperation to include the sectors of renewable energy, smart agriculture and healthcare.

He noted that Chung Byung-ha hosted street food festivals, Ambassador's Cup Taekwondo competitions, and South Korean movie nights to enhance the understanding of South Korean culture in Kuwait. In November, he opened the King Sejong Korean Language Institute, which has so far provided the opportunity for more than 200 Kuwaitis to study the South Korean language, he added.

He continued: "This year marks the 45th anniversary of diplomatic relations and the 60th anniversary of energy cooperation between South Korea and Kuwait. South Korea sent the right person to Kuwait to celebrate this anniversary and promote a stronger relationship between the two countries."

He affirmed his appreciation and gratitude for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, led by Foreign Affairs Minister Abdullah Al-Yahya, for the cooperation and facilities provided to the diplomatic family in Kuwait, noting that the tasks of ambassadors are easy, because all doors are open to them and their communities.

In an emotional speech, Chung Byung-ha stated: "Now it is my turn to leave. I feel grateful to the government and people of Kuwait, and to all of you for the support and friendship you have provided me. I feel deeply indebted to all of you for inspiring me to become a better diplomat. Indeed, we represent our countries, but I believe there must be something more between us. Over the past three years, I have reaffirmed that Kuwait is a country full of people with good hearts, full of optimism and potential, so I wish the State of Kuwait continuous peace and prosperity."

FM receives phone call from US Sec. of State

KUWAIT CITY, June 22, (KUNA): Minister of Foreign Affairs Abdullah Al-Yahya received on Friday a phone call from US Secretary of State Antony Blinken and the two discussed bilateral relations, and developments in the region, namely the crisis in Gaza Strip.

A statement from the foreign ministry said the two sides also delved into boosting joint cooperation in various fields.



KUNA photo
Minister of Finance and Minister of State for Economic Affairs and Investment, Dr. Anwar Al-Mudhaf, meets with Ambassador of the Republic of Germany Hans-Christian Freiherr von Reibnitz.



KUNA photo
Participants in the course organized by the NATO Defense College, which included a number of ambassadors, including the Kuwaiti Ambassador to Belgium, Nawaf Al-Enezi.

NDC organizes special course for envoys, top officers

NATO commends Kuwaiti partnership, support

KUWAIT CITY, June 22, (KUNA): Deputy Secretary-General of NATO Mircea Geoana praised the State of Kuwait's hosting of the NATO Regional Center and the Istanbul Cooperation Initiative countries and the support they provide to the center.

This came after the end of the special course for ambassadors and senior officers organized by the NATO Defense College (NDC) in the Italian capital, Rome, which included several ambassadors, including the Kuwaiti Ambassador to Belgium and the head of its missions to the EU and NATO, Nawaf Al-Enezi.

In a statement to KUNA, Al-Enezi said on the conclusion of the session that NATO greatly values the partnership with Kuwait, which has extended over 20 years since Kuwait joined the Istanbul Cooperation Initiative

as the first country.

He indicated that there is existing cooperation between Kuwait and NDC through joint teaching in the fields of military sciences, training and exchange of expertise.

He added that the course organized by NDC, which discussed the risks and opportunities available in the fields of cybersecurity, artificial intelligence, and geopolitical challenges at a global level, comes within the framework of NATO countries preparations for the upcoming NATO summit in Washington, coinciding with the seventy-fifth anniversary of establishing NATO.

The upcoming NATO summit in Washington will take a decision to appoint a new Secretary-General of NATO.

Dr Al-Otaibi launches new heart, liver transplant programs

'Kuwait leading GCC region in organ donations from brain-dead patients'

By Marwa Al-Bahrawi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, June 22: Dr. Turki Al-Otaibi, Head of the Department of Kidney Diseases and Transplantation at the Kuwait Center for Kidney Diseases and Transplantation, and President of the Organ Transplantation Society, highlighted Kuwait's pioneering role in organ transplantation.

In an exclusive interview with Al-Seyassah, Dr. Al-Otaibi announced the launch of a new heart transplant program and the reactivation of the liver transplant program, expanding Kuwait's capabilities in organ transplantation.

Dr. Al-Otaibi emphasized that Kuwait not only leads in organ transplantation within the Gulf but also ranks prominently among Middle Eastern countries.

"Specifically, Kuwait stands out for its high number of organ donations from brain-dead patients relative to its population," he said.

He also cautioned about the prevalence of chronic diseases among kidney patients, particularly diabetes, which accounts for 50% of kidney disease cases.



Photo by Rizk Taufiq
Dr. Turki Al-Otaibi talking to Al-Seyassah.

Dr. Al-Otaibi noted that 30% of diabetics are at risk of developing kidney disease, a condition affecting 10% of the global population.

These developments underscore Kuwait's commitment to enhancing its organ transplantation system and addressing critical health challenges, including chronic diseases impacting kidney health.

Nomination of citizens set to be announced

Philippines team arrives to discuss domestic workers

By Fares Al-Abdan

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff and Agencies

KUWAIT CITY, June 22: The head of the Union of Domestic Workers' Offices, Khaled Al-Dakhnan, revealed to Al-Seyassah that a delegation from the Philippines, led by the Philippine Undersecretary of the Ministry of Labor is in Kuwait and will hold meetings with Kuwaiti officials regarding the domestic worker issue.

Al-Dakhnan expressed optimism about the situation concerning Filipino workers, noting signs of progress and a potential breakthrough after a prolonged period of suspended recruitment that had a direct impact on the labor market.

He emphasized that these meetings will finalize the necessary arrangements to resume the recruitment of Filipino domestic workers, which is seen as a positive development for both countries.

This initiative reflects ongoing efforts to address labor market dynamics and regulatory frameworks concerning migrant workers, aiming to facilitate mutually beneficial agreements between Kuwait and the Philippines.

First batch of nomination: The first batch of citizens nominated for public sector jobs will be announced on Monday, reports Al-Anba daily.

Sources revealed that the first batch of nominees consists of more than 3,000 citizens; affirming the next batches consisting of the same number of citizens will be announced in the remaining days of June.

Sources said this step was taken after the Civil Service Commission (CSC) added new job titles in different specializations; such as Industrial Engineering, Chemical Engineering, Petroleum Engineering, technical diplomas, holders of high school certificates and lower.

Sources asserted that the nomination of applicants is in line with the principles of justice and transparency to give them suitable jobs in public institutions.

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Mobile groceries issue: The Technical Committee in the Municipal Council, headed by council member Munira Al-Amir, will discuss on Tuesday the request of the owners of mobile groceries to allocate areas for their business, reports Al-Anba daily.

The agenda of the committee also includes the following:

■ Proposal of council member Fahad Al-Abduljader regarding parking areas in schools and the establishment of markets for local produce in every governorate.

■ Proposal of Al-Amir to specify a unified architectural design for public buildings.

■ Request of the Ministry of Communication to allot a space for the third fiber glass network in Subbiya.

■ Proposal of Chairman of the council Abdullah Al-Mehri to amend decision no. 38/2002 on numbering the blocks in Kuwait City.

■ Proposal of Al-Abduljader on buying the houses Block Five-Khaitan.

■ Request of Kuwait Lawyers Association to suspend the issuance of licenses to the law firms in private residential areas.

Other Voices

A poignant talk about the disaster

By Ahmed alsarraf

The people of Kuwait have been known, for many years, for their efforts to provide relief to the afflicted, feed the hungry, and shelter the homeless, and the names of many great philanthropists who emerged in times of distress shine throughout the history of Kuwait, whether during the year of the hull and other times, or the period of Saddam's invasion and occupation.

Kuwait, like other rich countries, such as America, is famous, with a huge difference, for being one of the countries with the largest number of "charity" organizations and the most giving, but its giving has reached the far more than the near, because far-reaching charity work is "often far from the eyes of regulatory authorities."

The recent tragic Mangaf fire disaster occurred, in which more than a hundred "people" were injured, half of whom died, revealing unknown circumstances, some of which must be highlighted!

Immediately after the tragic accident occurred, charities rushed to obtain a license allowing them to collect donations to relieve the families of the fire victims. Its behavior was surprising, as it basically refuses to provide any kind of assistance to those who do not belong to the same religion and sect as those who run it, since the majority of those who died or were injured are non-Muslims, and therefore their "dismay" may not be for good, but rather to obtain the tempting percentage of "those in charge of it," which amounts to 12.5%, it is often the goal, and the Kuwaiti goodness reaching four corners of the universe is a result of that percentage, and not the primary goal!

The deduction rate currently stands at 12.5% (i.e. one-eighth), and for more than half a century it was 20% (i.e. one-fifth), and it represents the lifeline of religious-political groups, inside and outside the country!

Hours after the Mangaf fire accident occurred, the news was reported by various Western media outlets, mostly because of the large number of victims.

However, the internal coverage of the horrific incident was not on the scale of the tragedy, and indeed shameful, as it did not take into account the loss of fifty "lives", and similar number of injuries.

Families have their sole breadwinner, and there was no coverage in the darkest times, especially in the moments when the eyes and hearts of hundreds of thousands of families, whose members work in Kuwait, were watching on television screens, waiting, with terrible anxiety, for news about the fate of their loved ones.

The neglect was painful, and it would be different if the victims were not so poor and destitute, and our behavior harmed our reputation locally and internationally, as there was no live television coverage, no pictures of transporting the bodies, and no arrangements that showed the horror of the tragic incident, but the Royal Initiative saved the situation by announcing the Amiri Diwan's issuance of the orders to expedite the transfer of the bodies of the ill-fated workers to their countries, in addition to disbursing immediate financial compensation to the families of the deceased and the injured.

Thanks to the various civil defense agencies and the ministries of Health and Interior, for the huge efforts they made to reduce the number of casualties and save what could be saved.

Thanks go to the Minister of the Interior for his keenness to follow legal methods in referring those who were negligent and those responsible for the incident to the investigation authorities. His action gives us confidence that we are still in a state of law, and not a form, as some oppressed and complicated people wanted it to be. Kuwait has always been distinguished by its leadership and democracy; admired by those near and far.

The incident revealed the extent of negligence, often intentional, by all state agencies, which are responsible for monitoring the conditions of buildings, and it was clearly demonstrated that they often turned a blind eye to the lack of many of the safety requirements and procedures followed in any public housing.

How can it be accepted that the municipality, with its various departments, the fire brigade, and the Public Authority for Manpower, make periodic visits to the offices of our companies, and not do the same to hundreds of illegal buildings, crowded with thousands of workers, whose dilapidated conditions?!

These parties must be held responsible, not just the owners of the violating buildings, or those who exploited them. Therefore, the problem is with us and not with what some ignorant, sophisticated people claim that democracy is the cause of all our problems. This is nonsense after all.

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'Proactive measures in risk management vital'

"THE Kuwaiti society has responded to the Mangaf fire incident with a mixed bag of emotions and reflections. On one hand, there was deep sympathy for the victims and those injured, coupled with frustration over the recurrence of such incidents without lasting solutions from the government. There was also a strong desire for immediate and comprehensive actions to address these ongoing dangers and prevent future occurrences," columnist **Dr Muhammad Hussein Al-Dallal** wrote for **Al-Qabas** daily.

"The National Assembly and other oversight bodies have a critical role in highlighting risks to government institutions, urging their mitigation, and ensuring accountability.

"In the absence of the National Assembly, the responsibility to confront these risks now falls solely on the government, necessitating proactive measures in risk management. This includes anticipating future challenges, analyzing risks, and implementing preventive strategies across various sectors such as infrastructure, cybersecurity and public safety.

"The seriousness with which the Ministry of Interior approached recent issues, including the Mangaf fire and traffic safety, was positively received by the public.

"However, questions remain about the sustainability of these efforts. Will reforms endure beyond immediate crises, or will they fade as new priorities emerge? It's crucial that crisis responses are part of a broader strategic framework rather than temporary fixes dependent on individual leaders' enthusiasm or tenure.

"The strategic planning, especially concerning crises, demands continuity and a long-term approach; issues like demographic challenges, traffic safety, and labor recruitment require consistent strategic plans that transcend individual leadership changes. This ensures ongoing monitoring, evaluation, and adjustment of goals to achieve sustainable outcomes.

"Effective strategic planning also necessitates robust oversight mechanisms, both internal and external. Regular performance reviews and audits by entities like the Audit Bureau are essential to maintaining accountability and ensuring that strategic objectives are met over time.

"In conclusion, Kuwait faces significant challenges that demand sustained strategic planning and implementation, independent of short-term political cycles. By adopting a proactive approach and ensuring continuity in addressing these challenges, the government can better safeguard the interests and safety of its citizens."

Also:

"The devastating fire in Mangaf, which tragically claimed the lives of 49 expatriate workers and endangered many others, has deeply affected Kuwaiti society," columnist **Prof. Dr. Bahija Bebehani** wrote for **Al-Qabas** daily.

"The incident occurred in a six-story building where over 200 workers were present, exceeding the building's capacity. Investigations revealed hazardous conditions including flammable partitions and numerous gas cylinders.

"Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahd Al-Yousef, present at the scene, swiftly issued directives to Kuwait Municipality and the Violation Removal Committee. His instructions emphasized immediate and stringent action against violations at expatriate workers' housing across residential areas.

"Compliance with building capacity limits, maintenance of clear corridors and emergency exits, and installation of fire safety equipment were highlighted as crucial for ensuring housing safety and security.

"Key questions were raised regarding the availability and proficiency of firefighting equipment, electrical safety, and compliance with fire detection systems and safety standards.

"The minister stressed the importance of regular training for guards, workers, and residents on fire safety protocols, including the use of extinguishers -- a responsibility that extends to building owners and leasing companies.

"While the government has established regulations for workers' housing, challenges persist due to non-compliance by some building owners. Minister Al-Yousef's firm leadership promises strict enforcement of laws to prevent future tragedies, ensuring accountability for violators.

"In conclusion, Kuwait mourns the loss caused by this fire and recognizes the urgent need for stringent adherence to safety regulations in all residential buildings.

"The government's proactive measures and commitment to enforcement under Minister Al-Yousef's direction aim to prevent such disasters and protect the lives of both citizens and expatriates."

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"Consider, O people of understanding ... Not long ago, they were cele-

brating. People were celebrating their success in the National Assembly with them. Thousands of revelers gathered, issuing fiery statements and shouting their objection to the appointment of this or that person to the ministry. They were threatening and intimidating others, even before one of them could take the oath and get about his work amid public cheers and applause. The rational person lost his mind!" columnist **Talal Al-Saeed** wrote for **Al-Seyassah** daily.

"Then, they did not remain in the 'Islamic state', as they disbanded after the issuance of the dissolution decree. Very few people said to one of them: 'I am exalted,' even if they sympathized with them. This sympathy is from a hidden or shy side and we alternate those days among the people.

"The problem of problems among the members who finally succeeded is that the Assembly was dissolved before it convened. They lost direction and some of them did not know, except the very intelligent among them. They did not know who they were dealing with or the person who came to power and the extent of his strength, ability and courage in making the decision.

"The two previous governments made the same mistake. The ministers and new members forgot that they are in the time of Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad. This time is completely different from previous times. This is what we know and see.

"They were supposed to avoid a clash, as they decided at a very bad time to confront someone who was much stronger than them and more capable of making the difficult decision.

"The thing that escaped their minds is that the Kuwaiti street is not with them. By nature, people are with the strong. They do not take refuge with the weak. They did not find anyone to support them, go out to the street for them or even say to one of them: 'I will exalt.'

"The two previous governments, which departed without regret, also found that they did not appreciate the situation, and did not realize that they were facing a new era. One of them sought to swim against the current and drowned, while the other bet on the Kuwaiti street and lost.

"People are always with the one who stood and time never goes back. The 'Monday Diwaniya' will not return with what it had and what it deserved. There will be no 'Dignity of the Nation' marches due to which Kuwait was almost lost. There will be no 'we will not allow you' speech, which was the reason for the imprisonment of those who launched and repeated it!

"The dignity of the nation lies in the people rallying around their leader. The genuine offices are those that are open to hearing the citizen's complaints and solving his problems, not causing new problems."

"It is our turn to tell them: 'We will not allow you' to destroy our country ... Good."

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"When the State rises... What happened in the Mangaf building fire disaster, in which innocent people were killed as a result of negligence, and the lack of previous and ongoing oversight by the responsible authorities due to negligence and administrative laxity, is known to everyone, because reforming corruption requires time and the right decisions that serve the goal," columnist Major General **M. Faisal Al-Jazzaf** wrote for **Al-Seyassah** daily.

"The presence of a man like First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defense and Interior Sheikh Fahd Al-Yousef at the scene of the incident, making corrective decisions with utter determination did not happen before. Regardless of who did not approve such direct measures, he is a man who shouldered his responsibilities when the catastrophe occurred. He proved that he is an official, statesman and field commander.

"This is what we hope for from officials. Kuwait needs such a model, because it has been missing for years. The situation today does not expect slackness or retreat in making decisions to rectify errors. This is what His Highness the Amir, may Allah protect him, announced -- that there is no tolerance in the application of the law on every official who abuses his powers.

"Kuwait is not a pastime, but a homeland that must be preserved. The entitlements are many. Consolidating the principle of enforcing the law is the right path and approach. Holding the negligent people accountable is a principle established by His Highness the Amir, may Allah protect him. His stated there is no place for the corrupt and the negligent.

"The homeland is above everyone. Every citizen is a guardian. The reform process is a long way to go, but stability must be maintained to preserve the State's capabilities. The Kuwaiti people are hoping for this under their leadership.

"We ask Allah to protect Kuwait and its people from all forms of harm under the leadership of His Highness the Amir and His Highness the Crown Prince, may Allah protect them.

"May Allah have mercy on our righteous martyrs."

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



Al-Jarida photo

The duo with the seized contraband.

40-kg hashish, 2,000 narcotic pills seized

Security forces foil drug smuggling bid

KUWAIT CITY, June 22: The Directorate-General for Drugs Control General, in collaboration with the General Administration of the Coast Guard, foiled a smuggling attempt by sea, and seized approximately 40 kilograms of narcotic hashish and 2,000 Captagon pills, reports **Al-Jarida** daily.

The daily added, two individuals involved in the operation have been

arrested and have been referred to the Public Prosecution for interrogation.

The Ministry of Interior affirms its ongoing commitment to combat drug trafficking and protect society from these harmful activities. It urges the public to support security efforts by reporting any suspicious activities or incidents to the Emergency Hotline (112) and the DGDC Hotline at 1884141.

27 nabbed as Mol busts gang in KD 120mn laundering operation

Power supply to 11 properties cut, 206 warnings issued

KUWAIT CITY, June 22, (Agencies): The Ministry of Interior's statement said the State Security Apparatus detained a gang of 27 members including six citizens on charges of laundering sums valued at more than KD 120 million.

The suspects have been referred to the public prosecution, it said, indicating that they have used the local banking channels to conceal the funds and their sources.

Warning about bank links: The Ministry of Interior has advised citizens and expatriates to refrain from responding to job offers, which require sending or receiving money through bank links, reports **Al-Shahed** daily.

The ministry stressed that individuals involved in such activities will be held accountable for money laundering and fraud.

Minister's tour: First Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Defense, and Minister of Interior, Sheikh Fahad Yousuf Al-Sabah, conducted a field tour of the shelter center for violators of residency and labor law, and those holding Article 20 work permit and were arrested either working for others and for various other reasons, reports **Al-Seyassah** daily.

During his visit, he inspected the security measures that have been implemented and assessed the living conditions of the residents of the center.

Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousef also visited various military and security installations such as the Martyr Armed/35 Brigade of the Land Forces, the Ammunition Camp of the Logistic and Catering Command of the Kuwait Army, the Patriot site in the Air Forces, the Mohammad Al-Ahmed Marine Base, as well as the Al-Salmi and Al-Nuwaiseeb land borders under the Kuwait General Administration for Customs (KGAC). He also

visited several police stations and firefighting centers in Ahmadi Governorate. Sheikh Fahad looked into the level of readiness, the methods adopted for carrying out the missions, and the work system during holidays.

He praised the high capabilities of the officers and individuals, underlining the fact that they are aware of the major national responsibility they hold. Sheikh Fahad urged them to go the extra mile for achieving the utmost professional level and acquiring the highest technical capabilities and field experiences by participating in joint training exercises.

Municipality issues 206 warnings: During the past week, the Engineering Audit and Follow-up Department of the Kuwait Municipality in Al-Ahmedi Governorate conducted tours to oversee compliance with regulations, reports **Al-Seyassah** daily.

Their efforts led to significant actions: the electricity supply was cut off at 11 properties due to violations, and 206 warnings were issued for offenses such as basement use and encroachment on state property.

In response to these measures, 13 real estate owners in Mangaf and Mahboula promptly rectified the violations directed at their properties.

These actions reflect the department's commitment to enforcing regulations and ensuring adherence to building codes and property laws in the region.

DGFD closed 55 stores: The Public Relations and Media Department of the Directorate-General of Fire Department (DGFD) said Thursday, the department administratively closed 55 stores and establishments across various governorates, reports **Al-Seyassah** daily.

Over 37K citations issued

Delivery motorbikes banned on streets between 11 am to 4 pm

By **Munif Naif**

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, June 22: The General Traffic Department (GTD) in the Ministry of Interior has disclosed that patrol and traffic officers have been instructed to issue traffic violation citations to delivery motorcycles plying through the roads from 11:00 am to 4:00 pm starting from Sunday, reports **Al-Anba** daily quoting sources.

Sources said the surveillance cameras will monitor such violations, clarifying that the decision to ban the delivery motorcycles during the abovementioned hours is a humanitarian gesture aimed at protecting delivery workers from the direct heat of the Sun.

□ □ □

37,831 traffic citations issued: Under the guidance and instructions of Assistant Undersecretary for Traffic and Operations Affairs at the Ministry of Interior Major General Youssef Al-Khadda, the General Traffic Department (GTD) officers issued 37,831 traffic violation citations within a week.

The weekly statistics of GTD revealed that aside from the issuance of the abovementioned traffic violation citations, the officers also impounded 101 vehicles and 110 motorcycles; while 47 people were referred to the traffic police for committing serious violations. This is in addition to the arrest of 26 juveniles for driving without a license and they were referred to the Juvenile Prosecution. The statistics also showed that seven people in an abnormal condition were arrested, as well as three people suspected of possessing drugs and 12 people wanted by law for involvement in various cases, while 55 wanted vehicles were seized.

□ □ □

2 reckless motorist held: Jahra police officers arrested two reckless motorists who were referred to the traffic police, while their vehicles were impounded.



Al-Khadda



Sheikh Fahad



WEDDINGS, UPTO 140



AUDITORIUM



BUFFET



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Minister urges citizens to report misappropriation of public funds through official channels

'Social media not ideal place to raise corruption issues to address them'

Al-Kandari sounds 'cautious' note amid domestic stability

Calls for unity as regional, global crises intensify

KUWAIT CITY, June 22: Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs, and former Minister of State for National Assembly Affairs, Issa Al-Kandari, confirmed that regional and global events require caution and fortification of the home front, in addition to ensuring the co-

hesion of the Gulf system, reports Al-Jarida daily.

Al-Kandari stated on his account on the "X" platform today, Friday, that the summer heat is no less intense than the volatile situations engulfing the world. These include the events in Gaza, the mutual threats between Hezbollah and the Zionist entity, the sudden visit of Russian President Vladimir Putin to North Korea, his signing of a defense agreement with North Korea, South Korea's protest against it, and the timing of his visit to Vietnam.

