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THURSDAY, JUNE 27, 2024 / ZUL HIJJAH 21, 1445 AH

emergency number 112

NO. 18629 16 PAGES 150 FILS

Amir receives Crown Prince Kuwait Prime Minister ... four decades of expertise



His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received at Bayan Palace on Wednesday His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah. (KUNA)

Kuwait targets drug abuse

By Marwa Al-Bahrawi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, June 26: "Drug addiction is a global problem that continues to exacerbate and threatens almost every home," says Minister of Health Dr. Ahmed Al-Awadhi.

In his speech during the celebration of the World Day to Combat Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking under the

Continued on Page 5



KUNA photo

Minister of Electricity and Minister of State for Housing Affairs Dr. Mahmoud Bushehri during his visit to Minister of Works and Minister of State for Municipal Affairs Dr. Noura Al-Mashaan.

Ministries praise collab for infrastructure goals

By Mohammed Ghanem

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, June 26: Within the framework of taking effective steps towards achieving the goals of Kuwait Vision 2035, Minister of Electricity, Water and Renewable Energy KUWAIT CITY, June 26, (KUNA): His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah has a distinguished, deep scientific, professional and political experience acquired from serving in multiple official posts for decades.

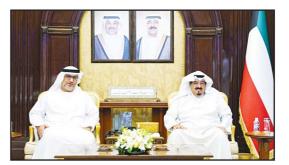
His Highness the Prime Minister's march was capped with a resolution by His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, on April 15, 2024, appointing him at the head of the government.

He had been quite successful in his work in the sectors of banking and public administration, mirroring a unique mentality of deep know-how on setting the priorities to press ahead with the aspired development.

His Highness Sheikh Ahmad Al-Abdullah, born in 1952, studied at Al-Sharqiah School in Kuwait, the American University in Beirut, and got a Bachelor's degree in bank funding and investments in 1976 from the University of Illinois, the US.

Forty years ago, he kicked off his career march working at the Kuwait Financial Center until the 70s, and then he joined the Central Bank of Kuwait where

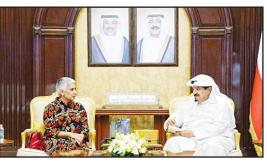
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HH the PM with UAE Ambassador.



PM Diwan photos HH the PM with US Ambassador.



HH the PM with Canada's Ambassador

Prime Minister receives UAE, Canada and US ambassadors

KUWAIT CITY, June 26, (KUNA): His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah received the UAE Ambassador to Kuwait Dr. Mutar Al-Neyadi, Canada's Ambassador to Kuwait Aliya Mawani and the US Ambassador to Kuwait Karen Hideko Sasahara at Bayan Palace on Wednesday.

His Highness and the Ambassadors discussed the bilateral relations between their countries, along with issues of common interest. Abdulaziz Al-Dakheel – Head of the Diwan of the Prime Minister, attended the meeting as well.

Visa 20 to Visa 18 transfer under review

- Details Page 2 -

Cabinet warns against fake news, threatens legal steps

Gov't informed of progress in Philippines labor resumption



KUWAIT CITY, June 26, (KUNA): The Kuwaiti Cabinet has cautioned against the perils of rumor-mongering and disinformation, urging social media and news services to ensure professionalism, credibility and national interest.

The Cabinet gave the warning during its weekly meeting held at Bayan Palace Tuesday under the chairmanship of His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah. It lashed out at some social media sites and news services for having recently published ungrounded reports on measures taken by ministries and governmental bodies. Calling on everybody to shoulder responsibility for publishing or republishing fake news stories, the Cabinet warned that legal action would be taken against anyone involved in rumormongering and disinformation. During the meeting, First Deputy Prime Minister, Interior Minister and Defense Min-ister Sheikh Fahad Yousef Saud Al-Sabah apprised the Cabinet of the outcome of his meeting with Philippines Department of Migrant Workers Undersecretary Bernard Olalia, which ultimately found a breakthrough to lift the ban on domestic employment from the Philippines He added that both sides had also agreed to form a joint committee pertinent to domestic labor affairs, one that would convene in a routine manner to address any sticking points that could potentially emerge.

Dr. Mahmoud Boushahri made an urgent visit to Minister of Public Works and Minister of State for Municipal Affairs Dr. Noura Al-Mashaan, during which they discussed key ideas and plans related to infrastructure and new projects aimed at advancing the wheels of progress and development in the country, as well as crucial joint topics and projects.

The two ministers exchanged opinions and experiences on the mechanisms to accelerate the pace of work, remove obstacles to the implementation of housing projects and solve the problems in South Abdullah Al-Mubarak, South Saad Al-Abdullah and Al-Mutlaa as quickly as possible.

Both parties stressed the urgent need for continuous cooperation and exchange of experiences between ministries as an essential step to ensure the effective completion of vital projects that will greatly support Kuwait's infrastructure and contribute to achieving the State's strategic goals

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KNPC expands digital upgrade for efficiency

KUWAIT CITY, June 26, (KUNA): The Kuwait National Petroleum Company (KNPC) has made strenuous efforts to enhance the digital transformation process in all its operations to protect assets, develop operational efficiency and maintain its competitiveness in global markets.

In a statement to KUNA, Manager of Information Technology Department at KNPC Eng. Naji Al-Marri said that KNPC's journey in the field of digital transformation and the accumulated experience it has gained since its establishment in 1960 have brought it very close to declaring itself a "paperless company."

Al-Marri added that the company has achieved advanced levels of mechanization of its operations in its various facilities, including the main building, Mina Abdullah and Mina Al-Ahmadi refineries, local marketing, Sabhan and Ahmadi warehouses.

He noted the efforts of successive generations of employees in the company that stand behind achieving this technical institutional excellence, pointing out it has given them the opportunity to present their ideas and development projects in the technical field.

He explained that the company is currently moving towards building a modern digital infrastructure to accommodate artificial intelligence technologies and other technologies of the Fourth Industrial Revolution.

He stated that the digital transformation has led to improving performance of technical work in refineries and administrative departments through the use of latest modern technologies and working to simplify and unify operations and procedures in all fields of the company.

For his part, KNPC Chairman of the Digital Transformation and Innovation Committees Eng. Bassam Al-Shammari said in a similar statement said that various digital transformation initiatives have been adopted by the company.

He added that among these initiatives are the integrated hydrocarbon supply chain, the digital twin, smart asset management, improving current systems, smart energy management, smart monitoring, smart connected workforce, smart automation and smart procurement.

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His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah chairs the weekly Cabinet meeting on Tuesday.

Newswatch

BEIRUT: Lebanon's caretaker Prime Minister Najib Mikati said on Wednesday that Lebanon would avoid escalating the situation in the southern border with the Israeli occupation in line with its international commitments.

Speaking to media, Mikati – after meeting with **Vatican** Secretary **Pietro Parolin** – said the stability and the interests of Lebanon should not be connected to regional wars.

He affirmed that Lebanon's priority was to safeguard its security and work on economic recovery as soon as possible. (KUNA)

BAGHDAD: Iraq's Prime Minister Mohammad Al-Sudani held talks on Wednesday with US ambassador to Baghdad Alina Romanowski, focusing on plans to end the mission of the global coalition fighting the so-called Islamic State.

The talks revolved around the role of an Iraqi ad hoc committee tasked with wrapping up the mission of global coalition forces in Baghdad, in addition to current happenings around the region, chief among them the Israeli war against the **Gaza Strip**, said a statement by the Iraqi prime minister's office. (KUNA)

ADEN: Yemenia Airways announced Wednesday that Houthi Militia had seized four of its aircraft at Sanaa International Airport, threatening the safety of air navigation and making it difficult to operate flights to and from **Yemen's** airports.

În a statement, Yemenia said that it was surprised that the militia seized three of its Airbus 320 aircraft, bringing the number of aircraft seized to four, noting that the Airbus 330 had been detained for more than a month. (KUNA) KUWAIT CITY, June 26, (KUNA): Acting Director General of Kuwait Environment Public Authority (EPA) Eng. Sameera Al-Kandari reaffirmed on Wednesday Kuwait's endeavor to enhance mutual cooperation with European Union countries in the field of renewable energy. Al-Kandari's speech came

during The Green Transition symposium organized by the authority in coordination with the European Union and the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC)

5 domestic labor offices shut down

By Marwa Al-Bahrawi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, June 26: The Director of the Commercial Control Department at the Ministry of Commerce, Faisal Al-Ansari, disclosed that five domestic labor offices in the Hawalli region have been closed due to serious violations.

These violations primarily involved non-compliance with ministerial regulations and laws governing the recruitment process.

In an interview with Al-Seyassah,

Continued on Page 5

EPA develops renewable energy strategy in Kuwait

titled "Kuwait's Sustainable Future ... Collaborative Solutions" with the participation of energy experts from Kuwait and the EU countries.

She explained that the event aimed to introduce the green transition project, renewable energy sources and strategies to enhance their efficiency in the institutions concerned with this matter.

Al-Kandari pointed out that Kuwait has a record in the field of renewable energy investments through its investment funds, stressing that the country seeks, through its cooperation with the European Union countries, to gain expertise in capacity building, technology transfer, improving energy efficiency and using the best practices and available solutions.

For her part, the European Union Ambassador to Kuwait Anne Koistinen said that the Union is one of the most important supporters in the field of green transition, stressing the commitment in supporting Kuwait to achieve its goals in the field of renewable energy for the year 2030.

She stressed that this event provided an opportunity to exchange experiences and present the best solutions in the topics of green transition and the integration of renewable energy technologies, in addition to improving environmental regulation and economic diversification strategies in Kuwait through investment in the field of renewable energy.



KUNA photo Acting Director General of Kuwait Environment Public Authority (EPA) Eng. Sameera Al-Kandari.



WHEN Bahrain chose to suspend the Constitution, a commission was established comprising highly skilled individuals, including prominent constitutional experts. Their collective efforts produced a comprehensive report that brought immense satisfaction to the people of Bahrain, ensured national stability, resolved all disputes, and reinstated legitimacy to the regime.

... Yet tomorrow is another day.

Prayer Timings Fajr 03:15 15:25 Asr... Sunrise .. 04:50 Maghrib .. 18:51 Zohr 11:50 Isha 20:24

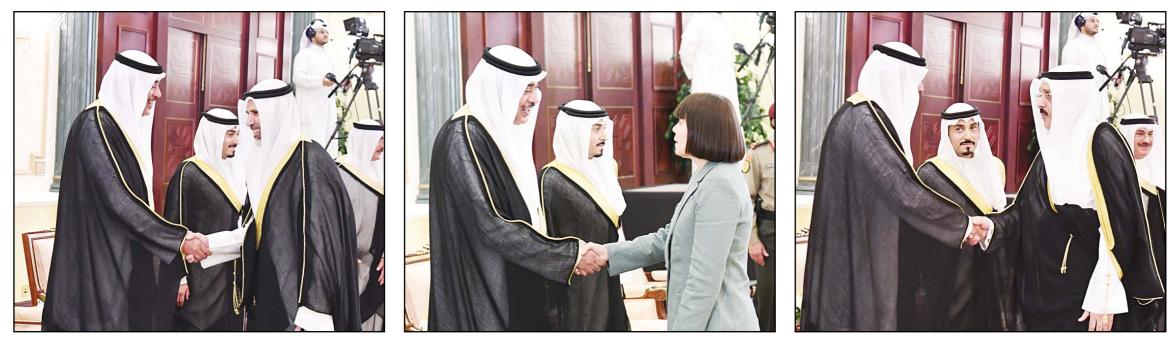


Expected weather for next 24 hrs: By Day: Very hot with light to moderate freshening at times northwesterly wind to light variable wind to light variable wind, with speeds of 10-45 km/h with a chance for rising dust over open areas.

Weather

	ii outiioi				
By Night:	Hot to rathe	er hot with	Kuwait Airport	47	34
light to moderate northwesterly wind to light variable wind, with			Abdaly	48	30
			Jahra	48	34
speeds of 10-38 km/h.			Salmiyah	43	35
Station	Max Exp	Min Rec	Nuwaisib	46	34
Kuwait City	47	35	Wafra	48	32

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



His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah receiving some of the officials.