Al-Kandari pointed out that America and Europe seized Russian sovereign assets and used the profits for the benefit of Ukraine, and that Putin accused the West of stealing from Russia in this regard. He also mentioned the border skirmishes between the two Koreas, the British King's pessimism about current global events, the escalating confrontations in the disputed maritime region between China and the Philippines, the United States' objection to China, and the West's accusation that Beijing is supplying weapons to Russia in its war with Ukraine.

These events, he emphasized, necessitate paying attention, taking precautions, fortifying our internal front, and maintaining the cohesion of our Arab Gulf system. The situation requires vigilance, leaving no room for fragmentation, diaspora, or division among us.

KUWAIT CITY, June 22, (KUNA): The Minister of Social Affairs, Family and Child Affairs, and Minister of State for Youth Affairs, Dr. Amthal Al-Huwaila, stated today, Saturday, that social media is not the ideal place to raise corruption issues or address them.

Al-Huwaila added, in a statement to the Kuwait News Agency (KUNA), that "social media is a space where serious and absurd things mix, making it difficult to differentiate and achieve the desired positive change. It may harm the country's reputation without any basis and expose the proponents of provocative matters to legal accountability."

She emphasized that there is a shared responsibility among all those who love this country to serve it and preserve its capabilities. She called on everyone with information or allegations about suspicions of corruption or misappropriation of public funds related to any sectors under her supervision to communicate through the announced official channels and submit supporting documents.

Al-Huwaila explained that the papers and documents would be studied professionally and seriously by specialized committees in complete confidentiality, and legal measures would be taken regarding them. She stressed her confidence in the honorable people of Kuwait as partners in change, giving, and advice for the benefit of the nation.



Picture shows Tajik women wearing hijab. (Inset) H.E. Zubaidullah Zubaidov, the Ambassador of Tajikistan to Kuwait.

Tajikistan envoy denies reports of hijab ban, rubbishes rumors

KUWAIT CITY, June 22: The Ambassador of Tajikistan to Kuwait, HE Zubaidullah Zubaidov, dismissed circulating misinformation about his country's stance on religious practices, clarifying that Tajikistan respects religious values and Islamic culture, contrary to rumors of a hijab ban and restrictions on Eid celebrations, reports Al-Qabas daily.

Ambassador Zubaidov emphasized that Tajikistan, with a population comprising up to 98 percent Muslims, does not prohibit wearing the hijab.

He explained that while Tajikistan has enacted laws regarding clothing, these regulations are designed to preserve traditional conservative Islamic

dress, reflecting the country's cultural norms.

Addressing claims about banning Eid al-Fitr and Eid al-Adha celebrations, Ambassador Zubaidov categorically labeled them as false and slanderous.

He clarified that Tajikistan's legislation aims to safeguard children's rights during these festive occasions when children traditionally move around neighborhoods, exchanging greetings, which occasionally exposes them to risks.

The intent, he stated, is to ensure children's safety while promoting values of humanity and respect for national culture.

Kuwaiti doctoral student innovates VR platform for healthcare professionals

KUWAIT CITY, June 22: In a pioneering scientific achievement, Kuwaiti doctoral student Maryam Al-Mashmoum, from the University of Manchester, has developed an interactive platform using virtual reality (VR) and artificial intelligence (AI) aimed at revolutionizing healthcare practices, reports Al-Qabas daily.

Al-Mashmoum collaborated with Santira, an international scientific journal, to showcase her research project titled "VR MDT," designed to overcome barriers hindering the exchange of medical knowledge due to time constraints and geographical distances. The platform aims to enhance patient care through innovative technological solutions.

Speaking to the daily, Al-Mashmoum explained that VR MDT utilizes generative AI and VR technologies to host medical meetings. It incorporates features like two- and three-dimensional digital imaging to facilitate disease identification and discussions on patients' medical histories. An AI-supported avatar enhances interaction, allowing specialists worldwide to collaborate effectively regard-



Maryam Al-Mashmoum, Kuwaiti doctoral student

less of their physical locations.

The platform enables healthcare professionals to draw diagrams, take notes, and share insights seamlessly within an interactive virtual environment. Al-Mashmoum highlighted that VR MDT not only streamlines the exchange of medical expertise but also supports comprehensive patient care strategies.

Al-Mashmoum achieved the "associate" degree after successfully passing the fellowship exam, having previously contributed as an assistant professor in various master's programs at the University of Manchester.



Al-Kandari

Positive momentum in diplomatic engagements

Austria ambassador commends Kuwait as vital regional partner, cultural bridge

KUWAIT CITY, June 22: Austria's Ambassador to Kuwait, H.E. Marian Alexander WRBA, has highlighted Kuwait's pivotal role as a major political partner and a crucial mediator in the Middle East, underscoring the deepening bilateral ties between the two nations, reports Al-Qabas daily.

As he nears the end of his tenure, the Ambassador emphasized the alignment of visions on various regional and international issues, marking Kuwait as an essential point of contact in the Gulf region.

The Austrian envoy praised Kuwait's significance as a potential partner for regional business and a gateway to Iraq, noting mutual support in international roles, particularly Kuwait's appreciation for Austria's support within OPEC. He described the relationship between the two countries as dynamic and growing, encompassing political, economic, and commercial cooperation.

Addressing geopolitical challenges in the Middle East, the Ambassador stressed the importance of preventing further escalation and promoting stability and prosperity. He highlighted the role of diplomacy in achieving sustainable peace, expressing Austria's readiness to collaborate closely with Kuwait in this endeavor.

The Ambassador recalled recent high-level visits and political consultations between Kuwait and Austria, affirming their value in strengthening bilateral relations. He anticipated forthcoming mutual visits in 2025, underscoring the positive momentum in diplomatic engagements.

In terms of tourism, the envoy acknowledged Kuwait as an important source of visitors to Austria, particularly during the summer months. He noted the high demand among Kuwaiti tourists and highlighted recent facilitations in the Schengen visa process, which enhances year-round travel opportunities between Kuwait and Austria.

On economic ties, Ambassador WRBA noted the robust trade relations between Austria and Kuwait, emphasizing Austria's exports of machinery, vehicles, and other



H.E. Marian Alexander WRBA – Austria's Ambassador to Kuwait

goods to Kuwait. He pointed out potential areas for closer cooperation in wastewater treatment, healthcare, and renewable energy, where Austrian companies offer world-class expertise. Regarding investments, the ambassador welcomed Kuwaiti investments in Austria, citing a bilateral agreement that ensures a favorable legal framework and fair treatment. He encouraged Kuwaiti investors to explore various sectors in Austria, including real estate, infrastructure, and financial services, benefiting from tax incentives and investment protection.

Highlighting cultural and educational exchanges, Ambassador WRBA praised Kuwait's education system and its role in fostering dialogue and understanding. He expressed admiration for Kuwait's security environment, emphasizing the safety and hospitality that Kuwait offers.

In conclusion, he expressed deep appreciation for his time in Kuwait, emphasizing the warmth of Kuwaiti hospitality and the strong cultural ties between Austria and Kuwait. He reflected on his tenure with fondness, noting Kuwait's strategic importance as a cultural and civilizational gateway in the region.



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KUNA photo
The Kuwait Patient Aid Fund concludes its sacrificial projects by slaughtering 1,013 sacrifices, benefiting 60,000 people in Sudan.

Kuwaiti charity distributes sacrificial meat to 60 thousand people in Sudan

KHARTOUM, June 22, (KUNA): The Kuwaiti Patients Helping Fund Society -- Sudan Branch -- distributed meat to 60,000 people in Sudan this year, the philanthropic association announced on Friday.

This year's sacrificial meat projects have been concluded after slaughtering 292 cows, 195 sheep, and 526 goats, meat of which has been given to more than 60,000 people in the states of Khartoum, Kassala, Al-Jazirah and North Kordofan, Dr.

Mohammad Ali Hajo, the director of programs department at the association said in a statement to KUNA.

The sacrificial meat was distributed to people dwelling at the displaced centers, the sick and injured undergoing treatment at hospitals, medical cadres, and others.

Dr. Abdulmajid Fadlallah, the executive manager, told KUNA that the project has been executed every year, thanking all donors in Kuwait.

Decision garnered widespread support

Kuwait applauds Armenia's recognition of State of Palestine

KUWAIT CITY, June 22, (KUNA): The Ministry of Foreign Affairs said in a statement that it considers the recognition as a positive step that would contribute to achieving what has been stipulated in the relevant Security Council resolutions and the Arab peace initiative as to empowering the Palestinian people to determine their destiny and establish the independent state with the 1967 borders with East Jerusalem as its capital.

It has affirmed the State of Kuwait's stand that calls upon all states to take similar decisions to find a just and comprehensive solution to the Palestinian cause.

Up to 149 states out of 193 that are members of the UN

General Assembly have recognized the State of Palestine.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs on Friday declared that the State of Kuwait acclaims Armenia's official recognition of the State of Palestine.

The Arab League praised Armenia's recent decision to officially recognize the State of Palestine, calling it a courageous move. Secretary-General Ahmad Abulghheit stated in a release that the growing number of countries acknowledging Palestine underscores the international community's stance against prolonged occupation. He emphasized this as a significant step towards establishing Palestine with the 1967 borders, urging other nations to follow suit.

Earlier, Spain, Ireland, Norway, and Slovenia had already recognized Palestine, bringing the tally to 149 nations. The Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) and the Muslim World League (MWL) also welcomed Armenia's decision, viewing it positively in advancing Palestinian empowerment and statehood.

Saudi Arabia echoed approval, highlighting Armenia's action as pivotal for supporting an independent Palestinian state with East Jerusalem as its capital. The Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) Secretary-General Jassem Al-Budaiwi similarly endorsed Armenia's move, urging further international recognition aligned with UN resolu-

tions and the Arab peace initiative.

The Palestinian Presidency welcomed Armenia's recognition as crucial for bilateral relations and regional stability, commending Armenia for its supportive stance toward Palestinian aspirations and international peace efforts. The presidency urged other nations to heed the global consensus and recognize Palestine based on the 1967 borders.

Overall, Armenia's decision to recognize Palestine has garnered widespread support and calls for broader international recognition, reflecting a collective effort towards a just resolution of the Palestinian issue.

Your Highness

Continued from Page 1

through the ministry dared carry out such repair and maintenance works, because of disputes over personal interests in the National Assembly.

Every parliamentarian wanted to run the show for the benefit of his influential master. Investigate this issue and you will find that what we say is true.

We add that when the ministry took action as a result of higher directives, turbines producing 500 megawatts were repaired and they were operated immediately. This happened because they worked under pressure, there is no National Assembly obstructing the solution, and we have an Amir who issues orders and carries out his orders immediately.

Power interruption

Continued from Page 1

because the loss of milk during the power cut will be double as the farmer's work continues 24 hours a day.

He also touched on another issue concerning the farms and their owners – the maintenance of roads leading to the farms and internal roads. He emphasized the suffering of the users of these roads that extend three kilometers and are used by 200 cars and trucks serving the farms. He urged the Public Works Ministry to complete these repairs quickly.

He added: "We want the Ministry of Finance to pay the dues for the fiscal year; because we have not received the budgets for December 2023, January, February and March 2024. The budget of KD5 million covers eight months of the year, while the price of a liter of milk is still 140 fils and the subsidy is 80 fils. It is no secret to those familiar with the conditions of the union that a ton of alfalfa was worth KD90 and it reached KD200. The price of a bag of fodder rose from KD2 to KD4."

Amid the escalating power outages across the country, Municipal Council member Munira Al-Amir has submitted a proposal to find sustainable solutions through solar energy production by citizens, government entities and the private sector, reports Al-Jarida daily.

This initiative seeks to address the country's energy challenges by incentivizing the generation of solar power and its sale to the State.

Al-Amir disclosed that the proposal has three main components. First, it advocates for the incorporation of new regulations stating the requirements and specifications for installing solar panels in government and private buildings within the framework of new construction projects.

Second, it calls for establishing

streamlined processes to license locations for solar energy production units owned by individuals and companies.

Third, initial standards and controls will be set to ensure these projects align with the State's overall structural plan.

She highlighted the significance of Decree No. 57/2022, which facilitates and encourages energy production and sale to the State. She emphasized the need for collaboration with key authorities; particularly the Ministry of Electricity, Water and Renewable Energy; to implement these initiatives effectively.

Regarding recent developments, Al-Amir praised His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah's decision to contract the establishment of a solar energy production field as a pivotal step towards meeting Kuwait's energy needs. She underscored the urgency of diversifying energy sources amidst growing energy demands and potential constraints in meeting them, as highlighted by recent ministerial statements.

She pointed out as well that government agencies and private petroleum facilities are the largest consumers of electrical energy. She suggested that integrating energy production units on their premises could alleviate part of the energy demand and foster resilience against power disruptions.

She affirmed that the proposal marks the beginning of a comprehensive strategy to explore and implement solar energy solutions across the country; thereby, laying the groundwork for sustainable energy production and enhanced energy security in the country.

On the other hand, a source from the Kuwait Municipality commented on the recent power cuts; confirming that the Municipality's systems remained operational due to backup generators, ensuring uninterrupted services and safeguarding essential data and operations.

Meanwhile, the Ministry of Electricity, Water and Renewable Energy anticipates unprecedented increases in energy consumption in the coming years, projecting a peak of 17,250 megawatts by the summer of 2025 and 20,905 megawatts by 2026, reports Al-Jarida daily.

These projections coincide with ongoing urban expansion and developmental projects across the country. However, recent government reports have highlighted delays in energy production projects, posing a potential crisis for the ministry in the upcoming summer.

Sources from the ministry disclosed that a power production unit at South Zour Station, which had been offline due to maintenance, was successfully restored Thursday.

Another unit was also brought online after necessary repairs, contributing over 500 megawatts to stabilize the grid amidst high electrical loads exacerbated by soaring temperatures.

The ministry emphasized its com-

mitment to restoring all production units promptly, attributing recent delays to maintenance tender delays.

Despite facing peak electrical loads on Friday, the Electricity Authority has not announced any scheduled power cuts.

The maximum load recorded peaked at 16,410 megawatts between 11:00 am and 5:00 pm, gradually tapering off as afternoon temperatures began to cool.

As of 5:20 pm Friday, the load index stood at 15,916 megawatts, reflecting ongoing efforts to manage energy demand effectively.

Senior officials at the ministry have submitted their visions on dealing with the current power crisis in the next 10 days, reports Al-Rai daily quoting sources.

Sources confirmed that by the beginning of July 1,200 megawatts will be added to the electricity network; that is, upon completion of maintenance works in South Zour Power Plant.

Sources said the senior ministry officials stressed the need to quickly obtain approval from the Ministry of Finance and State Audit Bureau (SAB) to float tenders for the maintenance of power plants in order to enhance power production.

Kuwait urges

Continued from Page 1

and those present there to return, in light of the subsequent security developments in the region.

Kuwaiti citizens facing difficulties in coming back can seek embassy aid via the emergency phone number: 0096171171441.

The Gulf cooperation Council (GCC) Secretary General Jassem Al-Budaiwi expressed his deep concern about the military escalation in Lebanon.

Al-Budaiwi urged, in a statement, all parties to de-escalate and avoid leading the region and its people to a war with grave outcomes.

The statement condemned the Israeli occupation's announcement about approving plans to attack Lebanon, stressing on the UN Security Council Resolution No. 1701 to stop all military actions in Lebanon.

The General Secretary stressed the necessity to comply with the UN Security Council resolution No. 2735 on the ceasefire in Gaza Strip.

He reiterated the GCC firm support to Lebanon, according to what was approved by the Supreme Council in its 44th session (December 2023 - Doha) regarding the GCC's standing with the Lebanese people and its continued support for Lebanon's sovereignty and territorial integrity.

US Secretary of State Antony Blinken called for avoiding further escalation in Lebanon on hand and also increasing aid to the Gaza Strip.

Mubarak Al-Kabeer building project to resume work soon

By Mohammed Ghanem Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, June 22: After a hiatus of three years, the Ministry of Public Works is set to complete the design, construction, and maintenance of the Mubarak Al-Kabeer Governorate building at a cost of 2.28 million dinars.

Sources within the ministry revealed that the project, initially valued at 4.567 million dinars when it commenced on September 28, 2014, encountered delays leading to its withdrawal from the original contractor in April 2021.

Following legal actions to resolve the contract issues, a new round of tenders saw bids, with one company offering the lowest bid of 2.280 million dinars to fulfill the project's requirements.

At the time of withdrawal, the completion progress stood at 86%, with the Ministry having disbursed 3.198 million dinars.

The building, located in the West Abu Ftaira area, spans 16,800 square meters and encompasses facilities such as a basement, power station, generator room, fire water tank room, warehouses, a prayer hall, and a ground floor featuring a VIP lobby.

Ministry accelerates Kuwaitization with second round of cooperative interviews

120 citizens competing for supervisory positions

KUWAIT CITY, June 22: Responsible sources in the Ministry of Social Affairs have revealed that the quartet committee, tasked with studying nomination files and conducting personal interviews for Kuwaitization, will commence interviews for the second batch of citizens interested in working in cooperatives next week.

These citizens will compete for 4 supervisory positions: general managers and their deputies in the Wafra, Hittin, and Surra Agricultural Associations, Al-Jarida reports.

The sources explained that the vacancies are distributed as follows: at Al-Wafra Agricultural, the competition includes two positions for Deputy General Manager for Financial and Administrative Affairs, and one for Commercial and Marketing Affairs. At Hiteen, the position of General Manager is open, and at Al-Surra, there is an opportunity for Deputy General Manager for Financial and Administrative Affairs. Additionally, 11 more job opportunities will be announced in 7 new cooperatives later.

The interviews for the second batch will continue from the 24th of this month until the 7th of September, following Ministerial Resolution No. 68/2023, which specifies the criteria, requirements, and procedures for filling supervisory positions in cooperatives. To expedite employment within associations, the committee will intensify personal interviews to accommodate as many eligible citizens as possible, aiming for an 80% pass rate. After com-



Al-Jarida photo Ministry of Social Affairs launches second phase of 'Kuwaitization' interviews.

pleting interviews with all applicants, selected candidates will be announced. In case of ties, a lottery will determine the final selection.

Emphasizing the significance of Kuwaitization, the process receives extensive support from the Council of Ministers, with close oversight from the Minister of Social Affairs and the committee dedicated to demographic modification and labor market development.

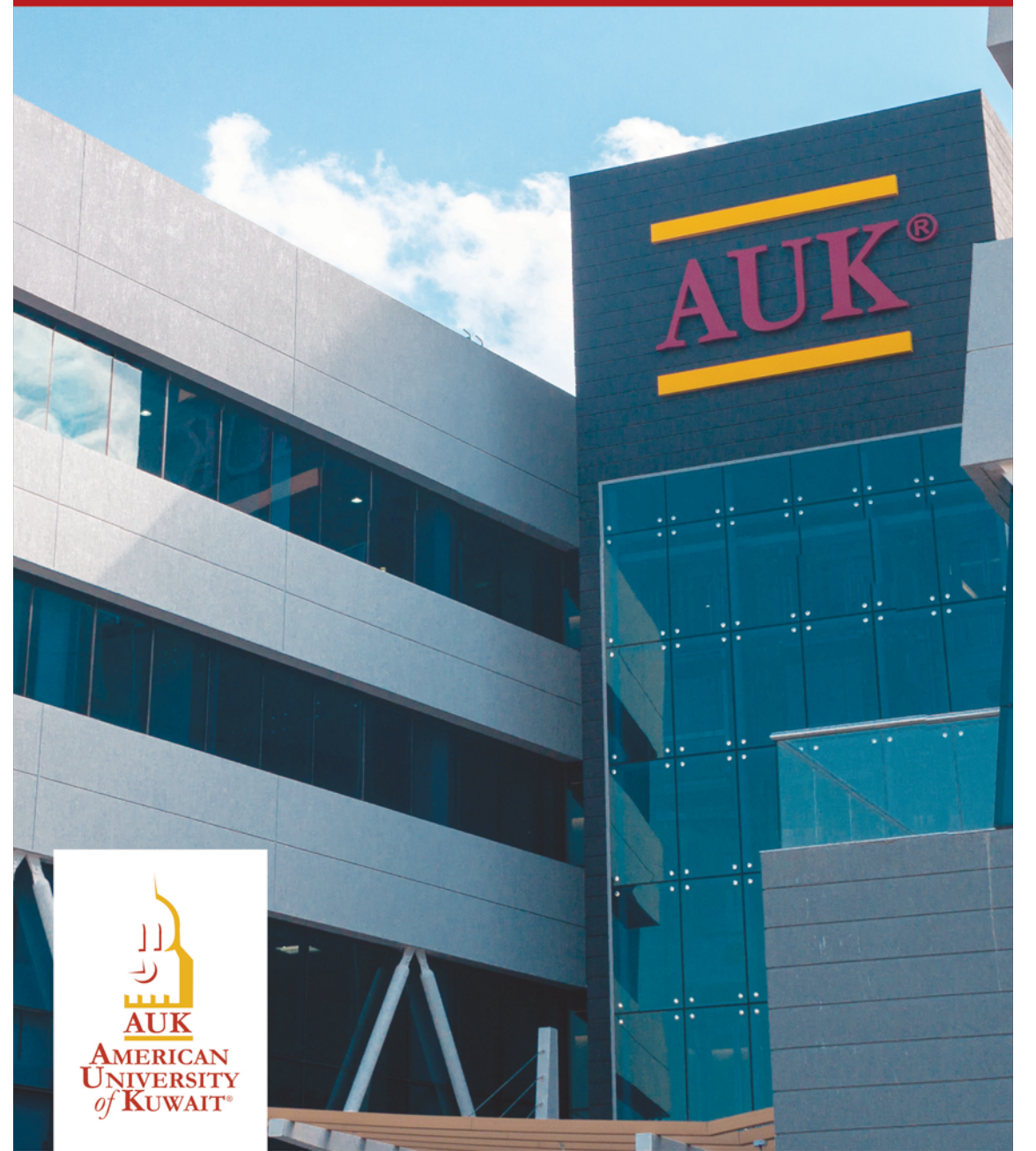
Under the leadership of Acting Undersecretary Dr. Khaled Al-Ajmi, the Ministry of Social Affairs has renewed the committees' mandate to implement the Kuwaitization plan for supervisory positions in cooperative societies, effective immediately in collaboration with relevant authorities.

The quartet committee responsible for studying nomination files and conducting personal interviews for Kuwaitization will begin next week, interviewing approximately 120 citizens competing for supervisory positions,

including general managers, deputies, and department heads across about 20 associations. The committee, comprising representatives from the Public Authority for Manpower, the Federation of Associations, and a representative from the employing association, is finalizing interview schedules while adhering to Ministerial Resolution No. 68/2023. This resolution specifies the criteria and procedures for assigning supervisory roles, including cooperative directors, deputies, and department heads.

The committee assures applicants of its impartiality and commitment to selecting competent individuals capable of enhancing cooperative operations. Upon completion of interviews, successful candidates will be announced.

To ensure fairness, transparency, and excellence in cooperative leadership, gradual penalties await associations' boards that fail to comply with ministerial directives regarding position filling. Stricter measures will follow persistent non-compliance.



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The American University of Kuwait received its Institutional Accreditation from the Private Universities Council (PUC), Ministry of Higher Education in the State of Kuwait, and has a Memorandum of Understanding and Cooperation with Dartmouth College (Hanover, N Hampshire - USA).

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ
 يَا أَيُّهَا الْمُسْلِمُونَ! نَحْمَدُ اللَّهَ الَّذِي بَارَأَ لَنَا مِنْكُمْ وَأَخْرَجَكُمْ مِنْ الْأَرْضِ الَّتِي كُنْتُمْ فِيهَا قَبْلَ أَنْ يَكُونَ لَكُمْ دِينٌ. اللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ وَسَلِّمْ عَلَى نَبِيِّنَا مُحَمَّدٍ وَعَلَى آلِهِ الطَّيِّبِينَ الطَّاهِرِينَ.

CONDOLENCES

It is with deep grief and a heavy heart that
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Mourns the sudden demise of
 our pioneer employee
Mr. Shaik Mohammed Ghouse Shaik Abdulrahman
Senior Sales Manager

We extend our deepest
 condolences and sincere sympathy
 to his Family members

May Allah Almighty bestow his mercy on him.

اللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ وَسَلِّمْ عَلَى نَبِيِّنَا مُحَمَّدٍ وَعَلَى آلِهِ الطَّيِّبِينَ الطَّاهِرِينَ

World News Roundup

Europe

Reform UK leader Farage criticized: Nigel Farage, leader of Reform UK, the recently formed right-wing party that is seeking to woo voters away from Britain's governing Conservatives at the July 4 general election, is facing wide-ranging criticism over his claim that the West provoked Russian President Vladimir Putin to invade Ukraine, including of being an appeaser.

In a BBC television interview broadcast Friday evening, Farage drew a link between the expansion of NATO and the European Union eastwards over the past few decades and the invasion.



Farage

Claiming that he warned of a potential war in Ukraine in 2014, when he was a member of the European Parliament, Farage said "we provoked this war." It's unclear whether his warning came before or after Russia had annexed the Crimea peninsula from Ukraine in February 2014.

"It was obvious to me that the ever-eastward expansion of NATO and the European Union was giving this man a reason to his Russian people to say, 'They're coming for us again' and to go to war," Farage said. "It's, you know, of course it's his fault - he's used what we've done as an excuse."

Farage's critics from across the political spectrum slammed his statement, with many describing him as a Putin apologist.

In perhaps his sharpest criticism of Farage, Conservative Prime Minister Rishi Sunak said it was "completely wrong" to say the West provoked Putin into launching a full invasion of Ukraine in February 2022. (AP)

□ □ □

N Macedonia parliament prepares to vote: North Macedonia's parliament began a two-day debate leading up to a vote on the new government proposed by a center-right party that won May's national elections.

Heading the proposed government is Hristijan Mickoski, a 46-year-old former engineering professor who has pledged to continue his center-left predecessors' efforts to shepherd the small Balkan NATO member into the European Union.

But Mickoski's more nationalist tone could alienate neighboring Bulgaria and Greece, both EU members with the power to hinder his country's accession to the 27-nation bloc.

Mickoski is expected to win Sunday's vote easily, having secured the support of 78 lawmakers in the 120-seat house.

His VMRO-DPMNE party heads a coalition that gained just over 43% of the vote in the May 8 elections, winning 58 seats - three short of a governing majority. Mickoski struck a coalition deal with the ethnic Albanian Vredi, or Worth, party and the small leftist ZNAM, securing a comfortable majority. (AP)

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Russian strikes target Ukraine energy facilities: Russia launched a new barrage of missiles and drones in an overnight attack on Ukraine, officials in Kyiv said Saturday morning, damaging energy facilities in the country's southeast and west and injuring at least two energy workers.

In its eighth major attack on Ukrainian power plants since Moscow intensified energy infrastructure attacks three months ago, Russia fired 16 missiles and 13 Shahed drones at energy facilities and critical infrastructure, the Ukrainian air force said.

Ukraine's air defenses intercepted 12 of the 16 missiles and all 13 drones launched by Russia, the air force said.

State-owned power grid operator Ukrenergo said the strikes damaged equipment at facilities in Ukraine's southeastern Zaporizhzhia region and western Lviv region. (AP)

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Russia fires deputy defense minister: Russian authorities have formally dismissed a deputy defense minister jailed on bribery charges and accused by Kremlin critics of living a lavish lifestyle, Russian media reported Thursday. A court ordered that his pretrial detention be extended for three more months.

Timur Ivanov, 48, is one of several senior military officers arrested on corruption charges in recent months. He was a close associate of Sergei Shoigu, whom President Vladimir Putin replaced as defense minister last month.

Ivanov, arrested in April, was charged with taking an especially large bribe. His lawyers said he maintains his innocence. The Basmanny District Court in Moscow on Thursday extended his detention pending investigation and trial until at least Sept. 23. If convicted, he faces up to 15 years in prison.

Russian media, citing an online registry of government officials, said Thursday that Ivanov was dismissed from his post. (AP)

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3 missing in Swiss Alps landslide: Three people were missing on Saturday after massive thunderstorms and rainfall in southeastern Switzerland caused a landslide, authorities said.

One woman was pulled out alive after being buried by the landslide in the Alpine valley of Misox in Graubünden. A rescue operation for the three others is ongoing.

Elsewhere in Switzerland, the popular tourist destination of Zermatt in the southern canton of Valais near the iconic Matterhorn mountain remains inaccessible. Heavy rains and melting snow have caused the Mattervispa River to overflow, cutting off the village.

Dramatic videos showed the otherwise small river that flows through Zermatt turning into a muddy flash flood, partially submerging streets in the popular ski resort.

The Matterhorn-Gotthard Railway halted operations with no alternative transportation available, the railway company announced on social media on Saturday morning. (AP)

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Italy coast guard recovers 14 more bodies: The Italian coast guard has recovered 14 more bodies from last week's shipwreck in the Ionian Sea off the southern Italian coastline, bringing to 34 the number of known victims from the sinking. Dozens are still missing and presumed dead.

The bodies, recovered on Friday, were transferred to a port in Calabria. Three coast guard ships were active in the air-and-sea search, some 190 kilometers (120 miles) from shore.

Survivors reported that the motorboat had caught fire, causing it to capsize off the Italian coast overnight last Sunday, about eight days after departing from Turkey with about 75 people from Iran, Syria and Iraq on board, according to the UN refugee agency and other UN organizations. Eleven survivors were being treated on shore.

The latest deaths bring to more than 800 people who have died or went missing and are presumed dead crossing the central Mediterranean so far this year, an average of five dead a day, the UN agencies said. (AP)

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Oppn figure sentenced in absentia to 20 yrs: A court in Belarus has sentenced a top opposition figure living in exile to 20 years in absentia, the latest in a yearslong crackdown on dissent in the country.

The court in the capital Minsk passed the sentence on Franak Viachorka - an advisor to opposition leader Svitlana Tsikhanouskaya - after convicting him of charges including treason and insulting the president.

Viachorka lives in Vilnius, the capital of Lithuania, where many opposition figures - including Tsikhanouskaya - fled after the disputed 2020 presidential election in which Tsikhanouskaya ran against authoritarian President Alexander Lukashenko.

Lukashenko, who has led Belarus since 1994, was declared the winner of the election, but the result was widely regarded as falsified. The opposition and the West disputed Lukashenko's reelection and denounced the vote as rigged. (AP)

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Czech man arrested in Croatia: A Czech man has been detained in Croatia for allegedly allowing his 9-year-old child to take an explosive device from a military zone which later killed the child, Croatian police said on Friday.

The 46-year-old man entered a restricted military training ground in central Croatia without authorization where he allowed his child to pick up the explosive device and bring it back to the family car, said a police statement.

When the car later broke down along the way, the child took out the explosive device which then exploded, killing the child and wounding three people, the statement added. It was not immediately clear what kind of device the child had found. (AP)



US Republican presidential candidate former president Donald Trump speaks at a campaign event on June 18 in Racine, Wisconsin. Trump's campaign outraised President Joe Biden by more than \$60 million last month, according to federal filings that detailed the Republican fundraising explosion sparked by Trump's felony convictions. (AP)

Politics

Trump dwarfs president in fundraising numbers

GOP targets Biden's 'executive order'

ATLANTA, June 22, (AP) - Republicans and conservative activists have increasingly been targeting an executive order issued three years ago by the Biden administration that is intended to boost voter registration, claiming it's unconstitutional and an attempt to interfere in the November election.

A recent fundraising email sent by a GOP political action committee is an example of how they are framing the order, saying it compels federal agencies "to act as Biden's personal 'Get-Out-The-Vote' machine." A Republican-led House committee recently issued subpoenas to agency directors and a group of GOP secretaries of state asked the Supreme Court to take up a case challenging the order.

Despite the pushback on the right, there has been no indication the order favors voters of one party over another.

White House spokesperson Robyn Patterson said the administration will continue to protect the voting rights of eligible citizens regardless of political affiliation. Biden issued the order in 2021 as Republican legislatures across the country were debating a wave of state voting restrictions amid the false claims that widespread fraud had cost former President Donald Trump reelection.

"These are baseless claims brought by the very people who spread debunked lies about the 2020 elections and have used those same debunked lies to advance laws across the nation that make it harder to vote and easier to undermine the will of the people," Patterson said in a statement.

Registering

Biden issued the executive order on March 7, 2021, noting the federal government's "duty to ensure that registering to vote and the act of voting be made simple and easy for all those eligible to do so" and that it would be implemented "consistent with applicable law." Agency leaders were asked to submit a strategic plan within 200 days.

The order directed updates to the federal website vote.gov, including ensuring that voting information be made available in more than a dozen languages. The site is not engaged in registering voters directly, but instead

connects visitors with state and local election offices to begin the registration process.

The order specifically mentions the Department of Defense and asks it to establish procedures to provide active-duty military personnel the opportunity each year to register, update their voter registration information or request an absentee ballot.

It also directs the Department of Justice to provide educational materials about registration and voting to those in federal custody as they prepare to be released, along with information about rules that might prohibit them from voting.

A year after the order was issued, congressional Republicans sent a letter to the White House raising concerns that the administration had exceeded its authority and was directing federal agencies to engage in activities beyond their mission.

Providing

Republicans said the US Department of Agriculture's Food and Nutrition Service had informed state agencies that the costs of providing voter registration services were allowable administrative expenses under the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program and could be "reimbursed at the 50 percent level."

"Using the nation's multi-billion-dollar nutrition program to implement the Biden Administration's voter registration scheme is not only a cause for concern, but one that necessitates further scrutiny," the Republicans wrote. "What the letter didn't say, according to a former White House official who helped implement the order, is that states administer the food assistance program and that states were specifically directed to provide voter registration information under a federal law passed years ago."

Justin Leviitt, who served as a senior policy adviser at the White House, also said the agency was only reiterating previous guidance that those expenses were reimbursable.

A few months later, Republicans sent letters to federal agencies requesting information about their plans to comply with the order. They also included repealing the executive order in a broad elections bill they introduced

last year.

Last month, the chairman of the Committee on House Administration sent letters requesting documents related to the order and set a two-week deadline to comply. The chairman, Wisconsin Republican Rep Bryan Steil, then issued subpoenas. He called the federal order "another attempt by the Biden Administration to tilt the scales ahead of 2024."

A White House official said the Office of Management and Budget had sent an initial response and other agencies were working on responding to the committee when it issued the subpoenas.

Also:

NEW YORK: Donald Trump's campaign outraised President Joe Biden by more than \$60 million last month, according to federal filings that detailed the Republican fundraising explosion sparked by Trump's felony convictions.

Biden's campaign and the Democratic National Committee together raised a robust \$85 million in May and reported \$212 million in the bank at the end of the month. The strong showing does not include roughly \$40 million raised by Biden and his top surrogates in recent days - or a separate \$20 million donation from former New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg to pro-Biden groups.

Still, Trump's fundraising for, for one month at least, seemed to dwarf Biden's, according to the filings made public Thursday.

The Trump campaign and the Republican National Committee said it raised a jaw-dropping \$141 million in May, including tens of millions donated immediately after Trump was convicted of 34 felonies in the New York hush money case. At the same time, billionaire Timothy Mellon donated a stunning \$50 million to a pro-Trump super PAC the day after Trump's guilty verdict, according to the filings.

Overall, Trump's campaign and the Republican National Committee reported more than \$170 million in the bank at the end of May, although Biden's campaign questioned whether the groups were devoting resources to cover Trump's legal fees.



Chinese Vice Premier Ding Xuexiang, also a member of the Standing Committee of the Political Bureau of the Communist Party of China Central Committee, meets with Grand Duke of Luxembourg Henri in Luxembourg, June 20. (Xinhua)



Paul



Nancy

America

Arkansas shooting kills 3: A shooter who opened fire Friday at a grocery store in Arkansas left the store and parked cars riddled with bullet holes as bystanders ducked for cover both indoors and in the parking lot, killing 3 people and wounding 10 others, authorities said.

The wounded included two law enforcement officers who exchanged fire with and shot the suspect, state police said. The shooting occurred about 11:30 a.m. at the Mad Butcher grocery store in Fordyce, a city of about 3,200 people located 65 miles (104 kilometers) south of Little Rock.

"It's tragic, our hearts are broken," Col Mike Hagar, director of the Arkansas State Police and public safety secretary, told reporters Friday.

Police identified the suspected shooter as 44-year-old Travis Eugene Posey of New Edinburg. He was taken to jail and charged with three counts of capital murder, while other charges are still pending. No court date had been set, according to the inmate roster. (AP)

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DePape faces life in prison: A man sentenced to 30 years in federal prison in the attack against former House Speaker Nancy Pelosi's husband was convicted Friday of aggravated kidnapping, a conviction that mandates life behind bars without the possibility of parole.

A San Francisco jury found David DePape also guilty of first-degree burglary, false imprisonment of an elder, threatening a family member of a public official and dissuading a witness.

The convictions on the additional charges in the state trial come weeks after a federal judge sentenced DePape, 44, for the 2022 attack against Paul Pelosi.

"Speaker Pelosi and her family remain in awe of their Pop's bravery, which shone through again on the witness stand in this trial just as it did when he saved his own life on the night of the attack," Pelosi's office wrote in an emailed statement Friday. "For nearly 20 grueling months, MrPelosi has demonstrated extraordinary courage and fortitude every day of his recovery."

DePape's public defender Adam Lipson said he was disappointed with the verdict and plans to appeal it. He called the prosecutors' decision to file a kidnapping for ransom charge "vindictive." (AP)

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Shiny monolith removed: A strange monolith found jutting out of the rocks in a remote mountain range near Las Vegas has been taken down by authorities.

How it got there is still unsolved. "It remains unknown how the item got to its location or who might be responsible," Las Vegas police said Friday in a series of



An excavator removes stones from the bed of the Navizence river, which flows into the Rhine, in Chippis, canton Valais, Switzerland on June 22. Three people were missing on Saturday after massive thunderstorms and rainfall in southeastern Switzerland caused a landslide, authorities said. (AP)

posts on X announcing the removal of the glimmering, 6-foot-4 prism.

Its discovery over the weekend, and quick removal because of public safety and environmental concerns, revived a pandemic-era mystery that captured the public's imagination when shiny monoliths evoking the object that appears in the Stanley Kubrick movie "2001: A Space Odyssey" began to appear around the globe.

Members of the Las Vegas police search and rescue team found the object near Gass Peak, part of the vast Desert National Wildlife Refuge where bighorn sheep and desert tortoises can be found roaming. (AP)

□ □ □

Millions baking across US: A relentless heat wave continued to bake most of the United States on Friday, with numerous areas expected to see record-breaking temperatures and forecasters warning there would likely be little relief through the weekend for most areas.

The steamiest conditions on Friday were expected in parts of Ohio and Indiana, where heat indexes were likely to soar past 100 degrees Fahrenheit (37.8 degrees Celsius) and remain there most of the day. But the Midwest was not the only area being baked, as heat and excessive heat warnings and advisories has been issued across the northeast, the mid-Atlantic and in some western states. (AP)

Subcontinent

5 soldiers killed in Pak

India boosts defense ties with Bangladesh

NEW DELHI, June 22, (Agencies): India and Bangladesh on Saturday moved to bolster their defense relationship and signed agreements for expanding cooperation in maritime security, ocean economy, space, and telecommunication sectors, as New Delhi tries to present itself as a regional power and a counterweight to China.

The agreements were signed during Bangladesh Prime Minister **Sheikh Hasina**'s visit to India, the first foreign leader to visit New Delhi since Narendra Modi became the country's prime minister for a third term two weeks ago.

Modi welcomed Bangladesh's decision to join his Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative to expand and facilitate regional cooperation of India's maritime neighbors. He said the deals with Dhaka were part of his country's pursuit of a neighborhood-first approach.



Hasina

Bangladesh also enjoys good ties with China, its major trade partner mostly for raw materials. But maintaining a close relationship with Beijing is challenging for Bangladesh, which also balances diplomatic and trade relationships with India and the United States, China's main rivals.

Bangladesh's garment industry, which brings in more than 80% of foreign currency from exports, is heavily dependent on China for raw materials.

Sharing

Hasina told reporters in New Delhi that the two countries decided to boost the sharing of river waters and cooperation in the power and energy sectors.

She also met Indian industry leaders and invited them to invest in Bangladesh which plans to develop bigger ports, waterways, rail, and road connectivity. India loaned Bangladesh \$8 billion in the last eight years, to help expand that infrastructure.

Since Sheikh Hasina's Awami League party came to power in 2009, she has acted to address New Delhi's concern about Indian militant groups taking shelter in Bangladesh.

However, an agreement on sharing the waters of the River Teesta remains elusive. The question of illegal immigration from Bangladesh to India also has dogged bilateral ties for years.

India is Bangladesh's largest export destination in Asia. Trade between the two countries touched \$15.9 billion in the financial year 2022-23.

New Delhi mainly exports cotton, motor vehicles, sugar, iron, steel, aluminum, electrical and electronic equipment to Bangladesh. It imports cereal, pulp paper and board, cement, and raw hides from Bangladesh.



India factory blasts kill 2: At least two persons died and four others were severely injured when serial blasts took place inside a factory in India's northern state of Haryana late on Friday night, confirmed a local cop.

The blasts took place inside a factory that manufactured fireballs, a fire-fighting equipment, in the Daultabad Industrial Area of the state's Gurugram district.

According to the cop, some explosive materials were used in manufacturing the fireballs. "The explosive materials caught fire leading the serial blasts," he added.

The blasts were of such a strong intensity that they could be heard at a distance of at least 5 km. Glasses and window-panes of hundreds of nearby houses and factories broke, even as panic-stricken local residents ran out of their houses.



India implements new law: The Indian government late on Friday night brought into force a new law to check corruption in conducting exams.

The new law entails penal provisions such as 10 years imprisonment and a monetary fine of 10 million Indian rupees (around 119,674 U.S. dollars) for those found involved in irregularities or corrupt practices while conducting examinations for college admissions or government jobs.

Passed by the Indian parliament in February this year, the new law, Public Examinations (Prevention of Unfair Means) Act 2024, came into force on Friday.

The move assumed significance amid widespread protests by students and civil society groups across the country against the federal government's National Testing Agency over repeated incidents of question paper leaks of leading national-level examinations.



Afghanistan traffic accident kills 3: At least three commuters were killed and four others injured in a road accident in north Afghanistan's Badakhshan province on Thursday evening, the provincial police said on Friday.

The accident happened after a vehicle collided due to overspeeding and overturned on a road in Argo district.

The injured were shifted to a nearby hospital.



5 soldiers killed in Pakistan: At least five soldiers of Pakistan army were killed in a blast targeting a security forces vehicle in Pakistan's northern Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK) province bordering Afghanistan, said Pakistan military on Friday.

According to a press release issued by Pakistan military's media wing Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR), an improvised explosive device (IED) exploded on a vehicle of the security forces in the general area of Sadda in Kurram district of KPK.

ISPR confirmed that five soldiers of the Pakistan army "made the ultimate sacrifice and embraced martyrdom".

The statement added that a security operation of the area was being carried out to eliminate any terrorists present in the area.



An aerial drone photo taken on June 19, 2024 shows a view of Daxin village in Pingyuan County, south China's Guangdong Province. (Xinhua)

Historic flooding in southern China kills 47, as severe weather warning extended

A family of six was found dead by rescuers in Fujian province, state media reported Saturday, adding to the extreme weather deaths after downpours caused landslides in the area, even as authorities extended a warning of more severe weather ahead.

The six people, who had previously been reported missing, were found dead in a temple near their home by rescuers after days of searching in Fujian's Shang-

hang county, according to the state-backed Hongxing news. They had gone to the temple seeking shelter, as it was on higher ground, but the building was toppled by a landslide, killing the family.

Authorities on Friday had said 47 people were dead in neighboring Guangdong province, which has seen historic flooding caused by the rains. The weather damaged more than a hundred bridges and flooded farm-

land, and destroyed roads connecting rural townships.

The heaviest rains were from Sunday into Tuesday, toppling trees and collapsing homes, and authorities estimated billions of dollars in damage.

China's National Meteorological Center issued a warning for more extreme weather across a swath of provinces in the south on Saturday, extending a warning from Friday, and for a few areas in the north. (AP)

Asia

Seoul summons Russian ambassador

US aircraft carrier arrives in South Korea

SEOUL, South Korea, June 22, (AP): A nuclear-powered United States aircraft carrier arrived Saturday in South Korea for a three-way exercise stepping up their military training to cope with North Korean threats that escalated with its alignment with Russia.

The arrival of the USS Theodore Roosevelt strike group in Busan came a day after South Korea summoned the Russian ambassador to protest a pact reached between Russian President Vladimir Putin and North Korean leader Kim Jong Un this week that pledges mutual defense assistance in the event of war. South Korea says the deal poses a threat to its security and warned that it could consider sending arms to Ukraine to help fight off the Russian invasion as a response - a move that would surely ruin its relations with Moscow.

Following a meeting between their defense chiefs in Singapore earlier in June, the United States, South Korea and Japan announced Freedom Edge. The new multidomain exercise is aimed at sharpening the countries' combined response in various areas of operation, including air, sea and cyberspace.

The Theodore Roosevelt strike group will participate in the exercise that is expected to start within June. South Korea's military didn't immediately confirm specific details of the training.

South Korea's navy said in a statement that the arrival of Theodore Roosevelt demonstrates the strong defense posture of the allies and "stern willingness to respond to advancing North Korean threats." The carrier's visit comes seven months after another US aircraft carrier, the USS Carl Vinson, came to South Korea in a show of strength against the North.

The Theodore Roosevelt strike group also participated in a three-way exercise with South Korea and Japanese naval forces in April in the disputed East China Sea, where worries about China's territorial claims are rising.

In the face of growing North Korean threats, the United States, South Korea and Japan have expanded their combined training and boosted the visibility of strategic US military assets in the region, seeking to intimidate the North. The United States and South Korea have also been updating their nuclear deterrence strategies, with Seoul seeking stronger assurances that Washington would swiftly and decisively use its nuclear capabilities to defend its ally from a North Korean nuclear attack.

Also:

SEOUL, South Korea: South Korea summoned the Russian ambassador to protest the country's new defense pact with North Korea on Friday, as border

tensions continued to rise with vague threats and brief, seemingly accidental incursions by North Korean troops.

Earlier Friday, the powerful sister of North Korean leader **Kim Jong Un** issued a vague threat of retaliation after South Korean activists flew balloons carrying anti-Pyongyang propaganda leaflets across the border, and South Korea's military said it had fired warning shots the previous day to repel North Korean soldiers who briefly crossed the rivals' land border for the third time this month.

That came two days after **Moscow** and **Pyongyang** reached a pact vowing mutual defense assistance if either is attacked, and a day after Seoul responded by saying it would consider providing arms to Ukraine to fight Russia's invasion.