HH Crown Prince receives MoFA officials, diplomats, army and police chiefs

KUNA photos

2

In a friendly and welcoming atmosphere, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah received senior officials of the Kuwaiti Foreign Ministry, chiefs of accredited diplomatic missions in Kuwait and senior officials of the Army, Police, National Guard and Fire Service Direc-

torate at Al-Sabah Family's Diwan in Bayan Palace on Tuesday. Also, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled received at Bayan Palace, Wednesday, President of the Supreme Judicial Council, President of the Court of Cassation, Dr. Adel Bouresli. (KUNA)

HH Amir sends congratulations to Madagascar on National Day

KUWAIT CITY, June 26, (KUNA): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah sent on Wednesday a cable of congratulations to the President of the Republic of Madagascar, Andry Rajoelina, on his country's National Day.

In the cable, His Highness the Amir wished President Rajoelina good health and wellbeing and for Madagascar more progress and prosperity.

Meanwhile, His Highness the Crown

Prince Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah sent a cable of congratulations to President Andry Rajoelina, on his country's National Day.

In the cable, His Highness the Crown Prince wished President Rajoelina good

health and wellbeing. His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah also sent a cable of congratulations to President Andry Rajoelina, on his country's National Day.

Sheikh Fahad Yousef leads labor market reform initiatives

Draft eyed to lift ban on domestic

workers 'transfer' for two months

KUWAIT CITY, June 26, (KUNA): Sheikh Fahad Yousef Saud Al-Sabah, First Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Defense and Minister of Interior, and Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Public Authority for Manpower (PAM), chaired the initial session of the authority's board for the 2024/2025 term, underscoring the leadership's commitment to enhancing and organizing the labor market.

The Ministry of Interior's General Administration of Security Relations and Media announced in a press release that a key outcome of the meeting was the approval of the Public Authority for Manpower's financial statements for the fiscal year 2023/2024, aiming to foster transparency. The statement highlighted the ongoing efforts to refine policies benefiting diverse sectors in the nation, reflecting the leadership's vision of achieving harmony and synergy across sectors, and bolstering workforce efficiency to drive sustainable development. Furthermore, preparations are underway within the authority to draft a decision temporarily lifting the ban on transferring domestic workers to the private sector for an approximate two-month period. This step will be accompanied by stringent controls and conditions to ensure orderly processes and balance in the labor market supply and demand. The authority reaffirmed its steadfast commitment to labor market development and meeting its requirements, aligning with the state's strategic objectives for human and economic advancement. The session was attended by members of the authority's board of directors and representatives from the private sector, emphasizing collaboration and partnership between public and private entities.





KUNA photo

Minister of Foreign Affairs while receiving the copy of the credentials of the new Honduran ambassador to the country.

FM receives credentials of Honduras envoy

Kuwait's Minister of Foreign Affairs Ab-dullah Al-Yahya received Wednesday the credentials of the new Ambassador of Honduras to the country Francisco Jose Herrera Alvarado.

During the meeting, the minister wished the new ambassador success in his work in the country and further prosperity to ties between the two countries. (KUŃA)

N-emergencies course kicks off

Kuwait Pharmaceutical Society calls for revolutionary e-medicine track system

By Marwa Al-Bahrawi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, June 26: Members of the Board of Directors of the Kuwait Pharmaceutical Society, Muhammad Al-Enazi and Abdulaziz Al-Jadaan, have expressed their support for efforts aimed at establishing a comprehensive electronic system to track and monitor the procurement, distribution, and supply of medicines from procurement to the final beneficiary

They highlighted the critical need to link drug prescriptions between government and private sectors to minimize instances of duplicate prescriptions and interruptions in medication availability despite sufficient resources.

In a press statement titled "The Electronic Prescription to Address Waste and Theft of Medicines," they emphasized that such a program should be the outcome of collaborative efforts within the Ministry of Health.

This includes departments such as Information Systems, Drug Inspection, Medical Warehouses, and other technical units. Their goal is to ensure transparency and efficiency in medication procurement processes, advocating that procurement should not be conducted through private companies or tenders to safeguard the confidentiality and security of pharmaceutical information

They underscored that pharmaceutical information is vital for national security and should be protected from any unauthorized access, compromise, or cyber threats. This approach aims to enhance the integrity of pharmaceutical supply

chains and ensure that medications reach patients without interruptions or security breaches

The initiative reflects a commitment to modernizing the medicine and pharmacy sector in Kuwait, addressing longstanding challenges through technological advancement and stringent security measures.

N-emergencies course: The Ministry of Health has announced the commencement of the "Building Medical Capacity to Respond to Radiological and Nuclear Emergencies" course, reports Al-Seyassah daily

This initiative is organized by the Radiation Protection Department in collaboration with several international bodies including the European Union, the United Nations, the CBRN (Chemical, Biological, Radiological, and Nuclear) Center of Excellence, and the Gulf Cooperation Council.

The course is part of Kuwait's comprehensive strategy to enhance its readiness for health emergencies, focusing on monitoring, preparedness, and swift response. It involves the participation of trainers and lecturers from Kuwait as well as experts from various countries worldwide who specialize in combating and responding to radiological and nuclear risks.

This collaborative effort underscores Kuwait's commitment to bolstering its capabilities in managing potential radiological and nuclear emergencies, ensuring effective coordination and preparedness on a global scale.

Capital Governorate to collaborate with MEW

KUWAIT CITY, June 26: Governor Sheikh Abdullah Al-Ali of the Capital affirmed the governorate's complete readiness to collaborate closely with the Ministry of Electricity and Water. The aim is to utilize all available resources and capabilities effectively in order to reduce electrical loads, reports Al-Jarida daily

This collaborative effort is part of a shared vision that includes awareness campaigns and other initiatives, all aimed at achieving desired outcomes that support national and community efforts.

The statement came during a meeting at the Governorate Office, attended by Engineer Faisal Sumait, Acting Assistant Undersecretary for Electrical Transmission Networks, and Engineer Falah Al-Mutairi, Acting Assistant Undersecretary for Customer Service at the Ministry of Electricity.

Also present were members of the Conservation Committee at the Ministry of Electricity and Sheikha Mathal Al-Ahmad, Head of the Voluntary Work Center, alongside other governorate officials.

First Deputy PM, Minister of Defense and Interior Sheikh Fahad Yousef chairs the meeting of the Board of Directors of the Public Authority for Manpower.

Kuwait's Q8 organizes smart city conference in Rome

KPI signs partnership agreement with Italy's Fox Petroli to produce biofuels

KUWAIT CITY, June 26, (KUNA): Kuwait Petroleum International (KPI) announced on Wednesday completing the agreement to acquire a 50 percent stake in Italy's Eco Fox SRL, a company wholly owned by Fox Petroli, which specializes in the production of biofuels.

In a statement to KUNA, KPI stated that this announcement follows the approval of the European Union's Directorate-General for Competition in accordance with the laws of the European Union and the Italian Republic.

This deal is considered the first biofuel play by Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) in its international operations, making it achieve a key component in KPC and its subsidiaries strategy for Energy Transition 2050, the statement added.

KPI's Chief Executive Officer, Shafi Al-Ajmi, expressed his pride in this accomplishment that enhances the provision of sustainable fuel to the company's customers across Europe, particularly in the Italian market.

He noted that it aligns with KPI's strategy to grow and enhance its market share in Europe, while diversifying the company's products in line with European demand and the global trend towards sustainability.

Al-Ajmi also highlighted the significant role played by national talent in capturing global investment opportunities and exploring every avenue to advance the company's operations in European markets, thanking them for their contribution to this achievement.

Executive Vice President for Marketing at KPI Fadel Al-Faraj stated that this acquisition is particularly significant as it represents a launching point for the 'Q8' brand to become a leader in sustainable biofuel production in Europe.

What adds to the importance of this achievement is its coincidence with the 40th anniversary of KPI's founding, Al-Faraj added.

The company in Italy has transformed from a traditional fuel supplier to a sustainable fuel partner for our customers, adding that KPI will continue to meet customer demands and achieve KPC's goals for sustainable energy transformation.

It is worth noting that Fox Petroli has been operating in the biofuel market in Italy since the 1990s, producing a range of advanced biodiesel and byproducts for industrial use.

The company has a production plant with an annual capacity of 200,000 tons, a bonded warehouse with a storage capacity of 30,000 cubic meters, and logistical support capable of receiving and shipping products by sea and land.

Established in 1983, KPI is a global marketing company under KPC, managing over 4,700 retail fuel and transport service stations across Europe.

KPI supplies aviation fuel to over 70 international airports, manufacturing high-quality oils globally, and holds stakes in three refineries in Italy, Vietnam, and Oman through partnerships with international oil companies.

Meanwhile, Kuwait Petroleum International (Q8) organized a conference in Rome, dubbed "Smart city roadmap for the government", aiming to promote partnership between private public sectors and pave the way to cities of the future.

Attending the conference alongside Italian Minister of Environment Gilberto Pichetto Fratin, Kuwait's Ambassador to Italy, Nasser Al-Qahtani, stated that the conference handles topics of utmost importance.

Ĥe called it a valuable opportunity for public and private sectors to exchange perspectives, and discuss energy consumption in light of climate changes affecting the whole world.

Al-Qahtani also said that it is a reflection of Kuwait's commitment to UN charter on climate change and decreasing carbon emissions.

He commended Q8's efforts in organizing this conference as it became of social and economic weight in Italian market, making notable contributions.

The conference, launched yesterday, was also attended by a number of high officials from both Kuwaiti and Italian sides.

KFF to promote 564 non-commissioned officers

KUWAIT CITY, June 26, (KUNA): The Acting Chief of Kuwait Fire Force Lieutenant General Khaled Fahad has decided to promote up to 564 non-commissioned officers

of various ranks in appreciation of their devotion and sincere efforts in protecting souls and properties.

The KFF said in a statement on Wednesday that Lieut. Gen. Fahad has taken the decision upon instructions by the First Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Defense and Minister of Interior, Sheikh Fahad Yusuf Saud Al-Sabah.

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A DIGEST OF PUBLIC OPINION

'Kuwait's volunteer-driven bid enhances disability inclusion'

"TWO hundred and fifty-eight people with disabilities - people of both sexes - in addition to people with mental disabilities, were placed in both private and public sectors, as well as in the Union of Cooperative Societies, thanks to a dedicated volunteer initiative," Iqbal Al-Ahmad, wrote for Al-Qabas daily

"This accomplishment is a testament to the voluntary efforts and steadfast determination aimed at integrating disabled individuals into Kuwaiti society. It reflects their pride in contributing to the workforce and enhancing societal values.

"This achievement didn't materialize out of thin air; rather, it arose from persistent voluntary endeavors and a commitment to integrating disabled individuals into society, thus fostering a sense of worth and importance among

them. "The pursuit of international standards plays a crucial role in elevating a nation's status or identifying its shortcomings across various domains. Government entities meticulously oversee such initiatives, ensuring their advancement.

"However, a recent private voluntary initiative led by Ku-Iqbal Al-Ahmad waiti individuals Mrs. Awatif

Al-Salman and Mr. Khalifa Al-Ghanim is set to significantly enhance Kuwait's standing in disability inclusion. Their initiative focuses on nurturing and training individuals with mental disabilities, forging partnerships with entities capable of providing tailored training and employment opportunities within their institutions, companies, and ministries.

"At the graduation ceremony for the initiative's fifth cohort, attendees were pleasantly surprised as all hundred members with mental disabilities were announced to have secured placements in private and public sectors and the Union of Cooperative Societies. This announcement was met with heartfelt applause from disabled individuals, officials, and attendees alike.

"What began as a two-person volunteer effort has evolved into a collaborative endeavor involving various stakeholders, poised to substantially elevate Kuwait's global stature in integrating disabled individuals into society.