South Korean Vice Foreign Minister **Kim Hong Kyun** summoned Russian Ambassador **Georgy Zinoviev** to protest the deal between Russian President **Vladimir Putin** and Kim Jong Un and called for Moscow to immediately halt its alleged military cooperation with Pyongyang.

Kim, the South Korean diplomat, stressed that any cooperation that directly or indirectly helps the North build up its military capabilities would violate U.N. Security Council resolutions and pose a threat to the South's security, and warned of consequences for Seoul's relations with Moscow.



A relative stands outside the home where two girls died when their home was buried in a landslide, in San Salvador, El Salvador on June 21. The torrential rains hitting El Salvador caused more deaths on Friday. (AP)

Lat/Am

Heavy rains death toll 19: The torrential rains hitting El Salvador caused the deaths of another six people on Friday when two girls and four adults were killed after being buried in their homes. Wall collapses and landslides on the outskirts of the capital brought a total of 19 dead.

Two weather systems - one along Guatemala's Pacific coast and the other in the Gulf of Mexico that developed Tropical Storm Alberto - have brought saturating rains to southern Mexico and Central America.

The Civil Protection authorities of El Salvador issued a red alert and the country's Congress declared a state of national emergency for 15 days because of the severity of the rains.

The death of the two girls, ages 5 and

7, was confirmed by the country's Rescue Commands and the Civil Protection, which alerted residents to the danger of landslides because of the accumulation of water that can cause walls to collapse.

According to the official report, a wall

collapsed on the girls' house and after several hours of work, they recovered their lifeless bodies. The parents of the minors were rescued alive and taken to a local hospital.

Civil Protection also reported four addi-

tional deaths on the rural southern outskirts of San Salvador.

Two older people in the Panchimalco district and two other people in the Planes de Renderos area died after walls collapsed at their homes. (AP)



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BRITAIN	-	FTSE 100	-34.74	8,237.72	
EUROPE	-	EURO Stoxx 50	-40.43	4,907.30	

Bank representatives discuss future economic trends at conference

KIB concludes participation in Bonds, Loans & Sukuk Conference

KUWAIT CITY, June 22: Kuwait International Bank (KIB) announced the conclusion of its participation in the Bonds, Loans & Sukuk Middle East 2024 Conference, the largest banking and investment event in the region. The Bank's participation reaffirms its leading position among financial and banking institutions that actively contribute to decision-making and create an environment conducive to development and growth in all economic fields. The event, held at the Madinat Jumeirah Conference Center in Dubai, was attended by a group of KIB's representatives, including the General Manager of the Treasury Department, Mohammed Al-Duwailah, the Executive Manager of the Treasury Department, Abdullah Al-Abduljader, the General Manager of International Banking and Financial Institutions Department, Ma'ab Mohammed AlQassem, and the Executive Manager of International Banking and Financial Institutions Department, Zaid Al-Kilani.

Commenting on the occasion, AlQassem said: "Our participation in this major annual event was a fruitful opportunity and a significant step that aligned with our aspirations and continuous efforts at KIB to strengthen our strategic relationships with our partners, and establish new partnerships locally, regionally, and globally. We were keen to directly and positively engage with all participants in the conference, including government and private institutions, investors, and service providers. Our aim was to collaborate and discuss solutions that enhance the diversification of the Bank's investment portfolio and expand Islamic financing activities. This reflects positively on the local economic landscape, and is in line with our long-term plans to develop



KIB at Bonds, Loans & Sukuk Middle East 2024 confab.

financing services as well as support international banking institutions."

On his part, Al-Duwailah said: "We are pleased to

have been part of this important annual forum, as it presented a great opportunity to share our ideas regarding future economic trends and policy formula-

tion. The event also served as an excellent platform for cooperation with new partners at both regional and international levels, which, in turn, enables a positive investment environment – one that ensures the attraction of capital and the creation of a stable financial setting to support the infrastructure of Islamic financial systems in accordance with Sharia principles."

During the conference, KIB representatives participated in a series of workshops and lectures that covered a wide range of vital issues, including the necessity of engaging with customers and establishing strong business relationships, dealing with the current economic climate, and sharing future financial forecasts. KIB showcased its strategic plans aimed at contributing to the accelerated development of the capital market locally and regionally. Additionally, the Bank set up a booth at the conference to introduce visitors to its various innovative products and solutions tailored for all customer segments.

It is worth noting that KIB continues to emphasize its fundamental role in driving macroeconomic progress in Kuwait and the region through participating in and sponsoring numerous events and conferences closely related to the banking and financial sector. This initiative stems from the Bank's advanced and prestigious position as one of the leading banking institutions in Kuwait and aligns with its vision and strategy to focus on playing a key role in transforming Kuwait into a financial and commercial hub in the region.

Kuwaiti banks slash April real estate loans by 26.3%

Year-on-Year real estate financing jumps 46.7% in April

By Mahmoud Shendi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times

KUWAIT CITY, June 22: In April, local banks in Kuwait decreased their financing to the real estate sector by 159.8 million dinars, marking a 26.3% monthly decline to reach 446.6 million dinars, down from approximately 606.4 million dinars in March.

According to the Central Bank of Kuwait's monthly statistics for April, however, bank financing for real estate saw a year-on-year increase of 142.2 million dinars, or 46.7%, compared to April 2023, totaling 304.4 million dinars.

Over the first four months of 2024, total bank financing for the real estate sector amounted to about 2.077 billion dinars.

Despite a slight monthly decrease of 0.2%, or 23 million dinars, the cumulative balance of real estate financing provided by local banks stood at 9.898 billion dinars by the end of April. This reflects an annual increase of 308 million dinars, or 3.2%, up from 9.590 billion dinars in

Kuwait plans \$425 million expansion

Mubarak Port project embarks on second phase with ambitious plans

KUWAIT CITY, June 22: The MEED magazine said the second phase of Kuwait's Mubarak Al-Kabeer Port project is anticipated to cost between 120 million dinars (\$390 million) and 130 million dinars (\$425 million). This significant investment primarily focuses on acquiring and installing crucial port equipment, reports Al-Qabas daily quoting reliable sources.

Major Components of the Project include the following:

Port equipment -- The budget allocates between 90 million dinars (\$290 million) and 100 million dinars (\$325 million) for essential equipment, including 9 ship-to-shore quay cranes, 48 automated stacking cranes, 45 automated guided vehicles, remote condition monitoring systems, tractors and forklifts.

Budget approval and project scope -- MEED's internal documents also revealed that Kuwait plans to finalize the budget for this phase before the year-end, following intensified efforts post-meetings with Chinese officials in June.

The first phase of the project, completed in 2014 at a cost of \$1.2 billion, laid foundational infrastructure such as marinas, quay walls, piers, and port buildings. However, essential equipment like cranes was not included, delaying operational commencement.

Scope of the second phase -- The upcoming phase aims to construct loading and unloading facilities; build quay walls and reclaim land, develop container yards and port infrastructure, erect terminal buildings and associated facilities, and implement safety and security systems.

A third phase is also envisioned to expand the port further, solidifying its role as a pivotal hub for regional and international trade.

The following are the strategic benefits

Economic Boost -- Maximizing local investments and attracting international capital.

Infrastructure Development -- Enhancing port capabilities to accommodate larger vessels, boosting trade efficiency.

Regional Hub -- Positioning Kuwait as a key transit point for regional and global commerce.

Urban Development -- Facilitating the expansion of Boubyan Island, increasing residential areas, and supporting Kuwait's urban growth.

Employment Opportunities -- Creating jobs for Kuwaiti citizens, especially in industrial and logistical sectors.

Industrial Zone -- Promoting light industries and supporting industrial growth across Kuwait.

Global Partnerships and Future Prospects -- The Ministry of Public Works is actively overseeing the project's execution, focusing on selecting an operator with international expertise in port management. Collaborations with China, including operational agreements, are progressing smoothly, facilitated by Kuwaiti laws supportive of foreign investment in economic zones.

In conclusion, the Mubarak Al-Kabeer Port project's second phase not only enhances Kuwait's maritime infrastructure but also positions the country as a regional economic powerhouse, driving sustainable development and industrial growth.

April 2023.

In terms of real estate activity, the total value of contracts regis-

tered with the Kuwaiti Ministry of Justice in May 2024 amounted to approximately 412.99 million

dinars, illustrating ongoing transactions within the sector amidst fluctuating financing trends.

KFH and Wataniya lead gains at Bursa Kuwait

Kuwait stock indices rise amid emerging market review

KUWAIT CITY, June 22: Last trading session at the Kuwait Stock Exchange started off stable with low liquidity, initially below half a million dinars. However, the market remained predominantly in the green throughout the session, buoyed by strong movements in leading stocks, particularly in Kuwait Finance House (KFH) and Wataniya, reports Al-Jarida daily.

The session concluded positively with significant gains across the main market indices, despite the week consisting of only two trading sessions.

The General Market Index increased by 0.46 percent, or 32.20 points, closing at 7038.48 points. Liquidity surged to over 80 million dinars, driven by activity surrounding the review of FTSE Russell Global Indices for Emerging Markets.

The Premier Market Index rose by 0.41 percent, gaining 31.31 points to close at 7,653.58 points, with a liquidity of 72.7 million dinars.

Similarly, the Main Market Index climbed by 0.70 percent, or 41.50 points, ending at 6000.76 points, with a liquidity of 7.2 million dinars.

Trading was marked by 273.9 million shares exchanged through 13,481 transactions. Of the 123 traded shares, 61 recorded gains, 51 incurred losses, and 11 remained un-

changed.

Key stocks like National Bank, KFH, Al-Khaleej, Boubyan, Zain, International, Al-Mabane, and Salhia registered notable increases, with some surpassing 3 percent gains.

Conversely, Burgan Bank, Human

Soft, and Meezan faced declines, while Mazaya and other smaller stocks saw limited losses.

Across the GCC, most market indices saw gains, except for a slight decrease in Abu Dhabi. Meanwhile, oil prices remained stable around

\$85 per barrel for standard Brent crude.

The positive performance of the Kuwait Stock Exchange in the short trading week reflects investor confidence amid ongoing market dynamics and regional economic trends.

Analysts target \$2,500 gold price by 2024

Gold prices hit two-week high on speculation of US rate cuts

KUWAIT CITY, June 22: Gold prices surged to their highest levels in two weeks on Tuesday, bolstered by sluggish US economic data that heightened speculation about potential interest rate cuts by the US Federal Reserve this year, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

Spot gold prices rose by 0.5% to \$2,337.87 per ounce, marking its highest point since June 7 early in the session. Meanwhile, the US gold futures also climbed by 0.2% to \$2,351.30.

Tim Waterer, Chief Market Analyst at KMC, expressed confidence in an upward trajectory for the gold market, citing the current interest rate environment nearing its peak.

Recent indicators including a soft labor market and subdued retail sales data for the second quarter rein-

force expectations of Fed intervention through interest rate reductions, possibly occurring once or twice by year-end.

Lower interest rates diminish the opportunity cost of holding non-yielding assets like gold, making it more attractive to investors seeking safe-haven assets amidst economic uncertainties.

ANZ analysts echoed optimism, setting a target price of \$2,500 per ounce for gold by the end of 2024, anticipating fluctuating short-term conditions influenced by varying statements from Federal Reserve officials.

The outlook for gold remains positive as market participants closely monitor economic indicators and central bank policies for cues on future price movements.

Other Voices

'Lack of long-term planning'

Power rationing hits Kuwait amidst rising temperatures

By Kamel Al-Harami
Independent Oil Analyst

It is known that Kuwait is among the hottest country in the world, where the temperature reaches 50 degrees Celsius and above in our long summertime -- from June to September.

This is normal and we have been used to it since more than 300 years ago. However, things changed with the discovery of oil; as refineries were built and electricity was generated.

The emergence of all types of cars, asphalt on roads and huge buildings contributed to the gradual increase in temperature. Nowadays, we are witnessing a new level of heat at 50 degrees Celsius.

With oil and wealth, we began to use all types of machines to make ourselves comfortable. The so-called discovery of air conditioners -- starting from the use of electric fans to the basic air conditioning units and then the most advanced central air conditioning systems -- led to our huge consumption of electricity without knowing or realizing that one day, we will run out of energy sources and we will face shortage of electricity. Simply, we cannot cope with the fastest growth of demand for electricity. We did not realize that we have to rationalize our consumption. The Ministry of Electrify did not advise us to be careful with our consumption, considering our electricity is the cheapest in the area and the highest consumption as well.

Now, Kuwait is facing electricity shortage and crisis; hence, the need to ration power supply in almost all

parts of the country. Each area has been informed to expect two hours or more power cutoff daily.

The main reason for the shortage is lack of long term planning, as no one is paying attention to such crucial step. They are just working temporarily and nobody is taking responsibility. Since 2022 and 2023, some people have been warning about the expected shortage of electricity, but nobody paid attention; despite knowing that we need to build new power stations. Actually, the government was warned in 2022 that the country would be facing power shortage of about 2,000 megawatts in 2023, 2024 and 2025. Nevertheless, no preparation has been done. No plan has been approved and the ministry kept on delaying it for certain reasons, so we ended up in today's crisis. We have nowhere to go. We have no choice but to depend on power supply from neighboring countries; asking for help and contributions as all of us are in need of electricity, especially during peak hours.

What is happening to us? What is happening to our Kuwait, its long term vision and plan? Is it going down the drain?

Yes, we have wealth and money, but we do not have electricity. We must ration power supply and monitor our clocks to see when our houses will be out of air conditioning.

Certainly, this is not good news. We are facing electricity shortage and power rationalization for two hours between 11:00 am to 5:00 pm every day, if not longer. Luckily, most of the expatriates are traveling this time. But, what will happen when they return in September!!

email: naftikuwaiti@yahoo.com



Al-Harami

Kuwaiti oil rises to \$87.14 pb

Oil futures 'dip' amid economic uncertainty

KUWAIT CITY, June 22: Oil futures saw a slight decline in early trading on Friday amid expectations of prolonged interest rate hikes in Asia and the United States, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

Brent crude futures for August delivery edged down by 11 cents to \$85.60 per barrel, while US crude futures fell 9 cents to \$81.20 per barrel. The market reaction comes amidst strong economic indicators, including a decrease in US oil inventories by 2.5 million barrels, as reported by the Energy Information Administration.

This reduction, which matched analysts' expectations, saw US crude stocks drop to 457.1 million barrels, while gasoline stocks also decreased by 2.3 million barrels to 231.2 million barrels, aligning with forecasts.

Additionally, recent data from Japan showed a 2.5% year-on-year increase in consumer prices, reinforcing expectations of potential

interest rate hikes by the country's central bank.

Similarly, in the US, a decline in new unemployment benefit claims underscored robust job market conditions, potentially influencing the Federal Reserve to maintain higher interest rates for an extended period.

These economic factors contribute to uncertainties in oil demand outlooks, influenced by broader economic conditions and policy decisions impacting global markets.

Also:

KUWAIT CITY: The price of Kuwaiti oil went up 19 cents to USD 87.14 pb on Friday, compared to USD 86.95 pb the day before, said Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) on Saturday.

On a global scale, the price of the Brent crude futures' contracts went down 47 cents to USD 85.24 pb, as did the West Texas Intermediate crude, going down 56 cents to USD 80.73 pb. (KUNA)

KFH leads Forbes top listed Kuwaiti companies

Feat in terms of market value and profitability

KUWAIT CITY, June 22: Kuwait Finance House (KFH) has achieved a remarkable feat, ranking as the leading Kuwaiti company and tenth in the Middle East on the Forbes 2024 Top 100 Listed Companies list. This recognition highlights KFH's pioneering role, financial strength, market value, and respected brand. It further strengthens their ambition of becoming a top 100 global bank.

KFH Acting Group Chief Executive Officer, Abdulwahab Iesa Al Rushood said: "This achievement comes just a few weeks after securing the top spot on MEED magazine's list of the 100 largest listed companies in the Middle East and North Africa in terms of market capitalization."

Al Rushood pointed out that KFH's competitive advantages have positioned it as the leading bank listed on Boursa Kuwait by market cap-

italization, at approximately USD 41 billion. Additionally, KFH boasts the highest profitability rates within the banking sector.

Sustainability and Growth
He noted that KFH's strong financial performance last year played a key role in this achievement. In 2023, the Bank achieved a record net profit of KD 584.5 million for its shareholders, reflecting a significant 63.4% growth rate compared to 2022. This marks the highest profit growth within the Kuwaiti banking sector.

Al Rushood attributed KFH's strong financial results and sustained profitability to several factors. These include an expanding customer base, improved harmony among its subsidiaries across 12 geographical regions, and a diversified product and service portfolio. Additionally, KFH has benefited from increased operational efficiency, a successful innovation and digital transformation strategy, and the recent acquisition of Ahli United Bank.

"KFH's recent acquisition of global recognition and renowned awards underscores its commitment to providing innovative products and services that meet customer needs,



Acting Group CEO – Abdulwahab AlRushood

solidifying its position as a leader in the financial sector, both locally and internationally," He mentioned.

Al Rushood also explained that KFH's qualitative achievement-shave solidified its position as a

Abdulwahab Iesa Al Rushood: The recognition comes after naming KFH the Largest Listed Company in Kuwait by MEED

benchmark for Islamic banking. This success has propelled KFH to become the largest bank in Kuwait and has earned it the distinction of being the most trusted Islamic financial institution globally.

"KFH boasts a global presence, spanning 12 countries through a large network of approximately 640 branches," Al Rushood added.

He went on to say that KFH boasts a strong global footprint, having launched the first Islamic bank in Germany and the first licensed under Malaysia's Banking Act. Additionally, it is the second-largest Islamic financier in Turkey.

In 2022, KFH acquired Ahli United Bank – Bahrain and completed converting its conventional banking services to be compliant with Shariah principles in December 2023. KFH also completed the merger with Ahli United Bank – Kuwait in February 2024. Additionally, KFH launched Tam Digital Bank in October 2023 as the first Islamic Sharia-compliant digital bank in Kuwait.

Al Rushood emphasized the strategic importance of these advancements for the Bank's financial strength and expansion goals. He also highlighted their role in keeping pace with technological developments and the rise of digital banking, underscoring KFH's commitment to continuous business development at all levels.



The Justice Department seal is seen, Nov. 18, 2022, in Washington. Two Lockheed Martin subsidiaries have agreed to pay the federal government \$70 million for overcharging the Navy for aircraft parts, the U.S. Department of Justice announced Friday, June 21, 2024. (AP)

Overcharged Navy for parts

Lockheed Martin subsidiaries reach \$70 million settlement

STRATFORD, Conn., June 22, (AP): Two Lockheed Martin subsidiaries have agreed to pay the federal government \$70 million for overcharging the Navy for aircraft parts, the U.S. Department of Justice announced Friday.

The federal agency says Sikorsky Support Services, based in Stratford, Connecticut, and Derco Aerospace, headquartered in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, knowingly entered into an improper subcontract for spare parts and materials for aircrafts used to train Navy pilots.

Under the contract, Sikorsky purchased the parts from Derco at the cost Derco paid other suppliers, plus a 32% markup.

Sikorsky then billed the Navy for the price it paid Derco, in violation of federal regulations barring such arrangements, which prosecutors said drive up government costs.

"Today's settlement demonstrates that the Justice Department will ensure that government contractors do not skirt the law and engage in self-dealing that may artificially inflate their charges at the expense of the American taxpayers," Brian Boynton, head of

the DOJ's civil division, said in a statement.

Lockheed Martin, based in Maryland, said in a statement Friday that it is "pleased that the settlement will bring this case to a conclusion," noting that there also was no finding of wrongdoing by Sikorsky or Derco Aerospace.

Prosecutors said the settlement resolves a lawsuit filed by a former employee of Derco under the whistleblower provision of the federal False Claims Act. The case goes back to 2011, or several years before Lockheed Martin acquired Sikorsky, the maker of the military's Black Hawk helicopters, in 2015.

Darrin Jones, of the U.S. Department of Defense's Office of Inspector General, said the settlement should serve as a deterrent for those looking to exploit the agency's procurement process.

"Overinflation of parts and material costs for the repair and maintenance of aircraft affected naval air training and is a disservice to the American taxpayer," added Greg Gross, of the Naval Criminal Investigative Service's Economic Crimes Field Office.

Bangladesh to receive 900 mln USD WB financing for sustainable growth

DHAKA, June 22, (Xinhua): The World Bank's Board of Executive Directors has approved two projects totaling 900 million U.S. dollars to help Bangladesh strengthen fiscal and financial sector policies and improve urban infrastructure and management to ensure sustainable and climate-resilient growth.

"Decisive reforms will help Bangladesh sustain growth and strengthen resilience to climate change and other shocks," Abdoulaye Seck, World Bank country director for Bangladesh and Bhutan, was quoted as saying in a statement received here on Saturday.

"These new financing operations will help Bangladesh in two critical areas -- the financial sector and urban management -- to achieve its vision of upper middle-income status," he added.

The Second Recovery and Resilience Development Policy Credit (500 million dollars) -- the last in a series of two credits -- supports fiscal and financial sector reforms to accelerate sustainable growth and build resilience to future shocks, including climate change.

"A well-functioning financial sector is critical for Bangladesh to increase investment and improve access to finance for those left out of formal banking systems," said Bernard Haven, World Bank Senior Economist and Task Team Leader for the program.

The Resilient Urban and Territorial Development Project (400 million dollars) will help improve climate-resilient and gender-responsive urban infrastructure and urban management capacities in seven city clusters along the economic corridor covering over 950 km of the highway from Cox Bazaar in the south to Panchagarh in the north of Bangladesh.

"This will be the first in a series of projects helping build resilience to climate change and create new opportunities and jobs in secondary cities through spatially targeted investments," said Kwabena Amankwah-Ayeh, World Bank Senior Urban Development Specialist and Task Team Leader for the project. "Developing secondary cities as growth hubs will be critical for the country's sustainable growth."

US Supreme Court upholds tax on foreign income

WASHINGTON, June 22, (AP): The Supreme Court on Thursday upheld a tax on foreign income over a challenge backed by business and anti-regulatory interests, declining their invitation to weigh in on a broader, never-enacted tax on wealth.

The justices, by a 7-2 vote, left in place a provision of a 2017 tax law that is expected to generate \$340 billion, mainly from the foreign subsidiaries of domestic corporations that parked money abroad to shield it from U.S. taxes.

The law, passed by a Republican Congress and signed by then-President Donald Trump, includes a provision that applies to companies that are owned by Americans but do their business in foreign countries. It imposes a one-time tax on investors' shares of profits that have not been passed along to them, to offset other tax benefits.

But the larger significance of the ruling is what it didn't do. The case attracted outside attention because some groups allied with the Washington couple who brought the case argued that the challenged provision is similar to a wealth tax, which would apply not to the incomes of the very richest Americans but to their assets, like stock holdings. Such assets now get taxed only when they are sold.

Justice Brett Kavanaugh wrote in his majority opinion that "nothing in this opinion should be read to authorize any hypothetical congressional effort to tax both an entity and its shareholders or partners on the same undistributed income realized by the entity."

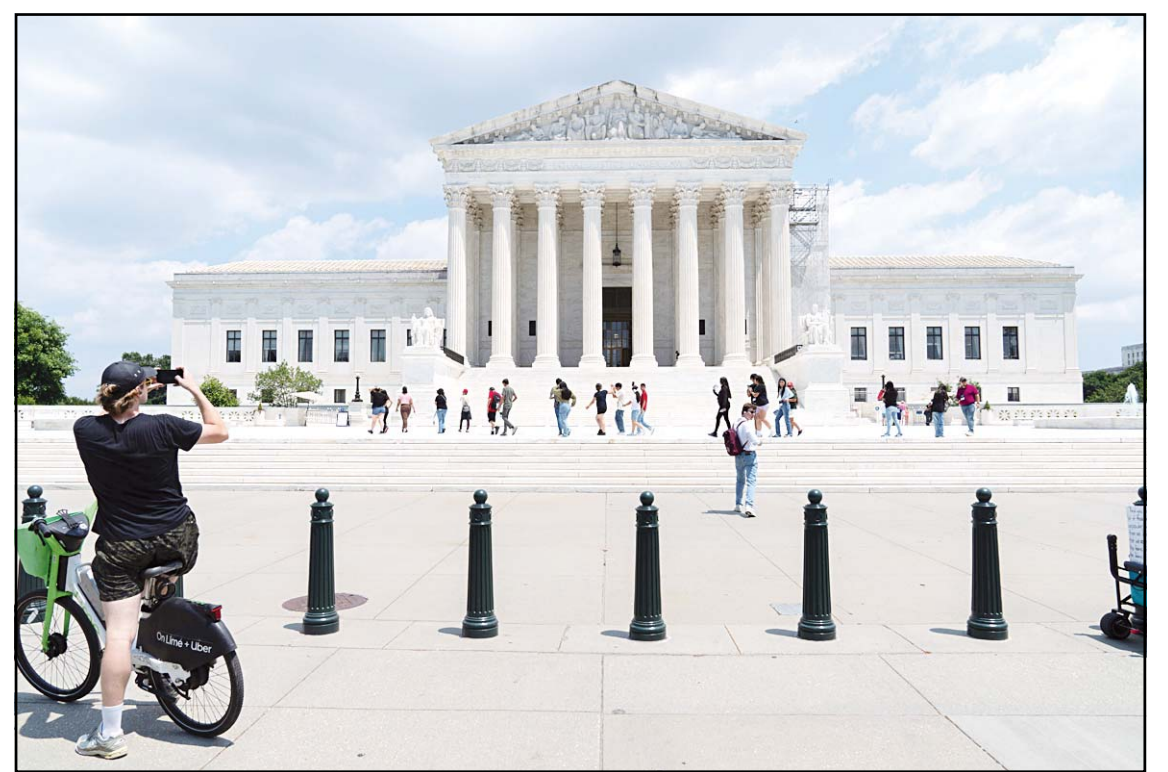
Underscoring the limited nature of the court's ruling, Kavanaugh said as he read a summary of his opinion in the courtroom, "the precise and very narrow question" of the 2017 law "is the only question we answer."

The court ruled in the case of Charles and Kathleen Moore, of Redmond, Washington. They challenged a \$15,000 tax bill based on Charles Moore's investment in an Indian company, arguing that the tax violates the 16th Amendment. Ratified in 1913, the amendment allows the federal government to impose an income tax on Americans. Moore said in a sworn statement that he never received any money from the company, KisanKraft Machine Tools Private Ltd.

But Kavanaugh said the tax the Moores disputed was akin to other taxes, including those on foreign-earned income and partnerships. A ruling for the Moores could have called into question those other provisions of the tax code and threatened losses to the U.S. Treasury of several trillion dollars, Kavanaugh noted, echoing the argument made by the Biden administration.

Justice Clarence Thomas, joined by Justice Neil Gorsuch, wrote in dissent that the Moores paid taxes on an investment "that never yielded them a penny." Under the 16th Amendment, Thomas wrote, the only income that can be taxed is "income realized by the taxpayer."

Lawyers for the Moores said they were disappointed by the ruling, but took some hope from its narrowness. "What this means is that the consti-



Visitors pose for photographs by the U.S. Supreme Court Tuesday, June 18, 2024, in Washington. (AP)

US proposes rules to stop Americans from investing in Chinese tech with military uses

WASHINGTON, June 22, (AP): The Treasury Department on Friday fleshed out a proposed rule that would restrict and monitor U.S. investments in China for artificial intelligence, computer chips and quantum computing.

The proposed rule stems from President Joe Biden's August 2023 executive order regarding the access that "countries of concern" have to American dollars that fund advanced technologies, which the U.S. government says would enhance their military, intelligence, surveillance and cyber capabilities. The order identified China, Hong Kong and Macau as countries of concern.

The Biden administration has sought to stymie the development of technologies by China, the world's second-largest economy, that could give it a military edge or enable it to dominate emerging sectors such as electric vehicles.

In addition to the proposed rule, Democrat Biden has also placed a stiff tariff on Chinese EVs, an issue with political implications as the president and Republican Donald Trump are both trying to show voters who can best stand up to China, a geopolitical rival and major trading partner.

The proposed rule outlines the required information that U.S. citizens and permanent residents must provide when engaging in transactions in this area, as well as what would be considered a violation of the restrictions.

It specifically would prohibit American investors from funding AI systems in China that could be used for weapons targeting, combat and location tracking, among other military applications, according to a senior Treasury official who previewed the rule for reporters on the condition of anonymity.

J. Philip Ludvigson, a partner at King & Spalding and a former Treasury official for Investment Security, said "companies and investors are now getting a much better look at what will be expected of them" under the new outbound investment program. "These added details are particularly important because the private sector will be shouldering the many due diligence and compliance burdens associated with making new investments," he said.

Craig Allen, president of the U.S.-China Business Council, a nonprofit organization of American firms that do business in China, said his organiza-

tion "supports the Biden administration's efforts to protect U.S. national security while also ensuring robust commercial exchange with China for the benefit of American companies, workers and our economy."

Treasury is seeking comment on the proposal through Aug. 4, 2024, and after that is expected to issue a final rule.

Biden administration officials, including Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen, have insisted that they have no interest in "decoupling" from China - however, tensions between the two nations have increased in recent years.

After the U.S. military in February 2023 shot down a suspected Chinese spy balloon off the Carolina coast after it traversed sensitive military sites across North America, China threatened repercussions.

Since then, incidents between the two nations based on national security concerns have regularly occurred.

For instance, Biden in May issued an order blocking a Chinese-backed cryptocurrency mining firm from owning land near a Wyoming nuclear missile base, calling its proximity to the base a "national security risk."

The case is Moore v. U.S., 22-800.

tutionality of other species of future taxes - such as a national wealth tax - remains entirely unaddressed by the court's opinion," said Dan Greenberg, general counsel of the Competitive Enterprise Institute.

Greenberg pointed to a separate opinion from Justice Amy Coney Barrett, joined by Justice Samuel Alito, that agreed the Moores should lose this case. But Barrett also sided with the dissenters in arguing that income has to be realized - in essence, received - to be taxed in accord with the Constitution.

Kavanaugh's opinion left the issue

of realization open and there are now four justices, one shy of a majority, who have declared their opposition to taxes, like a wealth tax, that don't require realization.

Leslie Samuels, a tax expert who served in the Treasury Department during the Clinton administration, said the court's decision was unsettling because it seemed to encourage more legal challenges to taxes and warn Congress that its ability to impose new taxes may be restricted.

"While the government won, the Moores' backers effectively achieved some important and disquieting suc-

cesses for the future," Samuels said.

The case also had kicked up ethical concerns and raised questions about the story the Moores' lawyers told in court filings. Alito rejected calls from Senate Democrats to step away from the case because of his ties to David Rivkin, a lawyer who is representing the Moores.

Public documents show that Charles Moore's involvement with the company, including serving as a director for five years, is far more extensive than court filings indicate.

The case is Moore v. U.S., 22-800.

Ex-CEO of Ontrak convicted of \$12.5 mln insider trading scheme

LOS ANGELES, June 22, (AP): The former CEO and chairman of Ontrak, a publicly traded health care company based in Nevada, was found guilty Friday of a multimillion-dollar insider trading scheme.

A federal jury in Los Angeles convicted Terren Scott Peizer, a resident of Puerto Rico and Santa Monica, California, of one count of securities fraud and two counts of insider trading.

In a statement announcing the conviction, the Justice Department described it as the first case it has prosecuted exclusively based on what is

known as Rule 10b5-1, which allows company insiders to create a predetermined plan to sell shares while also setting limits on certain trading practices.

Authorities said Peizer violated some of those limits when he set up plans in 2021 to sell shares in order to avoid more than \$12.5 million in losses, after he learned that Ontrak's largest customer at the time was set to terminate its contract with the company based just outside of Las Vegas.

After the news later became public, Ontrak's stock price dropped by more

than 44%, authorities said.

"This is the Justice Department's first insider trading prosecution based exclusively on the use of a trading plan, but it will not be our last," said Deputy Assistant Attorney General Nicole M. Argentieri, who heads the Justice Department's Criminal Division. "We will not let corporate executives who trade on inside information hide behind trading plans they established in bad faith."

One of Peizer's lawyers, David Willingham, said in an emailed statement that they will appeal, and that

testimony at trial showed Peizer didn't act in bad faith because he relied on the advice of his management team when he set up the trading plans.

"In our view, this result is a travesty of justice, as Terren Peizer is innocent of these charges," Willingham said. "We will not rest until it is overturned."

Peizer, 64, is scheduled to be sentenced in October. He stepped down as CEO last March after he was indicted.

He faces up to 25 years in prison for securities fraud, and up to 20 years for each count of insider trading.

LOYAC's influencer program boosts youth leadership skills

Gulf Bank renews affiliation with LOYAC for youth 'empowerment'

KUWAIT CITY, June 22: For the second consecutive year, Gulf Bank has renewed its strategic partnership with the non-profit organization LOYAC. This collaboration will support various activities throughout the year, including The Influencer program organized by LOYAC's Academy of Performing Arts (LAPA), an affiliate of LOYAC. The program aims to provide exceptional training opportunities for youth aged 15 to 19, equipping them with comprehensive public communication skills, to prepare them to become effective future leaders.

On this occasion, Ms. Najla Al-Eisa, Chief Marketing Officer at Gulf Bank, stated: "We are delighted to partner with LOYAC, and support their ongoing efforts to empower youth and achieve comprehensive and integrated development, enabling them to become effective leaders in society. These objectives align with Gulf Bank's 2025 strategy and Kuwait's vision, where youth play a fundamental role."

She highlighted that Gulf Bank, as a leading financial institution in Kuwait, is committed to upholding social sustainability principles. This includes supporting and sponsoring numerous activities by proactive civil society organizations, especially LOYAC, given its notable social contributions. She added, "We believe that the private sector has an vital role in supporting the efforts of civil society organizations."

Ms. Al-Eisa highlighted Gulf Bank's commitment to promoting social sustainability, advocating for diversity and inclusion, and



Najla Al-Eisa and Fareah Al Saqqaf during the signing of the partnership agreement.

Najla Al-Eisa:

■ We believe that the private sector has a vital role in supporting the efforts of civil society organizations.

Fareah Al Saqqaf:

■ We extend our appreciation to Gulf Bank for sponsoring the LOYAC's youth initiatives.

empowering various groups, including women, youth, and individuals with disabilities. She noted that these efforts have earned the bank significant recognition, both locally and internationally, as evidenced by the recent awards received from esteemed global publications like MEED and Euromoney.

Ms. Fareah Al Saqqaf, Chairperson and Managing Director of LOYAC, conveyed her apprecia-

tion to Gulf Bank for sponsoring LOYAC's youth initiatives, notably The Influencer program. She stressed that sustainable development is a shared responsibility that demands collaborative efforts from governmental, private, and civil sectors alike.

Ms. Al-Saqqaf noted that civil society organizations are pioneers in addressing human, environmental, and human development issues. Their dedication is rooted in their

intimate understanding of the people's needs. She also affirmed that the success of LOYAC's programs is greatly owed to the support provided by its strategic partners, offering them genuine opportunities to facilitate developmental initiatives.

She further explained that The Influencer program is carefully designed to build young people's oratory skills, boost their self-confidence, and enhance their ability to communicate, engage in dialogue, and persuade effectively. The program includes specialized workshops and experienced trainers aimed at teaching young individuals how to create intelligent, impactful, and engaging content.

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.

'Growth in tourism sector'

Wego: Leading travel marketplace in MENA

Can you tell us about Wego as a brand and its core mission?

Wego was founded in Singapore in 2005. In 2011, we localized the platform for about 60 countries and 20+ languages including Arabic which immediately gained rapid traction. Because of this we realized there was a big largely untapped opportunity in this part of the world and so began to focus more and more on the MENA region. We opened our Dubai Internet City office in 2013 and we are now dual headquartered in Dubai and Singapore.

Wego is now the number 1 travel app and the largest online travel marketplace in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA).

It provides award-winning travel search websites and top-ranked mobile apps for travelers living in the Asia Pacific and the Middle East regions. Wego harnesses powerful yet simple to use technology that automates the process of searching and comparing results from hundreds of airlines, hotels, and online travel agency websites.

Wego presents an unbiased comparison of all travel products and prices offered in the marketplace by merchants, both local and global, and enables shoppers to quickly find the best deal and place to book whether it is from an airline or hotel directly or with a third-party aggregator website.

What sets Wego apart from other travel search engines and platforms?

Wego is the only online travel player that is running a marketplace model, and which has a laser focus on serving the needs of travelers from the MENA region.

There are hundreds of travel agents, airlines and hotel chains all making their products available for purchase via the Wego marketplace so users can search, compare, and shop the entire travel market in one go. Users can book travel across hundreds of airlines, hotel chains and online travel agencies with the confidence that with Wego they will always get the best deal.

Our local focus can be seen in our product localization, in the features that we've built specifically for Middle East users, in the range of travel products and travel deals that we offer, in the range of local payment options on Wego and the quality of the live customer service we offer in Arabic and English 24x7.

The size of our user base across the MENA region now gives us the bargaining power with suppliers and partners that translates into special deals for our users that it is difficult for others to match.

What are the travel trends currently popular among Kuwaiti residents?

Since most Kuwaiti residents have a busy lifestyle, quick getaways to nearby destinations like Dubai, Istanbul and Cairo are gaining popularity. Kuwaiti travellers also tend to embark on family vacations quite often and hence seek accommodations that can fulfil the needs of all family members including children. We are also seeing demand on wellness trips post COVID.

How have traveller expectations and preferences evolved in recent years?

In recent years, travellers have started opting for flexible booking options, that let users change or cancel bookings without incurring high penalties. Also, as we are in the post-pandemic era, users are greatly concerned about health and safety measures, and hence prefer options that prioritise cleanliness and sanitation measures.



Mamoun Hmedan, Chief Business Officer

Since contactless payment modalities are on the rise, travellers often seek seamless online booking experiences such as digital check-ins and mobile payments. The rising global eco-consciousness is also impelling travellers to choose sustainable options and practice responsible tourism.

We also observe a significant shift towards mobile bookings and the use of AI to personalize travel recommendations. The integration of user reviews and social media has also influenced travelers' decisions more than ever before.

What are the most popular tourist destinations among Kuwaiti residents?

Dubai is greatly preferred by those seeking opulence, as it offers an exemplary array of best-in-class lifestyle, shopping and entertainment options. The vibrant city of Istanbul characterised by the unique convergence of historical and modern attractions is yet another contender.

Residents often flock to Cairo, Egypt, to explore timeless architectural marvels like the Great Pyramid. On the other hand, London is the go-to travel destination for many, as it promises eclectic choices in shopping, dining and cultural heritage exploration. Those seeking a tropical escape, prefer Maldives, which makes for the perfect summer retreat.

Georgia is also trending as it is visa-free for Kuwaiti citizens, allowing stays of up to 90 days.

What technologies are poised to revolutionise the travel industry in the next five years?

1. Personalization and AI: Apps will use AI to offer tailored travel recommendations based on user preferences and past behavior.

2. Enhanced UX: Voice-activated searches, chatbots, and virtual assistants will streamline the booking process.

3. Real-Time Information: Apps will provide real-time updates on flights, weather, and travel restrictions, offering flexible booking options.

4. AR and VR: Virtual tours will help users make informed booking decisions.

What are the emerging opportunities for growth within Kuwait's travel industry?

Presently, the nation's tourism industry is being bolstered by robust investment into tourism infrastructure such as hotels, resorts, and public attractions. By showcasing Kuwait's rich cultural heritage and historical sites to the world, the nation can attract cultural enthusiasts from around the globe. Meanwhile, it is crucial to facilitate innovative smart tourism solutions that can streamline travel services and fulfil the evolving demands of modern travellers.

KAICO celebrates Mobil 1's role in racing excellence

Mobil 1 powers Red Bull KTM to victory at Italian Grand Prix

KUWAIT CITY, June 22: Mobil 1 celebrates a new milestone in motorcycle racing, having fueled the success of Red Bull KTM team at the Italian Grand Prix. This thrilling victory took place at Mugello Circuit, marking the seventh round of the prestigious MotoGP World Championship.

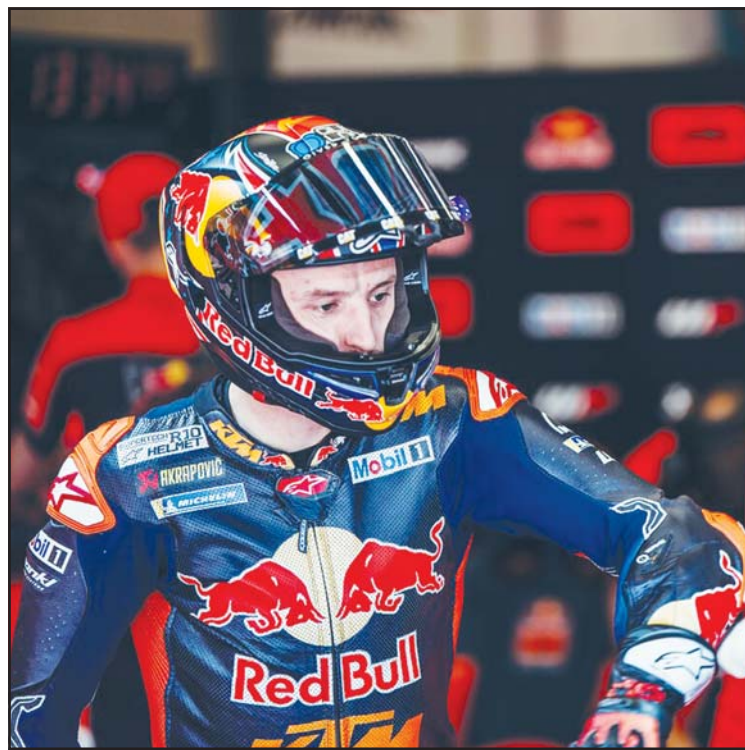
Kuwait Automotive Imports Company (Al-Shaya & Al-Sagar), the exclusive distributor of Mobil oils lubricants in Kuwait, expresses immense pride in Mobil 1's ongoing global achievements. This win adds another chapter to Mobil 1's impressive legacy in the world of motorcycle racing.

Mobil 1: The Everlasting Success Partner of Red Bull KTM Team

As a result of its commitment to innovation and quality, Mobil 1 is a fundamental component of Red Bull KTM's global racing success. It plays a crucial role in the achievements of riders Brad Binder and Jack Miller in various international races. At the Italian Grand Prix at Mugello, Mobil 1 provided outstanding performance and effective engine protection, helping the team overcome various challenges, with Brad Binder finishing in the top ten.

Advantages of Mobil 1 Oils:

Mobil 1 oils possess several



Red Bull KTM wins at Italian Grand Prix.

features that make them the ideal choice for Red Bull KTM team:

■ Excellent Performance: Provides high engine protection, enabling the team to achieve optimal performance.

■ High Efficiency: Maintains excellent and consistent perfor-

mance.

■ Superior technology: Reduces friction and improves fuel consumption, giving the team a significant competitive advantage.

Kaico and Mobil Celebrate Innovation and Success: KAICO (Al-Shaya & Al-Sa-

gar) General Manager Mr. Ashish Tandon praised Mobil 1 for its performance at the Italian Grand Prix, saying, "At Kuwait Automotive Imports Co W.L.L (KAICO), we support the leading brand's commitment to innovation and development, ensuring the best possible performance for vehicles".

Mr. Jayan, Lubricants Division Manager, emphasized Mobil's global leadership in engine oils for over 140 years, providing excellent performance and protection for engines. He stated, "The team's success at Mugello reflects Mobil's commitment to innovation and excellence in motorcycle racing and other mechanical sports".

About Mobil 1:

Mobil 1 is a leading brand of automotive and motorcycle engine oils, offering high-performance oils designed to protect and enhance engine performance. Mobil 1 oils are used by many professional racing teams worldwide. Mobil 1's achievements are not just a testament to its commitment to providing the best products and solutions, but also a reflection of the trust customers place in the quality of its products. The brand remains dedicated to innovation and high quality, looking forward to more successes and accomplishments in the future.

The Conversation

Importance of acclimatization and hydration in hot weather

Special considerations for vulnerable populations during heat waves

By Susan Yeargin, University of South Carolina

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

When summer starts with a stifling heat wave, as many places are seeing in 2024, it can pose risks for just about anyone who spends time outside, whether they're runners, people who walk or cycle to work, outdoor workers or kids playing sports.

Susan Yeargin, an expert on heat-related illnesses, explains what everyone should think about before spending time outside in a heat wave and how to keep yourself and vulnerable family members and friends safe.

The time of day matters if you're going for a run, or if you're walking or cycling to work during a heat wave. Early risers or evening runners face less of a risk - the Sun isn't as hot and the air temperature is lower.

But if your normal routine is to go for a run midmorning or over lunch, you probably want to rethink exercising in the heat.

Pretty much everywhere in the U.S., the hottest part of the day is between 10 a.m. and 6 p.m. The body will gain heat from both the air temperature and solar radiation. The ground also heats up, so you'll feel more heat rising up from the asphalt or grass.

Add humidity to the mix and that will also affect your body's ability to dissipate heat through sweat.

Don't forget that the body also generates internal heat when you're active, whether you're running or even mowing your lawn. When it's warm to hot outside, you're further increasing your heat gain through that exertion. The harder someone runs or cycles, the more heat they're generating.

Outdoor workers on farms, construction sites or even walking dogs are of-

ten in the heat longer, with less flexibility for breaks.

It takes about two weeks for the typical person to fully acclimatize to higher temperatures. Over that time, your body makes amazing adaptations to handle the heat.

Your sweat rate improves, dissipating heat more effectively. Your plasma volume expands so you have more blood pumping through your body, so the heart doesn't have to work as hard.

Because your cardiovascular system is more efficient, your body doesn't heat up as much. You also retain salt a bit better, which helps you keep water in your body.

That doesn't mean you're ready for even higher temperatures or extreme heat, though. Even if you're acclimatized to 80-degree weather, you might not be ready for a 95-degree heat wave.

When we get early season heat waves and high humidity, that can reach a level people aren't adapted to handle yet. And some combinations of heat and humidity are too much for anyone to safely spend much time in.

In older adults, the cardiovascular system isn't as flexible and powerful as it used to be, so it doesn't operate as efficiently, and sweating mechanisms decrease. That leaves older adults at greater risk for illnesses such as heat exhaustion or heat stroke.

Their thirst mechanism may also not function as well, leaving them more likely to become dehydrated. Some older adults are also less willing or able than younger people to seek out cooling centers.

Children might take a few more days to acclimatize than adults. They're also more dependent on skin heat loss than sweating, which is why their skin can get red and flushed-looking.

Children are probably better about complaining about feeling too hot or not feeling well, though, so listen to them and help them seek out cooler areas.