'The campaign, launched in 2018, underscores Kuwait's commitment to safeguarding disability rights and fostering societal integration. Spearheaded by the "Human Construction for Social Development" Society in collaboration with the "Public Authority for Disability Affairs," the campaign employs specialized curricula and programs designed by experts, yielding significant milestones for Kuwait.

"Acknowledgments go to the General Authority for the Affairs of Persons with Disabilities, the Office of the Representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations for their steadfast support, and the General Authority for Minors' Affairs for funding the latest batch's training costs, ensuring opportunities for all involved in this pivotal societal integration initiative.

"This successful Kuwaiti model has even in-

of tolerance. Attacking religious figures served to tarnish their reputation unjustly.

"During this vision, I suddenly heard continuous neighing of horses followed by moments of eerie calm. Curiosity drove me to follow the rebellious horse as it encountered strange, distorted humanlike creatures and animals that instilled suspicion and fear, accompanied by tongues of flame. Yet, the horse became completely calm upon reaching streams of flowing water, where crowds of people bathed, drank, and enjoyed themselves.

"The horse then headed towards a path flanked by tangled trees leading to a lush paradise. Intrigued, I followed. As we entered a path enveloped in thick, low-hanging clouds with a breathtaking view, I hesitated.

"However, I pressed on and entered. Suddenly, I felt chills run through my body, and a voice resonated clearly, proclaiming a stark choice: between a path with strange, unsettling creatures and tongues of flame, or estuaries of flowing water where people found joy and solace.

"I woke from this vivid dream drenched in sweat. When I recounted it to a wise individual, he interpreted it as a favorable sign to avoid straying from the right path, to uphold justice, avoid corruption, and refrain from insulting religion or its adherents.

"Instead, he advised me to assess individuals impartially based on their actions, without bias or preconception. This perspective, he emphasized, should guide my judgment and decisions moving forward.

"Since that day, my life's trajectory shifted. I embraced moderation, tolerance, and balanced judgment, maintaining my prayers and reconsidering my approach to opponents. Sharing my vision catalyzed a transformative effect among my peers, inspiring me to pledge to recount this experience, hoping it would resonate with those seeking goodness and guidance.

"Indeed, as the words of the Almighty affirm, "Indeed, God does not change the condition of a people until they change what is in themselves." This vision marked a turning point, steering me towards a path of righteousness, understanding, and respect for all.'

"Before completing this article, I had already published news that confirmed the thoughts shared by myself and others were of interest to decisionmakers and concerned authorities," columnist Iqbal Al-Ahmad wrote for Al-Qabas daily.

"Retirees possess a range of experiences that vary in depth and significance from one individual to another. Upon reaching a certain age, they are typically required to leave their jobs and stay at home unless they pursue another occupation.

"However, the concept of retirement and staying at home doesn't necessarily align with today's reality, especially since many individuals at sixty years old are still vibrant, energetic, and eager to contribute meaningfully to society.

"Despite their capabilities and willingness to give back, current laws often mandate their departure from the workforce, leaving them to pass their time between cafes and shopping complexes.

"Given their desire to continue contributing, there is a pressing need to revise policies and create opportunities for retirees to remain engaged in their respective fields. This could involve implementing a new system that offers part-time roles with adjusted hours and compensation.



Al-Jarida photo

3

Municipality team monitoring violations in Jaber Al-Ahmad City.

Comprehensive field inspection held in Jaber Al-Ahmad City

Municipality issues 12 buildings violation reports

KUWAIT CITY, June 26: Kuwait Municipality reported that its Engineering Audit and Follow-up Department recently conducted a comprehensive field inspection in Jaber Al-Ahmad City, reports Al-Jarida daily.

As a result of this inspection, the department issued 12 violation reports for non-compliance with building regulations. Additionally, a stop-work order was issued for a property that violated building regulations, specifically a fourstory structure, with all necessary legal measures enforced as per building codes. In an official statement, the municipality emphasized the intensified inspection tours across all governorates aimed at monitoring and addressing violations related to residential construction plots that do not comply with building regulations.

The municipality underscored the importance of constructing homes in accordance with approved plans and permits, urging citizens to ensure their constructions are free of violations. It called upon permit holders, including engineering offices and contractors, to strictly adhere to municipal laws and regulations. Furthermore, Kuwait Municipality

announced ongoing intensive inspection campaigns to identify encroachments on state property across all governorates. Specifically, the Violations Removal Department in Mubarak Al-Kabeer Governorate issued 14 warnings for encroachments in the Sabah Al-Salem suburb area.

The municipality reaffirmed its commitment to enforcing regulations rigorously and stated that supervisory teams will continue to conduct thorough field inspections to address violations promptly and apply necessary legal measures against offenders.

Employee gets jail, fine, dismissal for refusing to return misdirected funds

Ex-MP, 3 others' vote-buying case postponed until July 24

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

KUWAIT CITY, June 26: The Criminal Court sentenced a Kuwaiti employee to five years in prison, ordered his dismissal, obliged him to return KD 4,300 and fined him twice the amount of the service reward from a cooperative society that was transferred to his account by mistake but he refused to return the money.

During the court session, the accused appeared from his prison cell and denied the embezzlement charge against him, stressing that he has the right to receive the money in question.

for questioning by the defense team. The court charged Musaed and others with vote-buying after they were arrested by the Criminal Investigation Department officers in the electoral bribery incident proven by the results of investigations and the money found

in the site according to the report. The defendants' defense team also requested to set the deadline for summoning the incident officer.

It is worth mentioning that the Public Prosecution released the defendants with varying financial guarantees after confronting them with the charges.

14 days detention in IS case: The detention renewal judge decided to continue the detention of a terrorist network of three citizens at the Central Prison for 14 days pending investigaity for Applied Education and Training (PAAET) who insulted HH the Amir during a quarrel with citizens and decided to extend his detention for 14 days pending investigations into the case, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

In the last session, the accused ap-peared in court and denied the charge of insulting HH the Amir; insisting that he made the statement in the heat of an emotional quarrel with citizens.

The defendant's lawyer requested for his client's release on any bail amount the court deems appropriate; stressing that his client applied for ad-mission to PAAET, that he has a future and has no prior convictions.

The lawyer also argued that there is no justification for the pretrial detention of his client.



spired the Sultanate of Oman, which adopted and applied the initiative with equal success for a second consecutive year, demonstrating its replicability and efficacy.

"Thus, once more, integrating volunteerism into educational curricula emerges as a pivotal mechanism for advancing humanity and society, fostering inclusivity, and enriching societal fabric worldwide."

Also:

"One of the pioneers of Arab political action, while on his sick bed, narrated a vision he saw in his dream, which followed an intellectual doctrine for those close to him. He says: 'I saw what a person sees in his dream, and I have not throughout my life been one of those who believe in visions or their narrations," columnist Muhammad Al-Maqati wrote for Al-Jarida daily.

"However, the vision I experienced struck me as something profound, worthy of study, documentation, and retelling. Here I narrate that vision:

"In my vision, I saw a dark, spirited horse that had broken free from its reins, returning to its natural habitat. It exuded a rebellious nature, as if it had never been subdued. This image coincided with my recollection of ongoing discussions with my comrades about attacking political adversaries and sometimes religious figures.

"Our actions lacked coordination and often targeted religion as synonymous with reactionism, opposing progress, and promoting fanaticism instead

"Certain sectors, such as education, could greatly benefit from the expertise of retired professionals, including teachers who can support and mentor current educators. This forward-thinking approach was recently exemplified when the Ministry of Education expressed its intention to utilize retired teaching staff to enhance the educational process.

This type of strategy is crucial for the success of any development plan, ensuring that there are dynamic teams of young professionals supported by the invaluable experience of older generations. Their knowledge and guidance can provide stability and wisdom in areas where frontline workers may lack experience.

"I commend the Ministry of Education for its initiative and hope that similar ideas will be adopted by other ministries, institutions, and bodies across the country. Embracing the contributions of retirees not only enriches the workforce but also strengthens the fabric of our society, benefiting everyone involved

"Thank you, Ministry of Education, for leading the way in recognizing and utilizing the talents of retired individuals for the greater good of our nation.'

— Compiled by PFX Fernandes



Sheikh Al-Athbi inspecting one of the buildings.

Governor Sheikh Al-Athbi tours Khaitan, Farwaniya regions

Tuesday morning Sheikh Athbi Nasser Al-Athbi, the Governor of Farwaniya, visited the Khaitan and Far-waniya regions, accompanied by several key officials including Brigadier General Saleh Al-Azmi from the Farwaniya Security Directorate, Engineer Mubarak Al-Ajmi from the Farwaniya Municipality Branch, and representatives from various governmental bodies such as the Directorate-General of Fire Department (DGFD) and the Public Authority for Manpower, reports Al-Seyássah daily.

Leaders from the public security and criminal security sectors in the governorate also joined the tour.

During the visit, Sheikh Athbi Al-Athbi commended the efforts of the political leadership aimed at eradicat-

ing violations in residential and investment areas.

He emphasized that enforcing the rule of law across different regions is now a tangible reality. The Governor reported that the tour led to the identification of properties violating regulations. In response to warnings issued, owners of these properties have begun to rectify violations and remove encroachments on state property.

Sheikh Athbi highlighted ongoing efforts to address violations, stressing the importance of strict adherence to laws and regulations without tolerance for any irregularities. He emphasized the significance of compliance to maintain civic order and uphold the integrity of residential and investment environments within Farwaniya Governorate.

His lawyer, who appeared in court with him, requested the court to grant him clemency and acquit him.

The court based its ruling on Article 112, stipulating that every public employee who takes money, documents or other things found in his possession, because of his job title shall be imprisoned.

Vote-buying case delayed: The High Criminal Court postponed the trial of former MP Majid Musaed and three others on the charge of buying votes in the Fifth Constituency until July 24 to summon the incident officer

regulations: Al-Jabri

KUWAIT CITY, June 26: Badr Al-Jabri, Director of the Safety Department at Kuwait Municipality's Hawalli Governorate, reported that recent field inspections of private and investment housing as well as ongoing construction sites led to the issuance of 45 warnings for non-compliance with safety regulations regarding construction debris, reports Al-Seyassah daily. Additionally, three vio-lations were issued, which

included unauthorized structures on state property, unsafe storage and disposal of wood, which was subsequently cleared by the Waste Removal Department.

Al-Jabri emphasized the importance of adhering to municipal regulations and laws. He stated that supervisory teams will increase their inspection efforts to monitor offenders and take appropriate legal actions against them.

tions into their case.

Case files indicate that the defendants recruited and invited individuals to fight alongside the ISIS, incited others to overthrow the government, planned to target Shiites and American forces, and insulted Saudi Arabia. This came after the State Security officers arrested the defendants.

During their arraignment in front of the detention renewal judge, the defendants were confronted with the accusations against them. However, they denied the charges and their lawyer requested for their release. The judge rejected the request and decided to extend their detention.



Pre-trial detention: The detention renewal judge refused to release an Egyptian student at the Public Author-

Illegal structures razed: Kuwait Municipality continues its demolition campaign; targeting encroachments on State properties in the six governorates, reports Al-Qabas daily.

The demolition teams in Ahmadi Municipality branch removed 100 illegal structures in Mahboula, including sunshades put up on State properties and other structures built without obtaining a license.

Director of the Violations Removal Department at the Capital Municipality branch Sulaiman Al-Gheis said the teams conducting such campaigns are working in three shifts. He said three diwaniyas located in Al-Qadesiya were demolished, while 233 warnings were issued. He added a total of 63 illegal structures have been demolished since the beginning of 2024.



Photo by Rizk Taufiq

Tunnel 2 to open

KUWAIT CITY, June 26: The Public Authority for Roads and Land Transport has declared that Tunnel No. 2 on Cairo Street under the Third Ring Road, leading from Kuwait City towards Salmiya via the Al-Qadisiya and Hawalli regions, will open for vehicular traffic at dawn next Friday, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

This initiative is in collaboration with the General Traffic Department.