They might not realize that they can take a break during soccer practice, or that they should come in from the beach.

Be smart about the time of day you're being active: People love their routines, but you need to get the workout and yard work and other outdoor activities done early in the day or late in the evening. Avoiding the hottest parts of the day is the smartest way to prevent heat illnesses. When outside and the Sun is up, seek places with shade.

Have good hydration habits: Don't ignore thirst - it's your body telling you something. Hydration keeps your plasma volume higher to help your heart work less and decreases your overall risk for heat illnesses. Your brain and muscles are also composed of water, so if your body senses that you don't have enough water, it will start to sacrifice other things, including how much you're sweating.

Listen to your body: When you do need to be outside to work or play, your body will give you cues regarding how it's handling the heat. If you don't feel well, feel hot or can't seem to push harder, your body is telling you to slow down, add extra breaks or get out of the situation.

Make smart clothing choices: Wear light-colored clothing, which absorbs less heat than dark clothes. Short-sleeved shirts and shorts can also avoid helping heat build up or impairing sweat evaporation.

Remember that helmets and sports equipment hold in heat: Construction workers often have to wear hard hats, but athletes don't always need to practice with shoulder pads and helmets, especially in high heat. To help workers, there is a push for companies to follow health safety guidelines, such as providing cooling stations and hydration breaks.

Get a good night's sleep: Heat exposure one day can affect your risk the following day. If you can sleep in air conditioning and get a good night's sleep, that may help decrease the risk of heat illness. (AP)

Obituary

A legend and respected character actor

Sutherland, star of 'M.A.S.H.' and 'Hunger Games,' dies at 88

NEW YORK, June 22, (AP) — Donald Sutherland, the Canadian actor whose wry, arrestingly off-kilter screen presence spanned more than half a century of films from "M.A.S.H." to "The Hunger Games," has died. He was 88.

Sutherland died Thursday in Miami after a long illness, according to a statement from Creative Artists Agency, which represented him.

Kiefer Sutherland said on X he believed his father was one of the most important actors in the history of film: "Never daunted by a role, good, bad or ugly. He loved what he did and did what he loved, and one can never ask for more than that."

The tall and gaunt Sutherland, who flashed a grin that could be sweet or diabolical, was known for offbeat characters like Hawkeye Pierce in Robert Altman's "M.A.S.H.," the hippie tank commander in "Kelly's Heroes" and the stoned professor in "Animal House."

"Donald was a giant, not only physically but as a talent," Sutherland's "M.A.S.H." co-star Elliott Gould said in a statement to The Associated Press as many paid tribute. "He was also enormously kind and generous."

Before transitioning into a long career as a respected character actor, Sutherland epitomized the unpredictable, antiestablishment cinema of the 1970s. He never stopped working, appearing in nearly 200 films and series.

Over the decades, Sutherland showed his range in more buttoned-down - but still eccentric - roles in Robert Redford's "Ordinary People"

and Oliver Stone's "JFK." More recently, he starred in the "Hunger Games" films.

A memoir, "Made Up, But Still True," is due out in November.

"I love to work. I passionately love to work," Sutherland told Charlie Rose in 1998. "I love to feel my hand fit into the glove of some other character. I feel a huge freedom - time stops for me. I'm not as crazy as I used to be, but I'm still a little crazy."



Sutherland

Born in St. John, New Brunswick, Donald McNichol Sutherland was the son of a salesman and a mathematics teacher. Raised in Nova Scotia, he was a disc jockey with his own radio station at age 14.

"When I was 13 or 14, I really thought everything I felt was wrong and dangerous, and that God was going to kill me for it," Sutherland told The New York Times in 1981. "My father always said, 'Keep your mouth shut, Donnie, and maybe people will think you have character.'"

Acting

Sutherland began as an engineering student at the University of Toronto but switched to English and started acting in school theatrical productions. While studying, he met Lois Hardwick, an aspiring actress. They married in 1959 but divorced seven years

later. After graduating in 1956, Sutherland attended the London Academy of Music and Dramatic Art to study acting. He began appearing in West End plays and British television. After a move to Los Angeles, a series of war films changed his trajectory.

His breakthrough was "The Dirty Dozen" (1967), in which he played Vernon Pinkley, the officer-impersonating psychopath. 1970 saw the release of the World War II yarn "Kelly's Heroes" and "M.A.S.H.," a smash hit that catapulted Sutherland to stardom.

"There is more challenge in character roles," Sutherland told The Washington Post in 1970. "There's longevity. A good character actor can show a different face in every film and not bore the public."

If Sutherland had had his way, Altman would have been fired from "M.A.S.H." He was unhappy with the director's unorthodox, improvisational style. But the film caught on beyond anyone's expectations.

Sutherland identified with its anti-war message. Outspoken against the Vietnam War, he along with actress Jane Fonda and others founded the Free Theater Associates in 1971. Banned by the Army because of their political views, they performed in venues near military bases in Southeast Asia in 1973.

"I thought I was going to be part of a revolution that was going to change movies and its influence on people," Sutherland told the Los Angeles Times.

Variety



This image released by Magnolia Pictures shows Richard Roundtree, (left), and June Squibb in a scene from the film 'Thelma.' (AP)

Film

Film offers a refreshing take on senior comedy

Squibb charms as grandma in 'Thelma'

By Lindsey Bahr

There are a lot of bad comedies about, and supposedly, senior citizens. It's especially depressing because the worst offenders, the ones that don't just feel cheap and lazy but exploitative too, often feature our finest actors. They can take on the air of an unintentional horror film - and not the fun kind.

"Thelma," starring June Squibb, is not one of those. In her first lead film role, she plays a 90-something who gets scammed out of \$10,000 and goes on a mission to get it back. Revenge stories aren't often (or ever, really) described as sweet, but that's the magic of "Thelma," the feature debut of writer-director Josh Margolin that opens in theaters this week. It is charming, genuinely funny and a breeze to watch.

Perhaps it works so well on a fundamental level because Margolin wrote it with his own grandmother (also named Thelma) in mind. Though there is something inherently silly and goofy about the idea of a grandmother on a "Mission: Impossible"-style journey, "Thelma" transcends its on-paper limitations and becomes something wholly unexpected. Kind of like its main character. This isn't just an idea of an old person slotted into a high concept gag. It's specific and at least somewhat realistic. The scooter she and the late Richard Roundtree (as her friend Ben) ride might be slower than Tom Cruise on foot, but the energy is high and infectious.

Squibb is absolutely wonderful at the center of the film, with impeccable comedic timing and full command of her character. Thelma is living alone at 93. She lost her husband a few years prior. Lots of her friends are gone already. But she doesn't yet see herself in an assisted living situation, or even wearing a life monitor in case she falls. "If I fall I'm toast," she deadpans. "That's why I don't fall."

And she's managing pretty well. Her dotting 20-something grandson Daniel (Fred Hechinger of the first season of "The White Lotus") visits often to help with the computer and just hang out. When he's gone, she fills her days with all her tasks: Sorting pills, doing her stationary bike exercises, watching YouTube videos, attempting to comment, attempting to backspace and revise typos and accidentally posting blurry photos of nothing to her Instagram

stories.

That is until she gets a panicked phone call from someone claiming to be her grandson. He was in an accident, he says, and she needs to send \$10,000 in cash to bail him out. By the time the family starts answering the phone, the money is in the mail, and the police are telling them there's nothing that can be done. Her family, including Daniel's mom Gail (Parker Posey) and dad (Clark Gregg), basically wash their hands of it. But Thelma has nothing but time, and she wants to do something about it.

Margolin's film was made independently. It debuted earlier this year at the Sundance Film Festival and was picked up for a theatrical release. But he had his team have made it look and feel commercial and buttoned up with a fun '60s-inspired score by Nick Chuba.

Things really come to life when Roundtree (terrific, in his last role) enters the picture as her reluctant accomplice on their trip from the Westside of Los Angeles to Van Nuys, in the San Fernando Valley. She doesn't drive and needs his refurbished scooter that he's been going on about - but he's not about to let her take it on her own.

They have a great rapport - an inspired pairing. The Posey/Gregg/Hechinger trio isn't too shabby either spouting comedic banter that makes them instantly believable as a family unit. One standout sequence involves one of those dreaded Waze-directed Los Angeles left turns across a busy four lane thoroughway.

But this is ultimately Squibb's show and she delivers, like she always does. She should have been leading pictures the whole time and finally did something about it.

"Thelma," a Magnolia Pictures release in theaters Friday, is rated PG-13 by the Motion Picture Association for "strong language." Running time: 97 minutes. Three and a half stars out of four.

Also:

NEW YORK: After months of conjecture about the fate of Francis Ford Coppola's self-financed epic, "Megalopolis" has finally found a home.

Lionsgate will distribute "Megalopolis" in U.S. and Canadian theaters, the studio announced Monday, ending one of the biggest acquisition dramas of the year. Coppola's \$120-million Roman epic set in a futuristic

New York will land in theaters, including IMAX screens, on Sept. 27.

Coppola first privately screened "Megalopolis," his first film in 13 years, for potential buyers late March in Los Angeles. Word quickly filtered out about the unique nature of "Megalopolis," along with some skepticism over its financial potential. Last month, it debuted at the Cannes Film Festival where the film was met with mixed reviews but broad admiration for its daring.

Coppola has previously collaborated with Lionsgate on several home movie releases, including "Apocalypse Now Final Cut."

"One rule of business I've always followed and prioritized (to my benefit) is to continue working with companies and teams who over time have proven to be good friends as well as great collaborators," Coppola said in a statement.

"This is why I am thrilled to have (Lionsgate Motion Picture Group chair) Adam Fogelson and Lionsgate Studios release 'Megalopolis.' I am confident they will apply the same tender love and care given to 'Apocalypse Now,' which is currently in its 45th year of astounding revenue and appreciation."

In the film, Adam Driver stars as Cesar, an artist-inventor with dreams of a utopian metropolis at odds with the city's mayor (Giancarlo Esposito). It co-stars Nathalie Emmanuel, Aubrey Plaza, Laurence Fishburne, Shia LaBeouf, Jon Voight and Dustin Hoffman.

Coppola has spent decades pondering "Megalopolis" and ultimately sold off pieces of his considerable wine empire to largely finance it himself. The film, which previously landed distribution deals for many international territories, has experimental aspects to it. Screenings thus far have included a live moment when an actor walks on stage and addresses a question to the screen.

"Francis is a legend," said Fogelson in a statement. "For many of us, his gifts to cinema were one of the inspirations to devote our own careers to film. It is a true privilege to work with him, and to bring this incredible, audacious, and utterly unique movie to theatrical audiences."

At Lionsgate, we strive to be a home for bold and daring artists, and Megalopolis proves there is no one more bold or daring than the maestro, Francis Ford Coppola." (AP)

ATLANTA: Reality TV star Julie Chrisley's sentence for bank fraud and tax evasion was thrown out Friday by federal appeals judges, who ordered a lower court to redo her punishment over what the appellate panel called a "narrow issue."

Julie Chrisley and her husband, Todd Chrisley, who earned fame for the show "Chrisley Knows Best" that chronicled the exploits of their tight-knit family, were convicted in 2022 of conspiring to defraud community banks out of more than \$30 million in fraudulent loans. The Chrisleys were also found guilty of tax evasion by hiding their earnings while showcasing an extravagant lifestyle.

The couple's accountant, Peter Tarantino, stood trial with them and was convicted of conspiracy to defraud the United States and willfully filing false tax returns.

A three-judge panel of 11th US Circuit Court of Appeals upheld the convictions of the Chrisleys and Tarantino in a ruling that found a legal error only in how the trial judge calculated Julie Chrisley's sentence by holding her accountable for the entire bank fraud scheme. So the appellate panel sent her case back to the lower court for re-sentencing.

"We're pleased that the Court agreed that Julie's sentence was improper, but we're obviously disappointed that it rejected Todd's appeal," Alex Little, an attorney for the couple, said in an email message. He added that the Chrisley family was "hopeful for more good news in the future."

Before the Chrisleys became reality television stars, they and a former business partner submitted false documents to banks in the Atlanta area to obtain fraudulent loans, prosecutors said during the trial.

They accused the couple of spending lavishly on luxury cars, designer clothes, real estate and travel, and using new fraudulent loans to pay off old ones. Todd Chrisley then filed for bankruptcy, according to prosecutors, walking away from more than \$20 million in unpaid loans. (AP)

SANTA FE, N.M.: A New Mexico judge denied a request Friday to use immunity to compel testimony from a movie set armorer in the involuntary manslaughter trial of actor Alec Baldwin who fatally shot a cinematographer during

rehearsal for the Western movie "Rust."

Armorer Hannah Gutierrez-Reed was convicted in March of involuntary manslaughter for her role in the shooting of Halyna Hutchins on a movie-set ranch and she was sentenced to 18 months in prison. Her statements to investigators and workplace



Baldwin



Chrisley

safety regulators will likely feature prominently in Baldwin's trial, scheduled for July.

Further testimony could be limited by the armorer's reluctance to testify, and Judge Mary Marlowe Sommer said Friday that other witnesses can fill in most of the gaps if she doesn't testify. At a pretrial interview in May, Gutierrez-Reed

exercised her Fifth Amendment right against self-incrimination and declined to answer all questions.

"It's pretty clear that she does not intend to cooperate," Marlowe Sommer said. "I haven't heard of anything that she might testify to that someone else could not testify to."

But the judge acknowledged that Gutierrez-Reed could offer

new testimony about gun-safety training and whether Baldwin fully participated.

Special prosecutor Kari Morrissey indicated that the state could still call on Gutierrez-Reed to testify without immunity. Baldwin and Gutierrez-Reed both oppose efforts to compel her testimony. (AP)

People & Places

PARIS
a guy thing



Dior



Dior



Dior



Junya Watanabe



Comme Des Garçons



American Sabotage

Above and below: Models wear creations for the American Sabotage, Comme Des Garçons, Dior and Junya Watanabe Spring Summer 2025 collections presented Friday, June 21, in Paris. (AP)

Avant-garde designs

Art meets fashion in Dior's collection

PARIS, June 22, (AP) — Kim Jones' starry collection for Dior was the fruit of an encounter with ceramicist Hylton Nel, whose pottery and ceramics, including animal motifs, gave the spring collection for the Parisian powerhouse a fun, arty- and domesticated lift.

Here are some highlights of Friday's spring 2025 menswear collections:

On a drizzly day, Demi Moore swept in with her plus one - a Chihuahua called Pilaf- and when asked if she preferred dogs or cats, she replied, "isn't it obvious?" In the same spirit as the Hollywood actress, Dior's runway decor, inside the opulent grounds of the Left Bank's grand 17th century Val-de-Grace, was very tongue-in-cheek. It consisted of sculptures depicting ceramic reclining nude felines and cheeky canines, inspired by Nel and the Dior designer's own collection of trinkets.

Jones' artistic references are no surprise. Known for his historical and cultural inspirations, he has previously drawn on his uncle's photographs of Rudolf Nureyev and T.S. Eliot's "The Waste Land." This collection continued his tradition, bringing Nel's whimsical ceramics to life.

Bird motifs on a moody, black tailored jacket and a gender-fluid cloche hat opened the show, the model holding a reclining nude feline. Sketch-like animal motifs then appeared throughout. Loose, boxy proportions on car coats and skorts felt airy and defined the spring silhouette of designs that channeled the muted pastels of glazed ceramics. A demure pearly neck accessory - a sort of strappy hood collar - was a standout that seemed at once historic and fashion-forward, a signature of the British designer.

Innovation

Jones' innovative tailoring shone through, as always. Spring-like coats that seemed soft and feminine were given a full stop in the form of black leather boots, in one of many plays of contrast. This juxtaposition of delicate and strong elements is a hallmark of Jones' design. This season however, seemed more like a variation on a theme for the couturier, rather than something overtly new.

Yet the celebrity front row, as ever - including Moore, Robert Pattinson, Kate Moss, Pharrell Williams, as well as Taehyun, Soobin, Huening Kai and Yeonjun of Tomorrow X Together - brought a special kind of energy.

An urban patchwork suit in black, with frayed edges but a crisp silhouette, opened Junya Watanabe's latest menswear show, setting the stage for a focused and daring theme. The Japanese designer, known for his avant-garde creations and distinctive aesthetic, once again pushed the boundaries.

Box ties poked out above red carpet-ready white tuxedo shirts on a literal red carpet runway. But this was no ordinary Awards Ceremony outfit - an earring here, a frayed hem there. This was the punk answer to red carpet season. Tuxedo pants suddenly became distressed black jeans. Electrified hair standing on end, paired with snipped-away patches of tartan and slashed inserts, evoked a Tim Burton's Edward Scissorhands vibe.

Watanabe, celebrated for his progressive tailoring and deconstruction, continued to showcase his blending of historical references with modern subcultures.

The collection also reflected Watanabe's penchant for collaboration, with elements reminiscent of his partnerships with brands like Levi's and Carhartt. The fusion of high fashion with utilitarian elements added depth to the pieces, making them strikingly theatrical. Ready for the spotlight.

Style



American Sabotage



Junya Watanabe



Comme Des Garçons



Dior

Fashion

shooting that killed Shakur and wounded rap mogul Marion "Suge" Knight at an intersection just off the Las Vegas Strip. (AP)

ORLANDO, Fla.: Disney workers are suing their employer, claiming they were fraudulently induced to move from California to Florida to work in a new office campus only to have those plans later scrapped amid a fight between the entertainment giant and Florida Gov. **Ron DeSantis.**

In July 2021, the Disney Parks' chief told workers in California that most white-collar employees would be transferred to the new campus in Orlando to consolidate different teams and allow for greater collaboration. As many as 2,000 workers in

digital technology, finance and product development departments would be transferred to the campus located about 20 miles (30 kilometers) from the giant Walt Disney World theme park resort, the company said at the time.

Many workers were reluctant to make the move given their longstanding ties to Southern California and fears of uprooting their families, but Disney encouraged the move by promising a state-of-the-art, centralized workplace and greater affordability in central Florida, according to the class action lawsuit filed earlier this week.

"In sum, employees were incentivized to move through a combination of reward and punishment," the lawsuit said. "An employee could choose to move to a better life in Florida, or alternatively, choose not to move and be terminated by Disney."

By late 2021, as large numbers of Disney employees resisted relocating, Disney told them to put their moving plans on hold. Meanwhile, a group of workers who had decided to relocate, including the lead plaintiffs, **Maria De La Cruz** and **George Fong**, sold their California homes with the understanding that the company expected them to make the move, and they purchased homes in central Florida, the lawsuit said. (AP)

GRAND RAPIDS, Minn.: The Minnesota hometown of **Judy Garland**, the actress who wore a pair of ruby slippers in "The Wizard of Oz," is raising money to purchase the prized footwear after it was stolen from a local museum and then later turned over to an auction company.

Grand Rapids, Minnesota, where the late actress was born in 1922, is fundraising at its annual Judy Garland festival, which kicked off Thursday. The north Minnesota town is soliciting donations to bring the slippers back after an auction company takes them on an international tour before offering them up to prospective buyers in December.

"They could sell for \$1 million, they could sell for \$10 million. They're priceless," Joe Maddalena, Heritage Auctions executive vice president, told Minnesota Public Radio. "Once they're gone, all the money in the world can't buy them back."

The funds will supplement the \$100,000 set aside this year by Minnesota lawmakers to purchase the slippers. (AP)



Shakur



Garland

Variety

LAS VEGAS: A former Los Angeles-area gang leader accused of killing hip-hop music legend **Tupac Shakur** in 1996 in Las Vegas will ask a judge next week to let him out of jail to prepare for his trial on a murder charge. Duane "Keffe D" Davis' attorney

filed documents Thursday and a judge scheduled a hearing Tuesday at which Davis will ask permission to post \$750,000 bond to be freed to house arrest with electronic monitoring.

Davis' defense attorney, **Carl Arnold**, and a spokesperson did not immediately respond Friday to email and telephone messages about the court filing.

Davis has pleaded not guilty to first-degree murder and has remained jailed

at the Clark County Detention Center in Las Vegas since his arrest last Sept. 29. His trial is scheduled Nov. 4. If convicted, he could spend the rest of his life in prison.

Prosecutors asked Clark County District Court Judge **Carli Kierny** to require a "source hearing" for Davis to demonstrate that any funds used to secure his release are obtained legally.

Representatives at Crum & Forster Insurance and North River Insurance

Co., the Morristown, New Jersey-based backer of the bond identified in the court filing, did not respond Friday to telephone messages.

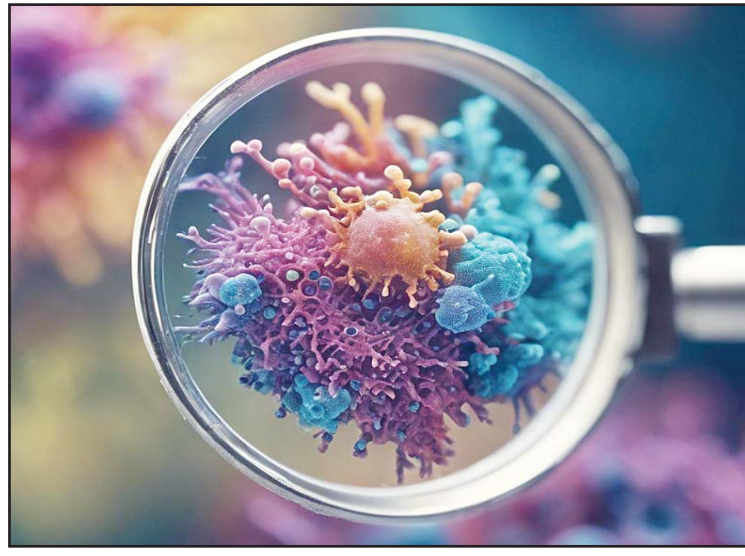
Davis is originally from Compton, California, but has lived in recent years with his wife and son in Henderson, a Las Vegas suburb.

He and prosecutors say he is the only person still alive among four people who were in a car from which shots were fired in the September 1996

Dr. Rajan discusses STSS causes, management, and prevention

Prompt medical care vital for STSS to prevent complications

KUWAIT CITY, June 22: Japan experiences a record-breaking outbreak of a lethal bacterial infection. Streptococcal toxic shock syndrome (STSS) has recently been causing concern. In an exclusive interview with Dr. Rajesh Rajan, a senior cardiologist and esteemed figure in the field of cardiovascular health, insightful recommendations were shared regarding STSS. Dr. Rajan shed light on the causes, management, and precautions necessary to prevent the spread of this potentially life-threatening infection.



Streptococcal toxic shock syndrome is a rare but extremely serious bacterial infection that can quickly become a medical emergency.

STSS is a rare but extremely serious bacterial infection that can quickly become a medical emergency. It occurs when Group A Streptococcus bacteria spread into deep tissues and the bloodstream. The initial symptoms of STSS often include fever, chills, muscle aches, nausea, and vomiting. Within 24 to 48 hours, low blood pressure, organ failure, rapid heart rate, and rapid breathing can develop. Signs of organ failure may include decreased urine output, excessive bleeding or bruising, and

yellowing of the skin and eyes.

Seek immediate medical attention if you experience any symptoms of

STSS. Timely intervention is necessary to prevent complications and increase the chances of recovery.

STSS often leads to complications such as organ failure and the need for surgical removal of infected tissues or limbs. While anyone can develop STSS, certain factors increase the risk, including age (especially adults aged 65 or older), open wounds or injuries that break the skin, underlying health conditions such as diabetes or alcohol use disorder, and exposure to Group A streptococcal bacteria.