LOCAL

Municipal Council's Technical Committee okays key urban development proposals

Panel approves major fiber optic network and zoning changes

By Inaas Awadh

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff KUWAIT CITY, June 26: During its second meeting,

the Municipal Council's Technical Committee, led by council member Munira Al-Amir and attended by Municipal Council Chairman Abdullah Al-Mahri, approved three out of 12 agenda items.

The committee approved the request of the Ministry of Communication to allocate a plot measuring 2,016 square meters for

the third major fiber optic network project in Subiya under the following conditions:

Commitment to the requirements specified by the Public Facilities and Services Committee in the concerned Municipality branch and coordinate with the committee before implementing the project,

Provide parking spaces,

q Coordinate with the agency in charge of the Silk City and Bubyan Island projects before signing any contract,

Commitment to adjust the location in case it overlaps with any infrastructure.

The committee also approved the request of Kuwaiti Lawyers Association

to suspend the issuance of licenses to law firms located in private residential areas, and agreed to grant one-year grace period to these law firms. It is worth mentioning that the grace period granted by Kuwait Municipality to these firms will end on June 30, 2024.

In addition, the committee approved the proposal of Municipal Council Chairman Abdullah Al-Mahri to amend Article 10 of Ministerial Resolution No. 322/2023 regarding the system of dividing and subdividing construction plots

Moreover, the committee referred four items to the executive body as follows: proposal of council member Fahad Al-Abduljader to allocate markets for selling local produce in each governorate, proposal of Al-Amir to specify the architectural identity of government buildings, request of Kuwait Scout Association to name the roundabout adjacent to its headquarters, and request to allocate agricultural plots for the National Fund for the Care and Development of Small and Medium Enterprises.

The committee returned three items to the executive body for further study as follows: proposal of Al-Abduljader regarding the acquisition of houses and land in Khaitan - Block 5, proposal of Al-Mahri to amend the Municipal Council's decision on numbering some regulatory plots in Kuwait City, and the proposal of council member Abdullatif Al-Daei to add a health activity to the activities of cooperative societies.

The committee deferred discussion on the proposal of council member Fahad Musaed Al-Abd Al-Jader regarding public school parking lots, and retained on its agenda the request of the owners of food trucks to allocate areas for their business.

These decisions reflect the council's proactive approach towards urban planning, infrastructure development, and regulatory reforms aimed at improving residential and commercial environments in Kuwait.

The initiatives are intended to streamline operations, enhance public services, and foster sustainable growth across various sectors.

KUWAIT CITY, June 26: The Embassy of the Republic of Tajikistan celebrated the National Unity Day today - the event that is celebrated annually on June 27, stands as a beacon of hope and a testament to the power of peace and reconciliation.

Ambassador of the Republic of Tajikistan, HE Zubaydullo Zubaydzoda said, "This day commemo-

rates the signing of the General Agreement on the Establishment of Peace and National Accord in 1997, which brought an end to a challenging period in the nation's history and marked the beginning of a new era of unity and prosperity. National Unity Day is a jubilant celebration of the values of harmony, resilience, and national unity."

Understanding the significance of National Unity Day, he said, entails revisiting Tajikistan's historical context. This Central Asian nation, known for its beauty and cultural richness, independence achieved from the Soviet Union in

1991, but the early years were fraught with political turmoil, culmi- a harmonious society. nating in a civil war in 1992.

He went on to say, this conflict inflicted

determination.

Cultural festivities feature prominently, showcasing traditional music and dance that highlight Tajikistan's rich heritage. These celebrations promote a sense of shared identity and pride, fostering unity and camaraderie among communities. National Unity Day thus becomes an occa-

sion for Tajikistan to honor its journey, celebrate accomplishments. and reaffirm its commitment to a peaceful and prosperous future, he added.

The Tajik envoy, stressed, "Beyond its comenvoy. memorative aspects, National Unity Day carries profound symbolism. It embodies the remarkresilience able and strength of the Tajik people, serving as a powerful reminder of the preciousness of peace -- something that demands collective nurturing and appreciation. The day emphasizes the importance of diatolerance, and logue.

mutual respect in forging

"National unity stands as the cornerstone Tajikistan's development. exemplified

PIFSS announces 20 dinar increase in pension for retirees and shareholders

in August, there will be a 20-dinar increase in

pensions for Kuwaiti retirees and shareholders,

Seyassah daily. KUWAIT CITY, June 26: Public Institution for Social Security (PIFSS) announced that starting

The institution clarified that the distribution of this increase will be automatic, handled directly by the institution, eliminating the need for individuals to apply for or review the adjustment themselves.



KUNA photo Ambassador Sheikha Al-Zain Sabah Al-Naser Al-Sabah during the ceremony of presenting her credentials.

Kuwait envoy to US Sheikha Al-Zain submits credentials to Governor-General of Jamaica

WASHINGTON, June 26, (KUNA): The State of Kuwait Ambassador to the United States Sheikha Al-Zain Sabah Al-Naser Al-Sabah submitted her credentials as non-resident ambassador to the Governor-General of Jamaica Patrick Linton Allen, in a ceremony held at Allen's residence in Kingston.

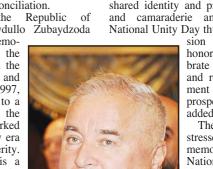
According to a statement from the Kuwaiti Embassy in Washington to the Kuwait News Agency (KUNA), Sheikha Al-Zain Al-Sabah conveyed on Tuesday greetings from His Highness the Amir of Kuwait, Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, and His Highness the Crown Prince, Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, to the Governor-General of Jamaica.

The Ambassador expressed Kuwait's appreciation for Jamaica's supportive stance towards Kuwait during the Iraqi invasion, also, praised the strong bilateral relations between the two countries for 50 years.

He wished further prosperity of the bilateral relations for serving joint interests.

Festivities highlight Tajik heritage **Republic of Tajikistan Embassy**

celebrates National Unity Day





of Tajikistan





Municipal Council's Technical Committee during its second meeting.

Queen Cabana (2 persons inclusive of breakfast) per night.	2 Bedroom Chalet (4 persons inclusive of breakfast per night.	
NOW	NOW	
BHD 60.984 net	BHD 136.198 net	
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NOW	NOW	
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considerable hardship yet also showcased the resilience and fortitude of the Tajik people. By 1997, the war concluded, leaving a profound impact on the nation. It prompted a collective realization among Tajikistan's citizens about the critical importance of unity and peace. The signing of the General Agreement on the Establishment of Peace and National Accord on June 27, 1997, marked a pivotal moment towards healing and reconstruction, symbolizing a shared commitment to moving beyond conflict towards a cohesive future.

National Unity Day is celebrated fervently across Tajikistan. Official ceremonies commemorate the peace agreement, with leaders delivering speeches that underscore the enduring significance of national unity and collaboration. These events serve not only as reflections on past achievements but also as celebrations of the present and future, imbued with optimism and

by its transition from conflict to peace through dialogue and cooperation. This ongoing journey emphasizes the value of diversity and inclusion, enriching the nation as it progresses in rebuilding its economy, infrastructure, and social institutions. National Unity Day thus celebrates these achievements and looks forward to the boundless potential ahead.

"In essence, National Unity Day in Tajikistan is not merely a commemoration but a jubilant celebration of the Tajik people's resilience, determination, and unity. It embodies pride, joy, and optimism for the future, reaffirming the nation's commitment to peace, harmony, and prosperity for all its citizens. As Tajikistan continues to evolve, National Unity Day will remain a steadfast symbol, inspiring and uniting the nation towards a shared identity and collective purpose," he said

6.5 million loan agreement inked

KFAED to fund Chinguri bridge project

KUWAIT CITY, June 26: During the 2024 regular meeting of the heads of institutions of the Arab Funds Coordination Group, the Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development signed a loan agreement worth 6.5 million Kuwaiti dinars to finance the Chinguri bridge project in Bangladesh, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

Representing the Government of Bangladesh, Assistant Undersecretary for Economic Relations of the Ministry of Finance, Mirana Marukh, signed the agreement, while Acting Director General Waleed Al-Bahar signed on behalf of KFAED, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The Chinguri Bridge Project aims to bolster economic and social development in southwest Bangladesh by enhancing passenger and goods transport infrastructure.

It will also strengthen the country's road network by connecting southwestern regions with the capital, Dhaka.

Kuwait condemns 'multiple' attacks in Russia's Dagestan

KUWAIT CITY, June 26, (KUNA): Kuwait on Tuesday condemned a string of attacks targeting churches and synagogues in Russia's predominantly Muslim region of Dagestan, which left scores of people either dead or injured.

Kuwait remains "firmly opposed" to any form of "violence and terrorism," said a foreign ministry statement, wishing a swift recovery for those wounded amid the rampage.

This initiative aligns with sustainable development goals, including poverty eradication, economic growth, industry, innovation, infrastructure development, and the promotion of sustainable cities and communities.

Ministry of Oil enhances 'efficiency' with Civil Service Bureau workshop

KUWAIT CITY, June 26: The Civil Service Bureau conducted a training workshop at the Ministry of Oil focused on enhancing service development, streamlining procedures, and creating a work procedures guide, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

This initiative aligns with Circular No. (24) of 2020 issued by the Bureau, which emphasizes the importance of developing services, documenting procedures, and simplifying them across all government agencies.

The workshop included introductory sessions on performance records for employees of the Ministry of Oil. It covered methods for determining functional tasks within organizational units, how to document daily tasks, and how performance is evaluated based on assigned responsibilities by supervisory officials.

In preparation for the forthcoming guideline on managing employee performance, an initial workshop was conducted for selected government agencies.

This workshop served as an introduction to the framework for assessing employee performance, emphasizing efficiency, quality, and task completion. The Bureau plans to continue and expand these workshops across other government agencies in the future.

ARAB TIMES, THURSDAY, JUNE 27, 2024

5

LOCAL



Part of the audience at the conference.

Guests during a discussion at the conference.



Sheikha Intisar Al-Ali poses for a group photo with the participants.

Photos by lehab Qurtal

New supervisors appointed

7-member 'investigation' committee established to probe disability affairs

KUWAIT CITY, June 26: Dr. Amthal Al-Huwaila, Minister of Social Affairs, Family, and Childhood Affairs, and Minister of State for Youth Affairs, has issued a ministerial decision to establish an investigation committee comprising seven members from the Fatwa and Legislation Department, re-

da daily. This committee 15 tasked with investigating all violations and issues related



leadership of Acting Undersecretary Dr. Khaled Al-Ajmi.

The committee, which included Assistant Undersecretaries, the Director of the Administrative Affairs Department, and the President of the Ministry's Workers' Union, met to finalize the process of filling vacant supervisory positions.

According to sources, the committee agreed to appoint individuals to 13 to 15 vacant supervisory roles, primarily within the social development sector. Once the meeting minutes are adopted, the nominated candidates will undergo

Sheikha Intisar highlights significant environmental concerns & solutions

Conference advocates native plants for sustainability

KUWAIT CITY, June 26: Sheikha Intisar Al-Ali, head of the Al-Nawer Initiative and organizer of the first Kuwait Wildlife Conference, highlighted significant environmental concerns and solutions during the event, reports Al-Jarida daily.

ing at the conference or ganized by Noir Kuwait Agricultural Services Company in collaboration with the Public Authority for Applied Education and Training, she emphasized the high annual cost of approximately two million dinars for transporting "Safi" sand in Kuwait. The conference, held under the theme "For a sustainable and healthy Kuwait... How do we achieve it with fungal plants?", was patronized by Dr. Mahmoud Bushahri, Minister of Electricity, Water and Renewable Energy, and Minister of State for Housing Affairs. Sheikha Intisar Al-Ali underscored the critical issue of desertification in Kuwait, citing an annual rate of 285 square kilometers lost to desert



environmental and financial expense, given the country's limited natural resources

Eng. Fenis Al-Ajmi, Director of the Security and Safety Department at the Public Authority for Applied Education and Training, echoed the importance of fungal plants in Kuwait's natural landscape. He emphasized their role in lowering temperatures, enhancing green spaces, preventing sand encroachment, and improving overall environmental

fairs over a Dr Al-Huwaila period of six

months, with the possibility of extension.