STSS is primarily caused by Group A Streptococcus bacteria. While it is rare for someone with STSS to spread the infection to others, less severe Group A streptococcal infections can potentially lead to STSS. To prevent STSS and Group A streptococcal infections, it is important to maintain good hygiene practices, promptly treat open wounds, and avoid close contact with individuals who have active strep infections.

Diagnosing STSS involves various tests, including blood and other sample collections to detect Group A strep infection. Additionally, healthcare providers assess organ functionality through specific tests. A confirmed diagnosis of STSS requires the presence

of a Group A strep infection, low blood pressure, and dysfunction in two or more organs.

The treatment of STSS involves administering antibiotics to combat the bacterial infection. Hospitalization is necessary for individuals with STSS, as they often require intravenous fluids and other interventions to manage shock and organ failure. Surgical intervention may also be necessary to remove infected tissues.



Dr. Rajan

Streptococcal toxic shock syndrome is a rare but potentially life-threatening infection that requires immediate medical attention. Recognizing the symptoms, understanding the risk factors, and seeking prompt treatment can significantly improve outcomes. Additionally, practicing good hygiene and taking preventive

measures can reduce the risk of contracting Group A strep infections. It is advisable to consult with healthcare professionals for personalized advice and treatment options when dealing with any medical concerns.

Dr. Rajesh Rajan is a renowned Indian cardiologist at Al Amiri Hospital Kuwait and holds prestigious positions as the current President of the Association of MD Physicians and the Managing Editor of the esteemed Annals of Clinical Cardiology Journal by Wolters Kluwer.

His contributions to the medical community are highly regarded, and he has been honored with Fellowships from esteemed institutions such as the Royal College of London, Edinburgh, Ireland, and Glasgow.

Dr. Rajan's expertise and commitment to cardiovascular health are evident through his groundbreaking research and recognition as a Fellow of the American College of Cardiology, the European Society of Cardiology, American Society of Echocardiography and the American Heart Association.

Device harms children's safety, mental health

Parents across Europe band together against young kids' smartphone use

BARCELONA, Spain, June 22, (AP): Try saying "no" when a child asks for a smartphone. What comes after, parents everywhere can attest, begins with some variation of: "Everyone has one. Why can't I?"

But what if no preteen in sight has one - and what if having a smartphone was weird? That's the endgame of an increasing number of parents across Europe who are concerned by evidence that smartphone use among young kids jeopardizes their safety and mental health - and share the conviction that there's strength in numbers.

From Spain to Britain and Ireland, parents are flooding WhatsApp and Telegram groups with plans not just to keep smartphones out of schools, but to link arms and refuse to buy young kids the devices before - or even into - their teenage years.

After being inspired by a conversation in a Barcelona park with other moms, Elisabet Garcia Permanyer started a chat group last fall to share information on the perils of Internet access for children with families at her kids' school.

The group, called "Adolescence Free of Mobile Phones," quickly expanded and now includes over 10,000 members. The most engaged parents are pushing for fellow parents to agree not to get their kids smartphones until they are 16. After organizing online, they facilitate real-world talks among concerned parents to further their crusade.

"When I started this, I just hoped I would find four other families who thought like me, but it took off and kept growing, growing and growing," Garcia Permanyer says. "My goal was to try to join forces with other parents so we could push back the point when smartphones arrive. I said, 'I am going to try to do that my kids are not the only ones who don't have one.'"

It isn't just parents. Police and public

health experts were sounding the alarm about a spike of violent and pornographic videos watched by children via handheld devices. Spain's government took note of the momentum and banned smartphones entirely from elementary schools in January. Now they can only be turned on in high school, which starts at age 12, if a teacher deems it necessary for an educational activity.

The movement in Britain gained steam this year after the mother of 16-year-old Brianna Ghey, who was killed by two teenagers last year, began demanding that kids under 16 be blocked from accessing social media on smartphones.

Decision

"It feels like we all know (buying smartphones) is a bad decision for our kids, but that the social norm has not yet caught up," Daisy Greenwell, a Suffolk, England-area mother of three kids under age 10, posted to her Instagram earlier this year. "What if we could switch the social norm so that in our school, our town, our country, it was an odd choice to make to give your child a smartphone at 11? What if we could hold off until they're 14, or 16?"

She and a friend, Clare Reynolds, set up a WhatsApp group called Parents United for a Smartphone-Free Childhood, with three people on it. Within four days, 2,000 people had joined the group, requiring Greenwell and Reynolds to split off dozens of groups by locality. Now there's a chat group for every British county.

Change (cross head) Parents rallying to ban smartphones from young children have a long way to go to change what's considered "normal." By the time they're 12, most children have smartphones, statistics from all three countries show. In Spain, a quarter of children have a cellphone by age 10, and almost half by 11. At 12, this share rises to 75%. British media regulator Ofcom said

55% of kids in the UK owned a smartphone between ages 8 and 11, with the figure rising to 97% at age 12.

Parents and schools that have succeeded in flipping the paradigm in their communities told The Associated Press the change became possible the moment they understood that they were not alone.

In Greystones, Ireland, that moment came after all eight primary school principals in town signed and posted a letter last year that discouraged parents from buying their students smartphones. Then the parents themselves voluntarily signed written pledges, promising to refrain from letting their young kids have the devices.

"The discussion went away almost overnight," says Christina Capatina, 38, a Greystones parent of two preteen daughters who signed the pledge and says there were almost no smartphones in schools this academic year.

Something like a consensus has built for years among institutions, governments, parents and others that smartphone use by children is linked to bullying, suicidal ideation, anxiety and loss of concentration necessary for learning. China moved last year to limit children's use of smartphones, while France has in place a ban on smartphones in schools for kids aged six to 15.

The push to control smartphones in Spain comes amid a surge in cases of children viewing online pornography, sharing videos of sexual violence, or creating "deep fake" pornographic images of female classmates using generative artificial intelligence tools. Spain's government says that 25% of kids 12 and under and 50% of kids 15 and under have been exposed to online pornography.

The dangers have produced school bans on smartphones and online safety laws. But those don't address what kids do in off hours.

Conference emphasizes awareness and resilience

KCICAI event explores cybercrime evolution and security strategies

KUWAIT CITY, June 22: The Kuwait Chapter of The Institute of Chartered Accountants of India (KCICAI) recently organized a much-anticipated conference on the "Evolution of Cybercrime and Cyber Security Landscape" at the Jumeirah Messilah Beach Hotel, Kuwait. The event attracted professionals and enthusiasts to discuss the dynamic changes and challenges in the realm of cybercrime and cybersecurity.

The session commenced with an introduction by CA Venkata Ramana, Secretary KCICAI, who underscored the critical importance of cybersecurity and its pervasive impact on our daily lives. He welcomed the Chief Guest Shri Sanjay K Muluka, Counsellor (Pol. & Com.) at the Embassy of India, Kuwait, and Mr. Ross McNaughton, Chief Information Security Officer at Gulf Bank, Kuwait, along with all the other esteemed guests and members.

CA Aditya Vikram Dhanuka, Chairperson KCICAI, officially commenced the event, setting the expectation to spread awareness and make its members more resilient towards cybercrime. This was followed by an address from Shri Sanjay K. Muluka, the distinguished Chief Guest, whose insights captivated and informed an engaged audience. He elaborated on various Indian government initiatives aimed at enhancing cybersecurity and stressed the need for events like these to promote awareness among members and the broader society.

Ross McNaughton, the speaker of the event, with over two decades of experience in the cybersecurity domain, delivered a compelling presentation on the current trends in cybercrime and the strategies organizations must adopt to safeguard their digital assets. McNaughton highlighted the increasing sophistication of cyber threats, ranging



Participants at KCICAI's Evolution of Cybercrime and Cybersecurity Landscape Conference.

from ransomware and phishing attacks to state-sponsored cyber espionage. He emphasized the critical need for a proactive cybersecurity posture.

Scams

Sharing some real-life examples, McNaughton explained why organized crimes, malware, and phishing scams target ordinary people. He highlighted that 70% of online banking customers and shipment recipients are particularly susceptible. He provided an overview of the dark web, distinguishing it from the surface web and the deep web, and warned that one-time passwords (OTPs) are only as secure as the telecommunications companies managing them.

He also highlighted the risks associated with public Wi-Fi and QR codes. McNaughton cautioned that using public Wi-Fi, even on secured sites, can expose users to surveillance by Wi-Fi providers and fraudsters who create fake Wi-Fi networks in public places. He also emphasized the dangers of QR

codes, as fraudsters can replace legitimate QR codes with malicious ones.

The concept of "Zero Trust" in cybersecurity was addressed too, emphasizing continuous verification of customer identity and restricting access based on user verification and device trustworthiness. McNaughton explained how behavior profiling tracks customer usage patterns. In his concluding remarks, McNaughton stressed the importance of continuous awareness and vigilance to build resilience against cyber threats. He advised prioritizing the monitoring of exposed information and credit ratings, as breaches are a constant threat.

The event proceedings were skillfully managed by CA Rohit Agrawal, Vice Chairperson KCICAI, who served as the Master of Ceremony. He ensured the smooth flow of the program, engaging the audience with his eloquent commentary and facilitating interactive sessions that allowed for a rich exchange of ideas and experiences.

The vote of thanks was delivered by CA Andaleeb Girkar, executive committee member, who expressed gratitude to Ross McNaughton for his enlightening presentation, the attendees, and the annual sponsors Al Mulla Exchange and NBK for their unwavering support. She also thanked KCICAI's media partners for their extensive coverage of the event.

For more information about KCICAI and upcoming events, please visit

WHO, Eli Lilly warn patients against fake weight-loss drugs

NEW YORK, June 22, (AP): The World Health Organization and drugmaker Eli Lilly and Co. are warning people to be wary of fake versions of popular weight-loss and diabetes medicines.

WHO said Thursday that it has fielded several reports of fake semaglutide - the active ingredient in Novo Nordisk's Wegovy and Ozempic - in all geographic regions of the world since 2022.

Lilly said in an open letter that it was "deeply concerned" about

growing online sales and social media posts involving phony or compounded versions of tirzepatide, the active ingredient behind its drugs Mounjaro and Zepbound.

The Indianapolis-based company said it was the only lawful supplier of those drugs, and it does not provide tirzepatide to compounding pharmacies, wellness centers or online retailers.

Lilly said fake versions of its drugs frequently advertised or sold

online are never safe to use.

Novo Nordisk has issued similar warnings in the past about its medications.

WHO said patients can protect themselves by using prescriptions from licensed physicians to buy the medications. The agency said patients also should avoid buying the drugs from unfamiliar sources.

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Wilson has 26 pts, 16 rebounds as Aces top Sun

Clark scores 16, Fever beat Dream in front of record-breaking 17,575 fans

ATLANTA, June 22, (AP): NaLyssa Smith had 21 points and nine rebounds, Caitlin Clark added 16 points and seven assists, and the Indiana Fever beat the Atlanta Dream 91-79 in front of a record-breaking 17,575 fans at State Farm Arena.

Atlanta set a franchise record for single-game home attendance, surpassing the 11,609 fans who saw the team's inaugural game against the Detroit Shock in 2008 at Philips Arena.

The game was played at the home of the Atlanta Hawks due to high ticket demand to see Clark, the No. 1 draft pick. The Dream's usual home at Gateway Center Arena in College Park has a capacity of 3,500.

The hyped matchup took a hit when it was announced that Rhyn Howard, the 2022 top pick for Atlanta, would not play due to a lower leg injury.

Indiana scored a season-high 35 first-quarter points to build a 10-point

lead after shooting 70% from the field.

Clark made her fourth 3-pointer, and Indiana's 10th, to extend the lead to 71-60 midway through the third quarter. It came during an 11-3 run that ended in a 79-62 lead. The Fever cruised in the fourth.

Kelsey Mitchell added 18 points and Aliyah Boston had 10 points, 10 rebounds and three blocks for Indiana (7-10), which won its fourth straight game. Katie Lou Samuelson added 10 points off the bench.

Tina Charles scored a season-high 24 for her 37th career 20-point game to lead Atlanta (6-8). Allisha Gray added 19 points and Haley Jones scored 12.

Atlanta's next home game against Indiana will also be played at State Farm Arena on August 26.

A'ja Wilson had 26 points and 16 rebounds, Kelsey Plum added 18 points and the Las Vegas Aces beat the Connecticut Sun 85-74, their seventh

win in the last nine meetings between the teams including the 2022 WNBA Finals.

It was Wilson's fourth game this season with 25-plus points and 15-plus rebounds - one shy of Tina Charles' WNBA record of five, set in 2021. Wilson also reached 20-plus points for the 19th straight regular-season game.

BASKETBALL

Las Vegas (8-6) has won two straight for the first time since May 29, Connecticut (13-2), which was off to its best 14-game start in franchise history, lost for the first time in six road contests this season.

Las Vegas' double-digit lead was trimmed to seven points midway through the third quarter, but the Aces closed on a 9-3 run for a 63-50 lead. They opened the fourth on a 7-3 run to

make it 70-53.

Alysha Clark added 11 points off the bench for Las Vegas. Kiah Stokes grabbed 10 rebounds to help the Aces dominate the glass 42-29.

Dijonai Carrington scored 11 of her 19 points in the third quarter and Brianna Jones added 18 for Connecticut. Alyssa Thomas, who was called for her fourth foul with 3:27 left in the third, finished with six points and seven assists. DeWanna Bonner, averaging a team-high 17.5 points per game, was held to six points on 2-of-10 shooting.

Jones and Tyasha Harris were the only two Connecticut players to score in the first quarter as the Sun trailed 20-16. Jones scored 11 points in the opening 10 minutes but didn't score in the second quarter. The Aces extended their lead to 45-28 by halftime.



Indiana Fever guard Caitlin Clark (22) battles Atlanta Dream guard Haley Jones (13) for the ball during the second half of a WNBA basketball game in Atlanta. (AP)



Blues captain Patrick Tuipulotu (centre) holds the trophy aloft as the Blues team celebrate winning the Super Rugby Pacific final against the Chiefs in Auckland, New Zealand. (AP)

Clarke's hat trick lifts Blues to 41-10 win over Chiefs in Super Rugby final

Auckland transformed this season by a new head coach

AUCKLAND, New Zealand, June 22, (AP): Winger Caleb Clarke scored three tries to help the Auckland-based Blues beat the Hamilton-based Chiefs 41-10 in an all-New Zealand final of Super Rugby Pacific to end a 21-year title drought on Saturday.

Clarke scored in the first half to pad the Blues' 20-3 lead by half-time and twice more in the second

RUGBY

as the Blues dominated in a steady rain to win a Super Rugby title for the first time since 2003. The Chiefs lost in the final for the second straight year.

Akira Ioane, who played alongside his brother Rieko for the last time before heading to Japan, scored the Blues' first try and provided the last pass in Clarke's second. He also claimed the lineout win which eventually led to Clarke's third try. He left the field to a standing ovation in the 78th minute.

"That was a tough one and we had so

many boys who stepped up," Clarke said. "It was a big occasion especially for Akira, the coaches who have come in for the first time and a group that has been together for so long.

"It's going to take a while to sink in but we finally got the job done."

Captain Patrick Tuipulotu played despite a knee injury sustained two weeks ago and his frequent carries were a big part of the Blues' dominant performance. He limped from the field in the 58th minute.



Blues winger Caleb Clarke runs at the defense during the Super Rugby final between the Chiefs and the Blues in Auckland, New Zealand. (AP)

The Blues spent almost all of the first half in the Chiefs' half, much of it inside the 22 and the fact they came away with only two tries was due to the immense effort of the Chiefs' defense. But the Chiefs' discipline was lax and they repeatedly conceded penalties.

Eventually the combination of the Blues' continues possession, territorial advantage and penalties wore down the Chiefs and they yielded three more tries in the second half, the last to A.J. Lam.

The Blues have been transformed

this season by new head coach Vern "Stern Vern" Cotter, the former Scotland and Fiji coach. He took away many of the frills and added a ruthlessness that had been missing.

On Saturday, as they have been throughout the season, the Blues showed patience and were happy to attack through the relentless accumulation of phases in which Tuipulotu and Akira Ioane were key figures. Lam and Rieko Ioane also were prominent, getting among the forwards to make several telling interventions.

Akira Ioane scored the first try in the 12th minute. After flyhalf Harry Plummer carried the ball close to the line, Ioane picked it up, pushed his hands through the ruck and dotted it down.

Clarke scored the second after Rieko and Akira Ioane handled close to the touchline in the left hand corner. Akira Ioane was toppling out of play when he hurled the ball infield to Clarke to score.

Chiefs prop George Dyer was sin-binned in the 51st minute, the Blues won possession against a seven-man Chiefs scrum and Hoskins Sotutu detached and passed to Clarke. Clarke's third came from a long, floated pass to his left wing from scrumhalf Finlay Christie.

The Chiefs scored a second half try through Simon Parker.

'Paris is an open museum' with cycling competitions

GENEVA, June 22, (Xinhua): Watching Olympic cycling competitions is the best opportunity for fans to experience the landscape beauty of the city of Paris, Union Cycliste Internationale (UCI) president David Lappartient said on Friday.

"I'm expecting something amazing at the Paris Olympic Games. Paris is a very iconic city. It's an open museum. The Olympics will give the fans an opportunity to see Paris," Lappartient said in an interview with Xinhua.

Lappartient, 51, was born at Pontivy, northwest of France.

"We have all these disciplines in very, very iconic places. Only cycling competitions can give their fans the opportunity to see all these good scenes in Paris," the president added.

The BMX competition of the Paris 2024 Olympic Games will be held at the Place de la Concorde, the largest square in the center of Paris and is located north of the Seine River.

The road cycling routes start at the Trocadero and take in famous Parisian sights including the Louvre and the Eiffel Tower.

"A lot of cycling disciplines are in

a very, very iconic place of Paris, and also the road cycling is free. That is why I say it's a kind of open museum. You will see all the iconic building. So I say cycling is one of the only sports with which you can really see the city," he said.

The only concern for Lappartient is the weather in Paris. But he's not worried about the athletes, but about the fans.

"The athletes will ride whatever the weather will be. It will be less difficult for the athletes because a run is only one minute. But for the fans or the spectators, with no roof, it will be probably more difficult," the French said.

There are five disciplines for cycling competitions at Paris 2024, including road cycling, track, mountain bike, BMX racing and BMX freestyle. As one of the most historical events, which was featured from the very first edition of the modern Olympic Games in 1896, cycling is developing fast among youth fans after BMX was introduced to the Games.

The BMX racing appeared at Beijing 2008 for the first time and BMX freestyle has its inaugural showpiece at Tokyo 2020.

IOC celebrates Olympic Day with campaign of Let's Move

LAUSANNE, June 22, (Xinhua): The International Olympic Committee (IOC) celebrated the 2024 Olympic Day two days early at the Olympic House on Friday and the IOC President Thomas Bach invited the world to join IOC's "Let's Move" campaign.

"This year's Olympic Day is a very special one, taking place just ahead of Paris 2024. The athletes, the fans and the entire Olympic community around the world are all looking forward to Olympic Games that are younger, more inclusive, more urban, and more sustainable. These are the very first Olympic Games with full gender parity, the very first Olympic Games aligned with the reforms of Olympic Agenda from start to finish. They will be followed by more than half of the entire world's population," Bach said.

Olympic Day takes place on June 23 each year to commemorate the day the IOC was founded in 1894 by Pierre de

Coubertin. This year's Olympic Day theme, Let's Move and Celebrate, aims to ignite a collective passion for the Paris 2024 by encouraging people to get active and feel connected through sport.

"In these difficult times we are living through, people are longing for something which brings us finally together. We are longing for something that gives

OLYMPICS

us hope. This is why the world is looking forward to these Olympic Games as a moment of togetherness, a moment of joy, a moment of hope, a moment of solidarity, a moment of peace on this very special day," Bach said.

There will be the traditional Olympic Day run in Lausanne and many National Olympic Committees will celebrate together on June 23.



In this file photo, Alise Willoughby of the United States competes in the women's BMX Racing quarterfinals at the 2020 Summer Olympics in Tokyo, Japan. Willoughby was selected for her fourth Olympics and will lead the U.S. squad in BMX racing at the Paris Games in just over a month. (AP)

Smith will also be swimming three individual events

Dressel wins 50 meter freestyle to earn individual race in Paris

INDIANAPOLIS, June 22, (AP): Caeleb Dressel earned his first individual race of the Paris Games, winning the men's 50-meter freestyle at the U.S. Olympic swimming trials on Friday night.

Dressel, the winner of five gold medals in Tokyo, finished third in the first individual event, the 100 freestyle, which relegated him to the relay at that distance.

But he'll get a chance to defend his 50 free title in Paris, powering to a relatively easy victory in the all-out sprint from one end of the pool to the other at Lucas Oil Stadium.

Dressel touched in 21.41 seconds, with Chris Guiliano

SWIMMING

claiming his third individual race in Paris with a runner-up finish of 21.69.

Regan Smith will also be swimming three individual events at the Olympics after winning the 200 backstroke.

Smith was under world-record pace through the first two laps, but faded a bit at the end to touch in 2 minutes, 5.16 seconds. Still, she finished more than a second ahead of Phoebe Bacon, who grabbed the second Olympic spot in 2:06.27. She chased down reigning world champion Claire Curzan, who missed out on a berth in Paris with a time of 2:06.34.

Smith previously won the 100 backstroke in world-record



Shaine Casas swims during the Men's 200 individual medley finals at the US Swimming Olympic Trials in Indianapolis. (AP)

time, along with a victory in the 200 fly. She just missed a fourth individual race in Paris with a third-place showing in the 100 fly.

Still, it's been a dynamic meet for the Minnesota native, who has endured plenty of ups and downs since setting her first world record in 2019.

"I'm incredibly proud of this performance," Smith said. "I ran out of gas in that last race, but it's been a great meet for me."

Guiliano edged Matt King for an Olympic berth by a hundredth of a second, with Jack Alexy taking fourth in 21.76.

It was a busy night for Dressel, who returned about 35 minutes later to compete in the semifinals of his final event, the 100 butterfly.

The tattooed Floridian showed impressive speed in that event as well, posting the fastest time of 50.79 to stamp himself as the favorite in the final Saturday night. Dare Rose was next at 51.11.

Guiliano has emerged as a big star of these trials, heading to his first Olympics with three individual events on his plate. He won the 100 freestyle and was runner-up in the 200 free and now the 50 free.

Carson Foster will be doubling up in Paris, adding a victory in the 200 individual medley to the title he won in the 400 IM.

Shaine Casas was under world-record pace through the first two laps, but Foster chased him down on the freestyle leg to win in 1:55.65.

Casas grabbed his first Olympic berth with a runner-up showing of 1:55.83 - a huge relief for a swimmer who was billed as a rising star ahead of the Tokyo Games but failed to qualify in either of his events at the 2021 U.S. trials.

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South Africa stay unbeaten at T20 World Cup

Windies rout US by 9 wickets

GROS ISLET, St. Lucia, June 22, (AP): Unbeaten South Africa pulled off a seven-run win over defending champion England in the Super Eight playoffs at the Twenty20 World Cup.

Harry Brook, who made 53, and Liam Livingstone, with 33 off 17 balls, had the chase in control for England with 25 needed off 18 balls until fast bowlers Kagiso Rabada and Anrich Nortje dismissed them in the last three overs.

Later, Shai Hope hit 82 from 39

balls as the West Indies beat the United States by nine wickets in a match between co-hosts. Hope struck eight sixes as the West Indies ran down their winning target of 129 with more than nine overs to spare.

England was restricted to 156-6 in reply to South Africa's 163-6.

"Getting to those last three overs, the odds looked heavily against you," South Africa captain Aiden Markram said. "But the bowlers came back, it shows a lot of skill and shows the fight inside."

Quinton de Kock finished with 65 as he smacked the tournament's joint-fastest half-century off 22 balls, and

CRICKET

David Miller provided the impetus in the latter half of South Africa's innings with 43 off 28.

South Africa's win streak was extended to six games and it is a firm favorite for the semifinals after two wins in two matches in its group.

England suffered its first loss in the Super Eight after it beat the West Indies by eight wickets at the same venue. Earlier, de Kock dominated South Africa's powerplay and had them moping along at 63-0 before England pulled them back through spinners Adil Rashid (1-20) and Moeen Ali (1-25).

De Kock put fast bowler Jofra Archer on the mat early with two successive sixes in a 21-run over. De Kock was given a life on 58 when video replays suggested Mark Wood's fingers were not underneath the catch. The decision left England players fuming.

At Bridgetown, Barbados, West Indies fans parted under the Friday night lights as new team addition Shai Hope launched a spectacular display of



West Indies' Shai Hope hits a six during the men's T20 World Cup cricket match between the USA and the West Indies at Kensington Oval, Bridgetown, Barbados. (AP)

power-hitting to put the West Indies' campaign back on track with its nine-wicket win over the U.S.

He finished the chase with a six from the fifth ball of the 11th over. Along with his eight sixes, he hit four fours.

After a loss to England in their first

Super Eight match, the West Indies had to win to stay in semifinal contention. The United States surprised the cricket world by beating powerhouse Pakistan on the way to the Super Eight playoffs but after losses to South Africa and the West Indies in the playoff

stage now cannot reach the final four.

Roston Chase took a career-best 3-19 and Andre Russell 3-31 as the West Indies limited the United States to 128 in 19.5 overs after winning the toss.

"This is my favorite place to play cricket," Chase said. "I'm from Barba-

dos so I grew up playing a lot of cricket here. It's our destiny and our goal to go out there and win this World Cup."

Hope was added to the West Indies' lineup for Friday's match as an injury replacement for Brandon King who was ruled out with a side strain.

Clubs intensify search for foreign players

Kuwait Club's Barahma departs after three 'successful' seasons

By Hassan Musa

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, June 22: Local clubs are ramping up efforts to recruit foreign players to bolster their squads, with recent days seeing increased activity in player contracts.

Al-Arabi, known as "Al-Akhdar," is in advanced negotiations to secure Algerian player Ahmed Khalidi. The 25-year-old right

team's training will commence on June 29, with plans to depart for a foreign camp in Bosnia on July 18. This camp will run until early August and will feature several friendly matches.

Al-Mazidi also mentioned that the club does not intend to pursue any more local deals after signing Yaqoub Al-Tarawa and Mohamed Khaled. The technical staff, led by coach Nasser Al-Shatti, will decide on the potential return of loaned Algerian defender Sofiane Bouchard.

Negotiations to include Ahmed Al-Zenki from Al-Kuwait and Al-Azraq clubs fell through at the last minute.

Moroccan professional Mehdi Barahma has announced his departure from Kuwait Club after three successful seasons. On Instagram, Barahma expressed gratitude to the club, saying, "I spent 3 seasons full of competition and titles. I wish Kuwait more achievements and titles. Thank you."

Barahma's tenure saw Kuwait Club win the Kuwaiti Premier League title three times consecutively. The club is set to participate in the AFC Champions League 2 qualifying round, facing a tough match against Bahrain's Al-Ahly.

Press reports suggest that Al-Qadisiya has initiated negotiations to acquire another Moroccan player, though details remain undisclosed.

Brazilian professional Anselmo de Moraes, who played for Saudi Al-Wahda last season, has received an offer from an unnamed Kuwaiti club. Anselmo contributed five goals and one assist last season and has previously been loaned to Al-Nasr Saudi Arabia.

SOCCER

winger, who previously played for Constantine, Hilal Shalghoum El Eid, and Olympia Medea, is close to finalizing terms.

Additionally, Al-Arabi has begun negotiations with Algerian midfielder Zakaria Draoui. According to Al-Arabi Secretary Fouad Al-Mazidi, the first



Anselmo de Moraes

Best of the Rest

Falcao eager for debut: Veteran striker Radamel Falcao said he is anxious to play in Colombia's top flight for the first time after signing with Millonarios.

The 38-year-old, who parted ways with Spain's Rayo Vallecano earlier this month, is expected to make his debut for the Bogota club in July after agreeing to a six-month contract. "I'm excited to play professional football in Colombia, which is something I've never done, and to live in the country again," Falcao told W Radio.

"There is the personal challenge of being able to do well with my club and I also feel a responsibility to put on a good show," added the center-forward, who is the all-time leading scorer for Colombia's national team with 36 goals in 104 appearances.

Falcao began his senior career with Colombian second-tier club Lancers Boyaca before earning a move to Argentine giants River Plate at the age of 18.

He has since had spells at Porto, Atletico Madrid, Monaco, Manchester United, Chelsea, Galatasaray and Rayo Vallecano.

"My idea is to contribute and be just another player," Falcao said. "I'm going to fulfill my childhood dream, which is to wear the Millonarios shirt." (Xinhua)

Aaronson extends contract: American midfielder Paxten Aaronson

extended his contract with Eintracht Frankfurt through the 2027-28 season on Friday and was loaned to Utrecht in the Netherlands for 2024-25. Aaronson, who turns 21 in August, made his debut with Major League Soccer's Philadelphia Union in 2021 and joined Frankfurt in January 2023. He made seven Bundesliga appearances in the second half of the 2022-23 season and seven in the first half of 2023-24, but had just one start.

He was loaned to Vitesse in the Netherlands on Feb. 1 for the remainder of this past season and scored four goals in 14 Eredivisie appearances, all of them starts. He has 22 appearances for Frankfurt in all competitions.

Aaronson has one senior appearance for the U.S., in a January 2023 friendly against Colombia. He was part of the recent training camp of the under-23 team preparing for the Olympics.

"The loan move to Vitesse Arnhem and the playing time he's had there has given him a boost, as we hoped," Frankfurt sporting director Timmo Hardung said in a statement.

"For him it's now important that he sticks at it and continues to play regularly. In Utrecht he has a good environment and a good club, where he can take the next step in his development." Aaron's brother, 23-year-old Brenden, is a U.S. national team regular and spent last season on loan from Leeds to Union Berlin. (AP)

Chile, Peru rue missed chances in Copa stalemate

WASHINGTON, June 22, (Xinhua): Chile manager Ricardo Gareca said his team remains hopeful of reaching the Copa America knockout stage after a goalless draw with Peru in their tournament opener on Friday.

Chile controlled 65 percent of possession but had only one shot on target against a Peru side that forced four saves from Roja goalkeeper Claudio Bravo.

"It was an evenly fought contest," Gareca, who served as Peru's manager from 2015 to 2022 before taking charge of Chile in January, told reporters after the duel.

"Beyond the fact that we wanted to win the game, the most important thing of all is to stay in contention. We are now where we started, with possibilities [of advancing]." Gareca insisted he had felt no added pressure against his former team and said the result allowed Chile to "improve, see and analyze" for the rest of the tournament.

His Peru counterpart, Jorge Fossati, expressed satisfaction at the Blanquirojo's performance.

SOCCER

"We had a great attitude and started well," Fossati said. "But we became anxious and lacked confidence at key moments." Real Madrid-bound forward Endrick said Friday that he is willing to bide his time as he seeks to establish a starting spot for Brazil at the Copa America in the United States.

The 17-year-old has been touted by many as a future star after becoming the youngest player since Pele to score in three consecutive matches for the South American giants.

Brazil manager Dorival Junior last week expressed concern that too much pressure was being placed on the teenager, warning that the weight of expectation could be "fatal" for his development.

But Endrick downplayed those fears by guaranteeing that he will stay patient and humble.

"No one needs to burn stages," Endrick told reporters. "I stay on the sidelines, training hard, contributing, working alongside my teammates. I know my time will come." The comments came as Brazil prepared for their opening 2024 Copa America fixture against Costa Rica in Los Angeles on Monday.

Endrick is expected to start the match on the bench, with Dorival likely to opt for an attacking trident of Vinicius Junior, Rodrygo and Raphinha.

"I will do what I can, whether that's playing or encouraging others," said Endrick, who will join Real Madrid when he turns 18 next month after parting ways with Palmeiras.

"I'm trying to help the team spirit off the pitch to create a good atmosphere. And when Dorival puts me on, I'll fight with all my life." He added: "I've had a change of mindset and now I don't care

Endrick ready to wait for Brazil chance



Peru's goalkeeper Pedro Gallese catches a ball beside Chile's Igor Lichnovsky during a Copa America Group A soccer match in Arlington, Texas. (AP)

The coaching school is the reason why

Italian coaches dominating the dugouts at Euros

BERLIN, June 22, (AP): Italy continues a tradition at the European Championship with Italian coaches - this time five - in charge of national teams at the tournament in Germany.

Italy coach Luciano Spalletti is joined by Vincenzo Montella (Turkey), Domenico Tedesco (Belgium), Marco Rossi (Hungary) and Francesco Calzona (Slovakia).

With five of the 24 teams in Germany led by Italians, this tops the Netherlands' mark of having three coaches - out of 16 teams - at Euro 2008.

All but Tedesco studied at the Italian federation's coaching school, which is directed by former coach Renzo Ulivieri, who is also the president of the Italian soccer coaches' association.

Atalanta, under Gian Piero Gasperini, won the Europa League, beating Leverkusen 3-0. Only Fiorentina's narrow 1-0 loss to Olympiakos in the Europa Conference League final under coach Vincenzo Italiano prevented Italian managers from sweeping the European titles.

Spalletti attended the FIGC's coaching school in 1998-99 and graduated with the maximum grade attainable: 110 cum laude. He wrote his thesis on "The 3-5-2 playing system." Spalletti took charge of Italy last year, shortly after quitting Napoli. He led the southern team to its first Serie A title in more than three decades.

That also ended a lengthy wait for his first Italian league title despite coaching teams such as Inter Milan and Roma. He won Italian Cup titles with Roma in 2007 and 2008 and then Russian league trophies with Zenit St. Petersburg in 2010 and 2012.

The 65-year-old Spalletti has brought his all-attacking style and flair to a reinvigorated Italy. However, the Azzurri have had a stuttering start to their title defense. Italy beat Albania 2-1 in their opening match before being completely outclassed in a 1-0 loss to Spain.

Montella was also one of the top students in class, with a final mark of 110/110 at the end of his course in 2011.

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Montella took charge of Turkey's national team last year but has been living in the country since 2021 as coach of Super Lig team Adana Demirspor.

The 50-year-old had previously coached Fiorentina, AC Milan and Sampdoria among others in his native country as well as Sevilla in Spain. His only trophy as coach was the Italian Super Cup with Milan.

Montella was a prolific forward during his playing career and helped Italy to the Euro 2000 final.



Italy coach Luciano Spalletti yells from the bench during a Group B match between Spain and Italy at the Euro 2024 soccer tournament in Gelsenkirchen, Germany. (AP)

Turkey won its opener 3-1 against debutant Georgia but Montella's team will face a much tougher task against Portugal on Saturday.

Slovakia may be Calzona's first job as head coach but the 55-year-old has had an impressive apprenticeship.

Calzona was assistant coach to Maurizio Sarri at Napoli from 2015-18. He was also part of Spalletti's staff at the Serie A team and helped lay the foundation for its run to the league title.

Calzona left in August 2022, before the title-winning season, when former Napoli and Slovakia captain Marek Hamsik - who holds his country's appearance and goalscoring records - suggested he take over as the coach of Slovakia's national team.

After steering Slovakia to Euro 2024, Calzona was given his first senior role at club level when Napoli turned to him in February as its third coach in a disastrous season. He was given a contract for the remainder of the season and allowed to do both jobs.

Slovakia pulled off the biggest shock of Euro 2024 so far when it beat Belgium in their opener. It lost its second group match to Ukraine.

After several years of coaching in the lower leagues of Italian soccer and then finding himself without a club for a year, Rossi considered joining his brother's accountancy firm.

But a chance meeting with the sporting director of Honved at a restaurant in Budapest led to him to take charge of the Hungarian team.

The 59-year-old Rossi had two spells with Honved and led the team to its first Hungarian league title in 24 years in 2017. He also coached a Slovakian team before being appointed Hungary coach in July 2018.

Rossi steered Hungary to Euro 2020 but lost its opener to Portugal and was eliminated at the group stage despite impressive draws against France and Germany.

Hungary lost both its matches so far at this year's tournament, to Switzerland and Germany.



Czech Republic's Vladimir Coufal, left, Czech Republic's Tomas Holes, center and Georgia's Khvicha Kvaratskhelia, (right), challenge for the ball during a Group F match between Georgia and the Czech Republic at the Euro 2024 soccer tournament in Hamburg, Germany. (AP)

Sports

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France & Netherlands produce Euro 2024's first goalless draw

Georgia get first point in draw with Czechs

LEIPZIG, Germany, June 22, (AP): Kylian Mbappé watched from the substitutes' bench as France and the Netherlands finished 0-0 in a heavy-weight European Championship clash on Friday.

Antoine Griezmann missed France's best chances while Xavi Simons had a goal ruled out for the Dutch in the first goalless draw of the tournament.

It leaves both teams on four points in Group D after their second match. It also ensured Poland was the first team eliminated. Poland was beaten by Austria 3-1 earlier Friday and is assured of finishing bottom of the group, even if it beats France in its final group game.

France's buildup was dominated by speculation on whether Mbappé would play after the team captain broke his nose in their opening 1-0 win over Austria.

Mbappé trained wearing a face mask on Thursday and coach Didier

Deschamps was optimistic he'd be available. But Deschamps evidently decided it was not worth the risk to play Mbappé in a game his team had no need to win.

"Kylian is doing well. He's getting better with each day. If it was a decisive game I would have thought twice about him playing," Deschamps acknowledged. "It's a risk for him. With each day that that passes, we are getting to a point where it's better for him. I thought the wiser decision was to keep him on the bench."

France enjoyed its best period of pressure after the break, when Aurélien Tchouaméni headed over, goalkeeper Bart Verbruggen denied Griezmann from close range, and Ousmane Dembélé went close.

Then Xavi fired the ball in at the other end in the 69th on a rebound after Mike Maignan saved Memphis Depay's effort. It set off wild Dutch celebrations that sent beer cups and their contents flying into the Leipzig sky. But the fans' elation was quickly deflated because Denzel Dumfries,

who was offside, was adjudged after a lengthy VAR check to have obstructed Maignan from attempting to save Xavi's shot.

Netherlands coach Ronald Koeman thought otherwise and felt the goal should have been allowed.

Griezmann had the best of France's early chances, forcing a save from Verbruggen before he and Adrien Rabiot somehow contrived to miss when it seemed easier to score. Rabiot had only the goalkeeper to beat but he attempted a pass instead to Griezmann, who fell over

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trying to hit it from close range.

The French team, which needed an own goal to beat Austria, has yet to score at Euro 2024.

"We weren't efficient enough. We had five or six goal-scoring opportunities and we weren't able to find the back of the net, and if we're not able to find the back of the net, we're not walking away with three points,"

Deschamps said. "I'm happy despite the fact we weren't efficient enough."

The Dutch fans outnumbered their French counterparts. Thousands of orange-clad fans brightened Leipzig's city center earlier, though the French fans in blue were in no way discouraged from creating their own party. One French supporter brought a live rooster to the stadium on the eve of the match. It was unclear if the animal had a ticket for the game.

Georgia earned its first-ever point at a major tournament in a 1-1 draw with the Czech Republic.

Video reviews were in the spotlight as the Czechs had a goal for Adam Hložek disallowed for hand ball.

Georgia, the only team making its debut at Euro 2024, then took the lead with a Georges Mikautadze penalty given for hand ball by Czech defender Robin Hranec.

The Czech team got back into the game when a header rebounded off the post and Patrik Schick scored with his chest. Schick went off with a calf injury soon after.



The President of the International Aquatics Federation, Captain Hussein Al-Musallam.

Victory for values: Al-Musallam

IAF celebrates CAS decision on gender eligibility policies

KUWAIT CITY, June 22: The President of the International Aquatics Federation (IAF), Captain Hussein Al-Musallam, achieved a significant victory for values and equal opportunities in the sport. The Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS) unanimously rejected Ms. Leah Thomas's appeal against the IAF's policy and regulations regarding the eligibility and competition categories for men and women.

This decision affirms that the IAF's policies and regulations are sound and will continue to be enforced in all World Aquatics Championships. The IAF remains dedicated to promoting an environment of fairness, respect, and equal opportunities for athletes of all genders, while preserving the achievements of women.

Commenting on the CAS decision, Captain Hussein Al-Musallam stated, "We must protect the rights of our athletes in tournaments, but we also have to ensure competitive fairness, especially in safeguarding the women's category in our tournaments."

He added that the IAF's policies and practices are continually evaluated to ensure they align with core societal values. The organization

remains committed to working collaboratively with all stakeholders to support inclusivity in water sports.

Captain Al-Musallam expressed confidence in the fairness of the IAF's policy. Ms. Leah Thomas transitioned from male to female during high school. The IAF's policy was approved during the Federation's General Assembly meeting on July 20, 2022, following consultations with specialized medical, legal, and

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human rights committees, as well as input from world champion female swimmers.

During the General Assembly, Captain Al-Musallam asked members to vote on the policy, emphasizing the importance of fairness to women and the preservation of their sports achievements over the past century. He noted that he continually learns from Western countries about protecting women's rights and their participation in sports and society, upholding the principles of justice and equality between men and women.



Xavi Simons of the Netherlands, (left), is challenged by Aurelien Tchouaméni of France during the Group D match between the Netherlands and France at the Euro 2024 soccer tournament in Leipzig, Germany. (AP)

Kuwaiti Fencing Association new logo unveiled

High hopes for Al-Shamlan at Asian Fencing Championship

KUWAIT CITY, June 22: The second day of the Asian Fencing Championship Kuwait - 2024 for men and women kicks off at 3 pm today, Sunday, in Hall No. 4 at the International Fairgrounds in the Mishrif area. Our national team champion, Youssef Al-Shamlan, will face Kazakhstan's Artem Sarkeezy in the final qualifiers of the round of 16 in the saber category.

There are high hopes that Al-Shamlan will continue his impressive journey to the tournament final

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and secure a podium finish, given his outstanding performance in the preliminary qualifiers.

Youssef Al-Shamlan is regarded as one of the top contenders for the championship title, alongside competitors from Japan, South Korea, China, Kazakhstan, and Hong Kong. This tournament is crucial for gaining points to improve players' rankings in the International Federation of Fencing and is ideally timed for preparation ahead of the 2024 Paris Olympics next July.

The final qualifiers for the wom-

en's epee category start at 11 am, featuring teams from Uzbekistan, Japan, China, Hong Kong, South

Korea, and Kazakhstan. All semi-final and final matches for both men and women in saber,

epee, and foil will take place at 5 pm, followed by the awarding ceremony.

Hamad Al-Awadhi, Secretary of the Kuwaiti Fencing Federation and Director General of the Kuwait Asian Championship - 2024, confirmed that the first day of the tournament saw strong competitions in men's saber and women's epee, highlighting the close technical level among players, especially those qualified for the 2024 Paris Olympics from Japan, China, South Korea, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, and Hong Kong.

Al-Awadhi added that Youssef Al-Shamlan reached the round of 16 in the saber category, and expressed hope that he will continue to advance and achieve a podium finish.

The new logo of the Kuwaiti Fencing Association symbolizes the country's marine and terrestrial environments. It features a combination of the Al Boom ship, the most famous Kuwaiti wooden sailing vessel from the past, and the Al Arfaj flower, the national flower that reflects the beauty of Kuwaiti nature.

The ceremony also honored past and present players, as well as former members of the Kuwaiti Fencing Association.



Kuwaiti fencer Youssef Al-Shamlan.

Hosts have a full squad in training

Germany, Swiss eye top spot

FRANKFURT, Germany, June 22, (AP): Germany goes for a third straight win in Group A against a Switzerland team that also is unbeaten. Germany has advanced to the knockout stage and Switzerland looks sure to confirm its place Sunday. The kickoff in Frankfurt - at the same time as group rivals Hungary and Scotland meet in Stuttgart.

Both teams impressed in their first games: Germany routed Scotland 5-1 and Switzerland beat Hungary 3-1. Germany sustained its form by beating Hungary 2-0, the Swiss less so in a 1-1 draw with Scotland.

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Germany has already reached the round of 16 and with just a draw will finish top of Group A. That would send Germany to Dortmund for a knockout game next Saturday against the runner-up of Group C, which is currently Denmark.

Switzerland will top the group if it wins. That would send Germany to Berlin to play the runner-up in Group B, which likely will be Italy or Croatia.

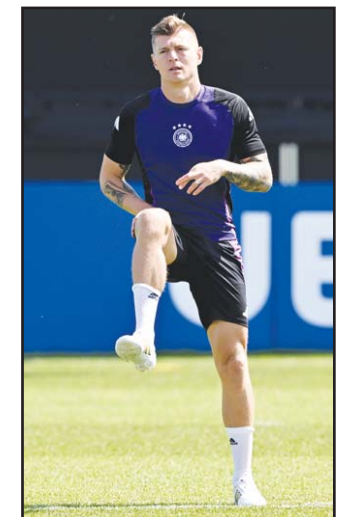
Only freakish results could drop Switzerland to third place in the standings. The Swiss start Sunday three points ahead of Scotland, which plays Hungary also in Stuttgart. Switzerland has a huge goal-difference advantage over Scotland.

The rain-soaked Frankfurt field has been a problem, even with a stadium roof that has been closed to protect the turf from the worst of persistent downpours this week.

Germany had a full squad of 26 players in training Saturday morning. Coach Julian Nagelsmann has picked the same starting lineup for both games so far.

Switzerland coach Murat Yakin is making changes in style and tactics. Though Kwadwo Duah scored against Hungary, he was dropped to face Scotland in favor of veteran Xherdan Shaqiri on the left side of attack - who duly delivered a standout goal.

Kylian Mbappé's nose is not the only damaged one at Euro 2024. Switzerland defender Fa-



Germany's Toni Kroos attends a training session in Herzogenaurach, Germany. (AP)

bian Schär also got a bloodyed and fractured nose, though he played on against Scotland and should be available.

The two team captains at Euro 2024, Granit Xhaka and İlkay Gundogan, both played in a strange game 12 years ago. In a warmup for Euro 2012, which Germany qualified for and Switzerland didn't, the Swiss gave their neighbors a beating in Basel. It was a rough debut for a 20-year-old German goalkeeper, Marc-André ter Stegen, then as now the backup to Manuel Neuer.

Teams that win all three games in a Euros group have an up-and-down history. At the last edition, Italy swept through its group in Rome en route to the title. At Euro 2008 a vibrant Netherlands team romped through a tough group then lost next in the quarterfinals to Russia. Germany won all three group games in 2012 before losing in the semifinals to Italy and Mario Balotelli.

"It's often been the case that the grass there isn't so firm and that players have had problems with it." - Germany and Stuttgart midfielder Chris Führich on the Frankfurt playing surface.

"We're happy that we're in the round of 16. Nevertheless, it will be about finishing first in the group." - Germany midfielder Toni Kroos.