The committee will specifically review files within the authority, focusing on those marred by violations highlighted in the annual report from the Audit Bureau, along with its associated observations and objections.

Regular progress reports on the committee's findings will be submitted to the minister.

In parallel, the Personnel Affairs Committee at the Ministry of Social Affairs convened under the

the necessary approvals from the Civil Service Bureau before administrative decisions are issued by the Ministry.

Furthermore, it was noted that decisions concerning 15 employees who were confirmed in supervisory positions prior to the Eid al-Adha holiday will be issued this week after approval by the Diwan.

The Ministry emphasizes the importance of an open-door policy for these new supervisors, encouraging constructive engagement with auditors and focusing on enhancing work methodologies and plans to meet the needs of Kuwaiti citizens and align with national aspirations.

Sheikha Intisar speaking at the conference.

encroachment. She advocated for increasing awareness of scientific knowledge and successful practices in wildlife and environmental agriculture to promote health and sustainability.

She stressed the feasibility of utilizing fungal plants at a lower cost to combat desertification sustainably, contrasting them with imported plants that require intensive irrigation and maintenance, leading to en-

vironmental and financial burdens. Highlighting the significance of native plants like Al-Arfaj as Kuwait's national flower, she proposed incorporating such species into cosmetic agriculture along roads, residential areas, and gardens to reflect Kuwait's natural environment, climate, history, and culture. She emphasized that Kuwait, as a desert nation, should not aim to transform into a forest ecosystem at considerable

health. He called for collective efforts to achieve these vital environ-

mental goals. Ali Al-Shanfa, General Manager of Noir Kuwait Agricultural Services Company, expressed commitment to enhancing Kuwait's environment by introducing plant systems resilient to its arid climate. He highlighted the challenges faced in organizing the conference, emphasizing the importance of inviting experienced guests to enrich discussions and drive practical outcomes for Kuwait's environmental sustainability.

Overall, the conference aimed to promote innovative and sustainable approaches using native plants to preserve Kuwait's environment and promote a healthier ecosystem amid its challenging climate conditions.

5 domestic

Continued from Page 1

Al-Ansari revealed that a committee from the Commercial Control Department issued multiple violations against the owners of these offices. The violations included the collection of cash payments exceeding the legally specified limits for recruitment fees.

According to ministerial decisions, payments for recruitment services must be conducted through KNET, Kuwait's national electronic payment system. However, these offices were found to have accepted cash payments that exceeded the prescribed limits, contravening established laws.

Al-Ansari commended the efforts of the committee, emergency teams, and inspection units for their diligent oversight of markets, offices, and other establishments.

He emphasized the ministry's unwavering commitment to enforcing regulations and holding accountable anyone who attempts to manipulate or circumvent the law.

This action underscores the ministry's stance on ensuring compliance with legal standards in all sectors, particularly in matters affecting labor and recruitment practices within the country.

Cabinet warns

Continued from Page 1

Afterwards, the Cabinet listened to an explanation from Minister of Electricity, Water and Renewable Energy and Minister of State for Housing Affairs Dr. Mahmoud Bushehri about the country's power system.

In this context, the ministers voiced

sincere thanks and appreciation to all citizens and residents, along with state bodies and private companies for swift response to calls for cutting power consumption.

The Ministry of Information was then asked to interview ministers and senior state officials to highlight their services and accomplishments in a bid to bolster communication between officials and citizens.

Furthermore, the Cabinet tasked the Kuwait Municipality with completing its efforts, in collaboration with other state bodies to put in place ministerial decrees pertinent to Sulaibikhat Bay and Al-Jahra Corniche development projects.

In this regard, the Cabinet asked the municipality to send it a periodical report on relevant developments and executive steps bearing on both developmental projects.

Finally, the ministers approved the Kuwaiti nationality verification committee's recent decisions, including the withdrawal of some people's nationality as per Law 15/1959 as for Kuwaiti nationality.

Kuwait Prime

Continued from Page 1

he remained until 1987. Later, he occupied the post of the banking supervision administration before shifting to Burgan Bank where was named the chairperson serving in the top post between 1987 and 1998.

Having acquired tremendous experience in the finance and business worlds, he began climbing the public echelon serving as a minister as of July 1999 in the departments of finance and transport

Sheikh Ahmad had carried the port-

folios of transport, planning, administrative development, oil and information. And on September 20, 2021, the Cabinet adopted a decree naming him the head of the Crown Prince Diwan with a Minister's degree.

He had employed his potential in pushing ahead the country's development enterprises, improving the financial performance, overhauling the financial policies and boosting financial sustainability.

His Highness, on several occasions, affirmed necessity of transparency, combating corruption and protecting public funds. He had translated words into action, referring several irregularity cases to the public prosecution.

Sheikh Ahmad Al-Abdullah believes that Kuwait's real wealth is the youth, has affirmed the necessity of volunteering actions and boosting the role of technology in various sectors.

His Highness the Prime Minister, when he was named as the minister of transports, minister of planning and minister of state for administrative development on July 14, 2003, laid the cornerstone for the "government mall enterprise," sought to upgrade the administrative systems, accelerate the pace of development, enhancing skills of the national cadres and overseeing the development scheme.

On June 15, 2005, he took the health and transport portfolios, set up partnerships with international medical institutions, devoted attention to medical research and accelerated the enacting of health legislations. During this period, he adopted the initiative to establish a special fund for financial health ventures.

On February 9, 2009, he was named minister of oil and in May of the same ear, he was appointed as minister of oil and information. During the service, he had taken decisive stands to solidify the national unity by activatlishing law and blessed a package of amendments to the two laws.

While in office at the ministry of oil, a new strategy was adopted to increase the crude output, luring and training national cadres to run the oil operations in and outside Kuwait, in addition to reaching new markets.

Moreover, during his service in the chain of offices, he exerted great efforts to cement the bonds and ties with great powers, friendly and brotherly nations, in addition to regional and international organizations.

He also advocates strengthening the inter-GCC interaction in various fields, supporting the Palestinian cause, promoting the status of Kuwait and ridding decision making of personal interests.

Kuwait targets

Continued from Page 1

slogan, 'The evidence is clear... let us continue prevention'; Al-Awadhi affirmed "there is an integrated system in Kuwait that primarily aims to intensify efforts to combat drug addiction and rehabilitate young people who have fallen into this scourge, so they can be effective and positive members of society.'

He disclosed the Council of Ministers issued a directive for the concerned ministries to coordinate their efforts in confronting this devastating scourge, which is a major challenge to societies. He cited the efforts of the ministry, specifically the Addiction Treatment Center, which is working hard in the field of combating drug addiction and providing advanced services in the field of detoxification, as well as advanced rehabilitation and psychological treatments.

He praised the work of various ministries and civil society institutions in addressing the problem. He pointed out that not only Kuwait is suffering from this issue, but also other Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries and the entire world.

He confirmed the ministry is keen on providing the necessary healthcare and rehabilitation for those who suffer from this scourge; citing as an example the expansion of the Addiction Treatment Center, which has 155 beds, and provides services to women and adolescents.

He then stressed that the celebration aims to educate communities about the danger of drugs, how to recognize the symptoms of addiction among drug users, and list the means to avoid falling into the danger of this scourge through proper socialization and meeting the needs of young people at an early stage in line with their intellectual and physical development.

Ministries praise

Continued from Page 1

within its 2035 vision.

They underscored the need for effective coordination between ministries to facilitate work procedures and ensure the efficient provision of public services to citizens. They agreed to adopt a series of urgent measures to expedite the construction process and develop the necessary infrastructure to support housing projects, in addition to the importance of accelerating the pace of work and removing all obstacles to ongoing projects, especially those related to residential care and solving the problems of citizens in South Abdullah Al-Mubarak and South Saad Al-Abdullah. These efforts are within the framework of the joint endeavor to improve the quality of life for citizens and provide an appropriate environment that meets their aspirations.

Moreover, they agreed to prepare a joint action plan and a timetable with the aim of following up the implementation of the directives and periodically evaluating the achievements to ensure the desired results are reached within the specified period.

KNPC expands

Continued from Page 1

He pointed out that the company developed an operational structure for the digital transformation strategy and formed committees to manage the plans, including the Supreme Steering Committee and the Digital Project Management Office.

He explained that the tasks of the Supreme Steering Committee include monitoring the progress made on established and approved operational plans and reviewing performance and achieving goals.

Al-Shammari added that the tasks of the Digital Project Management Office include providing reports of timeline, benefits, budget, achieved return, work requirements and guidance on issues and challenges that arise during project implementation.

KNPC conducted the largest search for local and global markets to find the best solutions, information and partnership with local and international companies with experience in managing and implementing digital transformation projects.

The company currently has a single digital community with a membership of 130 employees from various administrative and technical departments of the company, and coordinates with the Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) regarding the implementation of this strategy.

ing the audio-visual law, the pub-

INTERNATIONAL

World News Roundup

Europe

Zelenskyy scolds officials

Outgoing Dutch PM 'named' NATO chief

THE HAGUE, Netherlands, June 26, (AP): Over the course of more than a dozen years at the top of Dutch politics, Mark Rutte got to know a thing or two about finding consensus among fractious coalition partners. Now he will bring the experience of leading four Dutch multiparty governments to the international stage as NATO's new secretary general.

On Wednesday, NATO ambassadors appointed the outgoing Dutch prime minister as the alliance's next secretary general, its top civilian post. Rutte is scheduled to head the world's biggest military organization from October.

NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg said that "Mark is a true trans-Atlanticist, a strong leader, and a consensus-builder." "I wish him every success as we



continue to strengthen NATO for the challenges of today and tomorrow. I know I am leaving NATO in good hands," he said.

Rutte will be congratulated by President Joe Biden and his NATO counterparts at a summit in Washington on July 9-11 focused on support for Ukraine against the Russian invasion, perhaps the alliance's greatest challenge.

Taking to social media, Rutte described his nomination as "a tremendous honor."

Security

"The alliance is and will remain the cornerstone of our collective security. Leading this organization is a responsibility I do not take lightly," he posted on X. He said that he looks "forward to taking up the position with great vigor in October."

The secretary general chairs meetings and guide sometimes delicate consultations among the 32 NATO member countries to ensure that an organization that operates on consensus can continue to function. The NATO leader also ensures that decisions are put into action and speak on behalf of all members

Even before taking over from Stoltenberg, Rutte has been put to the test.

Securing the job of NATO chief required all of Rutte's diplomatic skills as he convinced doubters, including Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orbán and Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, to back his candidacy.

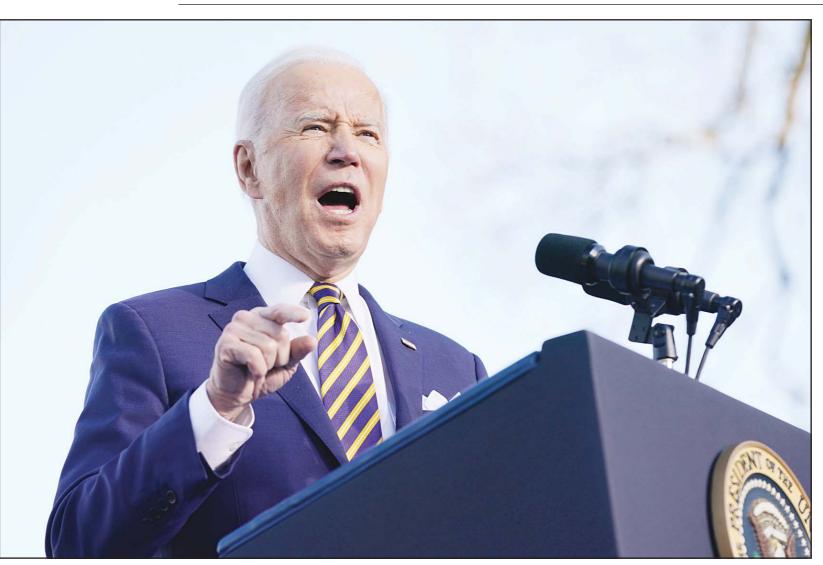
Rutte had to accept Hungary's demand that it should not be obliged to provide personnel or funds for NATO's new support plans for Ukraine. In an alliance that works on consensus, every country has a veto.

Fit

A former NATO spokesperson also believes that Rutte is a good fit for the job.

"Like Stoltenberg, Rutte is a pragmatist and one of the few European politicians to have developed a good working relationship not just with Joe Biden, but also with Donald Trump. That could prove a key asset for NATO after the November US presidential election,' said Oana Lungescu, a former chief NATO spokesperson.

Rutte "is seen as a safe pair of hands to lead NATO in turbulent times, just as Stoltenberg has done for the last decade," Lungescu, now a Fellow with the defense and security think tank, the Royal United Services Institute, told The Associated Press.



US President Joe Biden speaks in support of changing the Senate filibuster rules that have stalled voting rights legislation, at Atlanta University Center Consortium, on the grounds of Morehouse College and Clark Atlanta University, Jan 11, 2022, in Atlanta. The Border Patrol's average daily arrests over a 7-day period have fallen below 2,400, down more than 40% from before Biden's proclamation took effect June 5, 2024. (AP)

Border arrests fall more than 40% since Biden's halt to asylum processing

Arrests for illegal border crossings dropped more than 40% during the three weeks that asylum processing has been suspended, the Homeland Security Department said Wednesday.

The Border Patrol's average daily arrests over a seven-day period have fallen below 2,400, down more than 40% from before President Joe Biden's proclamation took effect June 5. That's still above the 1,500 mark needed to resume asylum processing, but Homeland Security says it marks the lowest number since Jan. 17, 2021, less than a week before Biden took office.

Last week, Biden, a Democrat, said border arrests had fallen 25% since his order took effect, indicating they have decreased much more since then. Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas

was scheduled to address reporters Wednesday in Tucson, Arizona, the busiest corridor for illegal cross-

Politics

ings during much of the last year. US authorities say the seven-day daily average of arrests in the Border Patrol's Tucson sector was just under 600 on Tuesday, down from just under 1,200 on June 2.

Under the suspension, which takes effect when daily arrests are above 2,500, anyone who ex-presses that fear or an intention to seek asylum is screened by a US asylum officer but at a higher standard than currently used. (AP)



Kinzinger endorses Biden

Rep Boebert wins Republican primary

DENVER, June 26, (AP): US Rep Lauren Boebert won Tuesday's Republican primary in a US House race that she jumped into last year, surviving a scandal over a video of her at a Denver theater and accusations of carpetbagging after fleeing what could have been a tough reelection bid in her current district.

won the primary for the 3rd District seat currently held by Boebert, and political consultant and talk radio host Jeff Crank defeated Colorado GOP Chairman Dave Williams, who was endorsed by Trump, in the 5th District. Boebert built national hard-line con-

servative stardom that likely made it

gressman Adam Kinzinger endorsed President Joe Biden on Wednesday, giving the Democrat a prominent new ally in his high-stakes campaign to win over moderate Republicans and independents this fall.

Kinzinger, a military pilot who emerged as a fierce critic of former President Donald Trump after the

Jan 6, 2021, US Capitol insurrection,

described Trump as "a direct threat to

every fundamental American value" in

President Biden on everything, and

Democrat for president, I know that

he will always protect the very thing that makes America the best country in

the world: our democracy," said Kinz-

also issued an ominous warning. Trump, he said, will "hurt anyone or

anything in pursuit of power.'

The former Illinois congressman

Kinzinger's announcement comes

on the eve of the opening presidential

debate and gives Biden an example

he can raise Thursday night of a well-

known Republican supporting him over

Trump. Biden's camp is prioritizing

outreach to moderate Republicans and

independents alienated by Trump's tu-

file Republican official formally back-

ing Biden, whose campaign earlier in

the month tapped Kinzinger's former

chief of staff Austin Weatherford

to serve as its national Republican

outreach director. Republican former

Georgia Lt Gov Geoff Duncan also

Kinzinger becomes the highest-pro-

multuous White House tenure.

endorsed Biden last month.

inger, who voted for Trump in 2020.

never thought I'd be endorsing a

"While I certainly don't agree with

a video announcing the endorsement.

A history graduate and former human resources manager at consumer products multinational Unilever, Rutte became prime minister of the Netherlands for the first time in October, 2010. He quit last July as his four-party coalition wrangled over how to rein in migration.

Although he has been one of Europe's top politicians for years, Rutte has remained down to earth.

He can often be seen riding his bicycle around his hometown of The Hague, or walking from his office to a meeting eating an apple.

Also:

KYIV, Ukraine: Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy signaled Wednesday that he is getting tough on officials he suspects are shirking their duties in the war with **Russia** that is now in its third year.

Zelenskyy and Commander in Chief Oleksandr Syrskyi visited troops in the eastern Donetsk region who have weathered fierce Russian ground and air assaults in recent months. They also discussed with local officials the drinking water supply, social issues, evacuation plans and the rebuilding of local homes, Zelenskyy said.

He added that back in Kyiv he would speak to "officials who must be here and in other areas near the front line - in difficult communities where people need immediate solutions.

"I was surprised to learn that some relevant officials have not been here for six months or more," Zelenskyy said. "There will be a serious conversation, and I will draw appropriate conclusions regarding them."

Zelenskyy has frequently visited front-line areas during the war.

His said his trip to the Donetsk region was to introduce the new commander of the Joint Forces Command, Andrii Hnatov.

Hnatov replaced Yurii Sodol, who had held the position since February 2023.

Zelenskyy didn't give a reason for the change, but it came after the widely admired chief of staff of the Azov regiment, Bohdan Krotevych, released a statement rebuking an unnamed general for having "killed more Ukrainian soldiers than any Russian general," in what was seen as a reference to incompetent management of troops.

YEKATERINBURG, Russia: Wall Street Journal reporter Evan Gershkovich went on trial behind closed doors in Yekaterinburg on Wednesday, 15 months after his arrest in the Russian city on espionage charges that he, his employer and the US government vehemently deny.

The 32-year-old journalist appeared in the court in a glass defendants' cage, his head shaved and wearing a black-and-blue plaid shirt. A yellow padlock was attached to the cage.

Journalists were allowed into the courtroom for a few minutes before the proceedings were closed. Also briefly permitted in court were two consular officers from the US Embassy in Moscow, according to the embassy.

The hearing ended after about two hours, and the next one was scheduled for Aug 13, court officials said.

Jay Conti, executive vice president and general counsel for Dow Jones, publisher of the Journal, described the trial as a sham in an interview with The Associated Press.



North Las Vegas Police investigate the scene of Monday night's shooting at an apartment complex in North Las Vegas on June 25. (AP)



Keane

America

Vegas shooting suspect dead: A man who fatally shot five people and critically injured a 13-year-old girl at apartments near Las Vegas has killed himself, authorities said Tuesday.

The North Las Vegas Police Department said the suspected shooter, 47-year-old Eric Adams, killed himself Tuesday morning as he was confronted by officers in a neighborhood. Authorities had been searching for him since Monday night's shootings in separate apartment units.

Efforts to locate relatives of Adams for comment weren't immediately successful. (AP)

Teenagers charged: Two teenage boys were indicted Tuesday in the shooting death of a 3-year-old who was killed while riding his tricycle outside his Buffalo home last week, officials said. The toddler's 7-yearold sister was wounded.

"Literally, babies killing babies," Mayor Byron Brown said as city leaders announced the charges against a 14-year-old and 16-year-old at an evening news conference.

Three-year-old Ramone Carter and Jamia Griffin, 7, were not the intended targets as the suspects fired toward another young person about 9:30 p.m. on June 21, acting Erie County District Attorney Michael Keane said.

The children's mother, Shakenya Griffin, told The Buffalo News the next morning that she heard gunshots and ran outside to look for her children. (AP)

Star witness gets 19 yrs: A Tennessee man who was granted his freedom after providing key trial testimony in the case of murdered nursing student Holly Bobo has been sentenced to 19 years in federal prison on unrelated federal weapons charges, au-

Boebert's resounding win over four other candidates in the new district across the state from where she lived before showcased her political cachet among Republicans and positions her for a likely easy win in the November general election. It was also a victory for the far-right flank of the House GOP, a group that takes no prisoners, makes no concessions and stays on the attack.

Victory

Taking the stage at her election night victory party, Boebert wore a pair of reflective gold sneakers sold by former President Donald Trump and a white "Make America Great Again" hat with his signature across the bill.

"America will rise again, and I am so excited that you all are here to be a part of it with me," Boebert said to applause. Boebert responded to questions about her switch to the 4th District by saying, "While the crops may be slightly different here in CD4, the values are not."

She promised to fight for policies including shutting down the southern border and also signaled that she intends to continue her combative style. "A lot of folks criticize my approach

on things," Boebert said, "but I learned very early on in Washington, DC, that nothing happens without force." In two other closely watched Re-

publican contests, Attorney Jeff Hurd

thorities said Tuesday. Jason Autry, 49, was sentenced by US District Judge S. Thomas Anderson in Jack-

son on Monday, according to court records



Britain's Prime Minister Rishi Sunak, (left), speaks to Shadow Minister for Hous-ing and Planning Mark Isherwood during the launch of the Welsh Conservatives General Election manifesto in Rhyl, Wales, England on June 21. Police in northern England say four men have been arrested on suspicion of trespassing on the grounds of Sunak's home on June 25. North Yorkshire police say the group was detained just after noon and escorted off the property. They were arrested on suspicion of aggravated trespass. (AP)

easier for her to weather the scandals of the last year, which included the video of her vaping and causing a disturbance at a musical production of "Beetlejuice."

While the theater incident and district jump rattled some Republicans, Gilbert Kendzior shrugged them off, saying, "Who's perfect?"

Kendzior said he voted for Boebert because she shakes things up. "It's gotten too staid. Same promises, nothing happens," he said.

On Tuesday she beat a group of more traditional, homegrown primary candidates who had far less name recognition and generally less combative political styles: former state sen Jerry Sonnenberg; current state Reps Mike Lynch and Richard Holtorf; and parental rights advocate Deborah Flora.

Sonnenberg congratulated Boebert and pledged to support her, saying, "I look forward to helping her win this seat in November and then being a resource to her on rural issues in this district."

The 4th District, which sweeps across a wide expanse of ranches, ghost towns and conservative parts of the Denver metro area that make up much of the plains of eastern Colorado, overwhelmingly went for Trump in the 2020 election

Also:

NEW YORK: Republican former con-

and a statement from the US attorney's office.

Autry had pleaded guilty to being a felon in possession of a weapon and ammunition after he was arrested in December 2020 when he tried to run away from a sheriff's deputy in a rural field, where the deputy found a Marlin rifle. (AP)

Arkansas man pleads not guilty: The Arkansas man accused of killing four people and injuring 10 others, including two police officers, in a mass shooting at a grocery store pleaded not guilty Tuesday to multiple charges connected to the attack.

Appearing in court for the first time, Travis Eugene Posey, 44, pleaded not guilty to four counts of capital murder and ten counts of attempted capital murder for a shooting last week at the Mad Butcher grocery store

Ă judge ordered Posey held without bond

Police have not identified a motive for Posey, 44, who was shot and injured by officers who exchanged fire with him.

Police have said he did not appear to have a personal connection to any of the victims.

Gregg Parrish, the executive director of the Arkansas Public Defender Commission, represented Posey at the brief hearing.

Posey spoke briefly at the hearing to say Parrish had explained the charges to him, the Arkansas Democrat-Gazette reported.

The judge did not schedule Posey's next court appearance. (AP)

ARAB TIMES, THURSDAY, JUNE 27, 2024

INTERNATIONAL

Africa

21 Nigeria soldiers dead Kenya starts clearing debris after protests

NAIROBI, Kenya, June 26, (Agencies): Kenyans woke up to the acrid smell of tear gas still lingering in the capital on Wednesday, a day after protesters stormed parliament amid violent demonstrations over a controversial tax plan during which at least six people have been killed.

As the day began, there were no reports of violence. Police and soldiers patrolled the streets as city workers began cleaning up debris. Parliament, the city hall and the supreme court were cordoned off with tape reading "Crime Scene Do Not Enter."

The military was deployed overnight to support po-lice on as President **William Ruto** called the events treasonous and vowed to quash the unrest "at whatever cost.



Kenya has been rocked by massive protests for over a week in opposition to a proposed finance bill that would raise taxes as frustrations over the cost of living are simmering. Many young people who helped vote Ruto into power with cheers for his promises of economic relief have taken to the streets to object to the pain of reforms.

Ruto

Thousands of protesters stormed Kenya's parliament

Tuesday, burning parts of the building while legislators fled. Police responded with gunfire and several protesters were killed. The city mortuary told The Associated Press that it received six bodies from police on Tuesday.

Authorities said police fired over 700 blanks to disperse protesters in the suburb of Githurai, east of the capital Nairobi. Videos of gunfire piercing the night air were shared online.

Injured

More than 100 people were injured in Tuesday's protests, according to civil society groups. It is still unclear how many people were arrested.

UN Secretary General António Guterres said he was deeply saddened by reports of deaths and injuries. "I urge the Kenyan authorities to exercise restraint,

and call for all demonstrations to take place peacefully," he wrote on the social media platform X

In Nairobi, a regional hub for expatriates and home to a United Nations complex, inequality among Kenyans has sharpened along with long-held frustrations over state corruption.

Opposition to the finance bill has united a large part of the country, with some explicitly rejecting the tribal divisions that have torn Kenya apart in the past. Some who had passionately supported Ruto felt betraved.

A Kenyan newspaper, Daily Nation, called for dia-logue. "Let's reason together," its front page said.

Citizen TV, a local broadcaster, led a discussion titled "A Nation on the Brink" with panelists calling on the government to engage with the public.

21 Nigeria soldiers killed: An ambush by a "terrorist group" killed 21 Nigerien soldiers near the country's border with Burkina Faso on Tuesday, Niger's ruling military junta said in a statement read on national television.

day evening did not spe The statement



WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange gestures after landing at RAAF air base Fairbairn in Canberra, Australia on June 26. Assange has returned to his homeland Australia aboard a charter jet hours after pleading guilty to obtaining and publishing US military secrets in a deal with Justice Department prosecutors that concludes a drawn-out legal saga. (AP)



Anti-riot police hold back demonstrators during an anti-tax protest in down-town Nairobi, capital of Kenya on June 25. Kenyans woke up to the acrid smell of tear gas still lingering in the capital on June 26, a day after protesters stormed parliament amid violent demonstrations over a controversial tax plan during which at least six people have been killed. (Xinhua)



Asia

'Duterte plans to run for Senate next year' Assange returns to Australia a free man

CANBERRA, Australia, June 26, (AP): WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange returned to his homeland Australia aboard a charter jet on Wednesday, hours after pleading guilty to obtaining and publishing US military secrets in a deal with Justice Department prosecutors that concludes a drawn-out legal saga.

The criminal case of international intrigue, which had played out for years, came to a surprise end in a most unusual setting with Assange, 52, entering his plea in a US district court in Saipan, the capital of the Northern Mariana Islands. The American commonwealth in the Pacific is relatively close to Assange's native Australia and accommodated his desire to avoid entering the continental United States.

Details

Assange was accused of receiving and publishing hundreds of thousands of war logs and diplomatic cables that included details of US military wrongdoing in Iraq and Afghanistan. His activities drew an outpouring of support from press freedom advocates, who heralded his role in bringing to light military conduct that might otherwise have been concealed from view and warned of a chilling effect on journalists. Among the files published by WikiLeaks was a video of a 2007 Apache helicopter attack by American forces in Baghdad that killed 11 people, including two Reuters journalists. Assange raised his right fist as he emerged for the plane and his supporters at the Canberra airport cheered from a distance. Dressed in the same suit and tie he wore during his earlier court appearance, he embraced his wife Stella Assange and father John Shipton who were waiting on the tarmac. "He described it as a surreal and happy moment, his landing here in our national capital, Canberra," Prime Minister Anthony Albanese told reporters in Parliament House. "I had a very warm discussion with him this evening. He was very generous in his praise of the Australian government's efforts." Assange was accompanied on the flights by Australian Ambassador to the United States Kevin Rudd and High Commissioner to the United Kingdom Stephen Smith, both of whom played key roles in negotiating his freedom with London and Washington.

Suspected NKorean hypersonic missile exploded in flight: South

SEOUL, South Korea, June 26, (AP): A suspected hypersonic missile launched by North Korea exploded in flight on Wednesday, South Korea's military said, as North Korea protests the regional deployment of a US surgeft entries deployment of a US aircraft carrier for a military drill with South Korea and Japan.

Later Wednesday, South Korea conducted live-fire drills along its disputed western sea boundary with North Korea, its first since it suspended a 2018 agreement with the North aimed at reducing front-line military tensions in early June.

The North Korean missile was launched at about 5:30 am and was aimed toward the North's eastern waters before the failure, South Korea's Joint Chiefs of Staff said. Missile fragments were scattered in the water up to 250 kilometers (155

launch generated more smoke than normal launches, possibly because of an engine fault, it told South Korean reporters at a background briefing. The contents of the briefing were shared with foreign media.

In a three-way phone call, senior diplomats from South Korea, the US and Japan condemned the missile launch as a violation of UN resolutions and agreed to maintain close coordination in response to North Korean threats, according to

South Korea's Foreign Ministry. North Korea has performed a series of hypersonic missile tests since 2021 in an apparent effort to acquire an ability to penetrate its rivals' missile defense shields. Foreign experts question whether the missiles have achieved their desired speed and maneuverabil-ity during the test flights. In recent

which group was behind the attack. Niger is struggling with a deadly security crisis involving several armed groups.

Last week, the rebel Patriotic Liberation Front attacked a China-backed pipeline and threatened more attacks if the \$400 million deal with China isn't canceled. The group, led by Salah Mahmoud, a former rebel leader, took up arms after the junta staged a coup last year ousting a democratically elected government.

Niger and neighboring Mali and Burkina Faso are also battling movements linked to al-Qaida and the Islamic State extremist group in a decade-long conflict in the Sahel region that is worsening.

Zimbabwe train-bus collision kills 1: One person was killed and seven others injured early Monday when a train rammed into a bus at a railway crossing in Harare, the capital of Zimbabwe, police have confirmed.

In a statement on X, formerly Twitter, the police said the accident happened around 4:30 a.m. (0230 GMT)

"A bus with 66 passengers on board was hit by a train after the bus driver failed to stop at the railway crossing. Subsequently, one person died on the spot and seven others were injured," the police added.

The accident happened just over a week after nine passengers were killed on a bus which caught fire just outside the small town of Rusape in Manicaland Province.

Road traffic accidents involving passenger transport vehicles are common in Zimbabwe, prompting the government to engage operators to minimize them.

5 dead in Cameroon road accident: At least five people were killed and 25 others injured in a road accident in Cameroon's West region, according to police and medical authorities.

The tragedy occurred Tuesday evening after the brake of a passenger bus failed as it was descending a steep hill at La Falaise locality in Dschang town of the region, local police said.

The victims included children, teenagers and women, according to Regional Hospital Annex of Dschang, where the injured were treated.

The children were mostly students who had finished the semester and were travelling to spend holidays in other parts of the country, police said.

Some 1,500 people die in road accidents each year in the central African nation, according to estimates by the Ministry of Transport.

Tunisia faces water crisis: Tunisia is witnessing a worsening water crisis as the demand exceeds the available supply, reported the Tunis Afrique Presse

(TAP) on Tuesday. "The reserves of Tunisian dams have reached their lowest levels in different regions in the country,' Chawki Ben Mansour, central director of the National Company of Water Exploitation and Distribution (SONEDE), was quoted by the TAP as saying.

The water reserves at Tunisian dams, estimated at around 720 million cubic meters, recorded a regression of around 200 million cubic meters compared to the same period last year, Mansour said, calling on citizens to support water-saving policies.

Mansour added that SONEDE launched an awareness campaign a week ago to inform citizens of the severe drinking water situation caused by the drought and lack of rainfall.

Lat/Am

Puerto Rico sues former officials:

Puerto Rico's Justice Department announced Tuesday it is suing at least 30 former government officials accused of corruption to recover more than \$30 million in public funds.

Among those sued are three former legislators, including María Milagros Charbonier, who was sentenced in May to eight years in federal prison after being found guilty of theft, bribery and a kickback scheme.

"We are going to recover the Puerto Rican people's money and claim an amount that totals three times the damage caused by those who have illegally appropriated public funds," said Domingo Emanuelli, the US territory's justice secretary. Also sued are eight former mayors

including Félix Delgado of Cataño and Ángel Pérez of Guaynabo. Delgado was sentenced to one year in federal prison in March after pleading guilty to accepting bribes in exchange for awarding millions of dollars' worth of municipal contracts. Pérez was sentenced to more than five years in federal prison in February after being found guilty of bribery and extor-

sion. Their attorneys could not be immediately reached for comment. (AP)

Guatemala court revokes order: A Guatemalan appeals court on Tuesday revoked a judge's order to give house arrest to journalist José Rubén Zamora, known for railing against corruption in the Central American country. The reporter has been in prison for two

years, something that has sparked outrage by press freedom groups across the world.

Guatemala's prosecutors appealed a judge's decision in May to grant him house arrest. However, the lower court order did not result in him being freed because there is a second detention order as the prosecutor's office pursues two separate cases against him.

Zamora, 67, has been in prison since July 2022, when he was charged by the Public Prosecutor's Office with money laundering, amounting to some \$38,000, and in June last year he was sentenced to six years in prison. The sentence was suspended by a court decision due to errors in the process. (AP)

Foreign police arrives in Haiti: The first UN-backed contingent of foreign police arrived in Haiti on Tuesday, nearly two years after the troubled Caribbean country urgently requested help to quell a surge in gang violence.

The flights were paid for by the "Assange team," Deputy Prime Minister Richard Marles said, adding his government played a role in facilitating miles) from the launch site near North Korea's capital, it said. No damage was immediately reported. The Joint Chiefs of Staff said it

believes the weapon was a solid-fueled hypersonic missile. The

the transport.

Albanese told Parliament that Assange's freedom, after he spent five years in a British prison fighting extradition to the US, was the result of his government's "careful, patient and determined work."

Also:

CANBERRA, Australia: The new prime minister of the Solomon Islands said Wednesday that his visits to Australia and China are focussed on creating jobs in the developing South Pacific island nation.

Prime Minister Jeremiah Manele met his counterpart Anthony Albanese in the Australian capital of Canberra, during his first overseas trip since being elected last month. Manele will next visit China, and then Japan.

"We are keen to work with all partners, with Australia and China, (on) how we can partner together to create transformational projects and programs in Solomon Islands that create jobs," Manele said at a joint press conference

years, North Korea has also been developing more missiles that use solid propellants, Launches of such missiles are harder to detect than liquid-propellant missiles, which must be fueled before liftoff.

with Albanese.

The Solomons is on the front line in competition between the United States and China for influence in the Pacific. During the five-year term of Manele's predecessor, Prime Minister Manasseh Sogavare, China's influence increased dramatically.

MANILA, Philippines: Former Philippine president Rodrigo Duterte plans to run for the Senate in mid-term elections next year, his daughter and the country's vice president said Tuesday.

When Duterte's stormy presidential term ended in 2022, he said he would retire from politics, but he has walked back on his public pronouncements multiple times.

Vice President Sara Duterte said her two brothers also plan to run in the election while she eventually intends to return to her family's southern political stronghold of Davao city, where she once served as a mayor, to run for the same position again.

A couple hundred police officers from Kenya landed in the capital of Port-au-Prince, whose main international airport reopened in late May after gang violence



In this photo provided by the South Korea Defense Ministry, the South Korean Marine's K-9 self-propelled howitzers fire during a live-fire drills at Yeonpyeong Island near maritime border with North Korea, South Korea on June 26. A suspected hypersonic missile launched by North Korea exploded in flight on Wednesday, South Korea's military said, as North Korea protests the regional deployment of a US aircraft carrier for a military drill with South Korea and Japan. (AP)

forced it to close for nearly three months. It wasn't immediately known what the Kenyans' first assignment would be, but they will face violent gangs that control

80% of Haiti's capital and have left more than 580,000 people homeless across the country as they pillage neighborhoods in their quest to control more territory. Gangs also have killed several thousand people in recent years.

Hours after the Kenyans landed, Prime Minister Garry Conille thanked the East African country for its solidarity, noting that gangs have vandalized homes and hospitals and set libraries on fire, making Haiti "unlivable." (AP)

Brazil police official wins backing: Brazilian police official Valdecy Urquiza won a crucial vote of confidence Tuesday toward becoming the next head of Interpol, the international police body, and its first non-Western chief after its executive committee selected him as its preferred candidate.

The 43-year-old, currently Interpol's vice president for the Americas, is on a key track to be selected by the Lyon, France-based organization's general assembly in Glas-gow, Scotland on Nov 7. The assembly has always followed the recommendations for the choice of the secretary-general from the committee, which is currently made up of 13 members.

The Interpol secretary-general essentially runs the organization on a daily basis. Jürgen Stock of Germany, who has held the post since 2014, is not allowed under its rules to seek a third term. (AP)

Market Movements

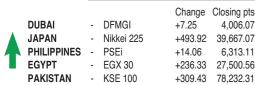
4,006.07

39,667.07

27,500.56

78,232.31

6,313.11



26-06-2024

- TASI

Change Closing pts -74.42 11,656.35

Business

Trademark registrations surge by 17.5% in May

Kuwait trademark revenue

averages KD 6.8m annually

Kuwait 2nd largest donor to OPEC fund

SAUDI

KFAED emphasizes support for OPEC's development forum

VIENNA, June 26, (KUNA): Head of the OPEC Fund for International Development at the institution Dr. Abdulhamid Al-Khalifa emphasized on Wednesday importance of the outcomes of the Third Development Forum organized by the Fund for the third consecutive year.

On the occasion of opening the fund new building in Vienna, Dr. Al-Khalifa said in a statement to KUNA that the topics discussed at the forum focused on the significance of sustainable development.

He explained that the Development Forum addressed three main topics, enhancing infrastructure development and maximizing its benefit through technology and Artificial Intelligence (AI). It also discussed the necessity of enhancing focus on human resources, and last topic was importance of collaboration between donors and beneficiaries to achieve developmental goals.

Dr. Al-Khalifa highlighted Kuwait's role within the Fund, affirming that in this regard it's the second largest contributor after Saudi Arabia in the Fund's budget as Kuwait's support for development is known worldwide, not only through OPEC but through other development funds.



KUNA photo Acting Director General of Kuwait Development Fund for Arab Economic Development Waleed Al-Bahar during OPEC's third devel-

He pointed out the cooperation between Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development and OPEC fund in several projects in developing countries

He clarified that financial pledges by donors often take the form of commitments, but what matters most is altering these commitments into tangible actions on the ground. This implies knowledgesharing activities in development countries to assist them in developing longterm and sustainable plans.

Dr. Al-Khalifa provided a brief history of OPEC Fund, established in 1976 with Kuwait being one of the founding countries. Since then, the Fund engaged in developmental activities in nearly 125 countries worldwide.

Also:

VIENNA: Acting Director General of Kuwait Development Fund for Arab Economic Development (KFAED) Waleed Al-Bahar underscored the importance of OPEC's third development forum, affirming Kuwait's constant support to sustainable development efforts all over the globe.

Speaking to KUNA, Al-Bahar explained that the three-axis forum handles sustainable development goals and challenges they might face.

This year's edition examines enhancing institutional abilities, improving performance of corporations and individuals, and expediting smart sustainable infrastructure, which underwent concerning regression that reflected quite clearly on sustainable development, he added.

On fund's contribution, Al-Bahar commented that they took part yesterday in a meeting for Arab funds, a meeting held annually to discuss important topics and coordinate positions.

He highlighted the fund's projects, which reached 105 countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America since its inauguration in 1961

By Marwa Al-Bahrawi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff KUWAIT CITY, June 26: The Controller of Trademarks and Patents at the Ministry of Trade and Industry, Eng. Rashid Al Owaihan, stated that the annual average revenue from trademarks is estimated at 6.8 million dinars. He revealed that over one million dinars were collected for trademarks in April and May, with 501 thousand dinars in May and 515 thousand dinars in April.

In a statement to Al-Seyassah, Al Owaihan noted that the number of trademarks in May reached 1,145, marking a 17.5% growth compared to April, which saw 945 trademarks. The monthly average of trademarks in the country is estimated at 1,100.

Al Owaihan also mentioned that about 450 patents were registered in the first half of this year. The annual average of patents in Kuwait is estimated at 850. He emphasized the importance of educational campaigns to protect intellectual property and encourage patent registration, which have significantly increased the number of domestic and international patents sevenfold in one year.

He explained that before the

Fuel lead export categories

Kuwait's trade surplus decreases in Q1 2024

KUWAIT CITY, June 26: The value of Kuwait's trade balance surplus decreased by 12.09% annually in the first quarter of 2024 due to declining exports. Kuwait recorded a trade surplus of 3.20 billion dinars (\$10.46 billion) from January to March 2024, down from 3.64 billion dinars (\$11.89 billion) in the first quarter of 2023, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

According to the Central Administration of Statistics, this decline was driven by an 8.33% drop in exports, which fell to 6.05 billion dinars from 6.60 billion dinars in the same period last year.

also decreased. Imports amounting to 2.85 billion dinars in the first three months of 2024, a 3.72% decline from 2.96 billion dinars in the first quarter of

COVID-19 pandemic, the number of patents did not exceed 120 annually. However, due to the promotion of intellectual property culture and 2023. The total volume of trade exchange with Kuwait during this period was 8.91 billion dinars, a 6.89% decrease compared to 9.57 billion dinars in the first quarter of the previous year.

In March 2024, the trade balance surplus increased by 7.34% to 1.17 billion dinars, up from 1.09 billion dinars in March 2023. Supporting this monthly performance, imports in March decreased by 11.87% to 929.29 million dinars, while exports amounted to 2.09 billion dinars, a 2.33% decrease.

Fuel and lubricating oil exports were the largest component of Kuwait's exports, totaling 1.92 bil-lion dinars. Meanwhile, consumer goods not specified elsewhere topped Kuwait's imports at 205.94 million dinars.

joining international intellectual organizations, the annual number of patents now ranges between 700 and 850.

Capital market reforms, uptick in IPO momentum

Exploring joint investment opportunities

Kuwait Investment Authority to open office in Saudi Arabia

KUWAIT CITY, June 26, (KUNA): Minister of Finance Dr. Anwar Al-Mudhaf said that Kuwait Investment Authority's board decided to open a representative office in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, within the framework of strengthening economic and investment ties between the State of Kuwait and the Kingdom, and the desire to bolster cooperation of such relations.

In a statement, Al-Mudhaf, who is also Minister of State for Economic Affairs and Investment, and Chairman of the Board of Directors of Kuwait InvestTwenty (G20), the minister said. The minister noted that the kingdom has "a prominent and influential role in the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) and is witnessing a remarkable increase in its economic and investment importance and its increasing role in international economic decision-making." The minister added, "through the

presence of a representative office of the General Investment Authority in the Kingdom, the Authority will be able to explore and seize investment opportunities, which will certainly increase the prospects for cooperation with Saudi and international companies in joint projects to enhance economic development of the both countries.

Markaz report highlights opportunities & challenges in GCC asset management

KUWAIT CITY, June 26: GCC Asset Management industry has improved over the years, driven by positive regulatory reforms and the support from governments, according to a report published by Marmore MENA Intelligence, the research subsidiary of Kuwait Financial Centre "Markaz" titled "GCC Asset Management – A deep dive". The report comprehensively analyses the asset management sector, delving deep into the products available in the market, preferred distribution channels, preferred asset classes, cost of funds and some emerging trends such as the increased usage of technology by industry leaders.

GCC Asset Management landscape has imroved substantially in the past decade, especially in Saudi Arabia, supported by capital market reforms, improvements in business conditions and the active participation of stakeholders. The product portfolio of asset managers has significantly expanded, providing more options to investors. Considering the reforms that are in the pipeline and the penetration of investment products, there is still significant headroom for the asset management industry to grow in the coming years. According to the report, money market funds are more dominant in terms of assets under management of funds that are focused on GCC, while equity funds are more prevalent in terms of number of funds focused on the region. In response to the increasing investor demand for alternatives, the funds launched by asset managers in the re-



gion are becoming more diverse. Of the alternate asset classes, private credit is seeing higher interest as indicated by recent fund approvals in GCC. Among the 19 private credit funds approved from

Arabia's regulations for direct financing. Initiatives such as Saudi Arabia's Public Investment Fund's Manager Gate Platform are also supportive of the industry's growth.

Examining the funds offered by asset managers, the report observes that GCC asset management market is concentrated among the few asset management companies. The industry also has many small-scale asset managers. This offers scope for consolidation and would enable players reap benefits of economies of scale. GCC asset management industry also consists of funds which are much smaller in size in comparison with global peers. The cost of operating such

ment Authority said, "the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is witnessing great economic development and growth that has led to the creation of a rich investment environment which has attracted the attention of the entire world."

The Kingdom's economy is among the major economies in the world and it is a permanent member of the Group of

Al-Mudhaf also noted that "opening the representative office will contribute to enhancing trade and investment exchange between Kuwait and Saudi Arabia.'

World Bank approves \$600m for Morocco's public sector

WASHINGTON, June 26, (KUNA): The World Bank's Board of Directors has approved USD 600 million for Morocco, which will finance two projects to improve public service delivery, inclusiveness, and the performance of the public sector.

The first project, "Supporting the Implementation of SOE Reform in Morocco" (USD 350 million), is designed to improve the governance, restructuring, competitive neutrality, and performance monitoring of stateowned enterprises (SOEs), the bank said in a press release.

It will do so by strengthening the state's state-ownership functions, improving SOE governance and management practices, fostering performance monitoring - including climate impacts- and providing a framework for fair competition.

The additional financing for the 'Public Sector Performance' (ENNA-JAA) program (US\$250 million) will continue support for the Moroccan government's efforts to enhance performance and transparency, focusing on modernizing public administration through digitization and reforms in public financial management, it added.

"The ultimate aim of these two projects is to enhance the performance of the public sector and elevate the quality of public services delivered to Moroccan citizens. This is in line with Morocco's New Development Model, which stresses the need for a paradigm shift to promote inclusive, private-sector-led growth," said Jesko Hentschel, Country Director for the Maghreb and Malta at the World Bank.

The World Bank has supported the Moroccan government in the initial stages and implementation of SOE reform by focusing on results, strengthening the reform implementation capacity of the two implementing agencies, the Ministry of Economy and Finance and the newly created state ownership agency, and encouraging coordination, he said.

"The reform of SOEs is high on Morocco's agenda, as highlighted by the last Council of Ministers chaired by His Majesty King Mohammed VI on June 1. With a vision of a prosperous Morocco, the aim is to reconfigure the public portfolio, improve its performance, and carry out reforms to ensure accessible, high-quality public services to the people," added Jesko Hentschel.

Egypt secures \$2 bln in budget support

Major funding 'boost' for **Egypt's structural reforms**

CAIRO, June 26, (Xinhua): Egypt has secured 2 billion dollars in budget support from major development partners, a senior Egyptian official said Monday

Egyptian Minister of International Cooperation Rania Al-Mashat announced that two billion U.S. dollars were mobilized to boost the state budget from development partners including the World Bank, the European Union (EU), the African Development

Bank and South Korea.

"The results of efforts exerted with bilateral and multilateral development partners in the past few months aimed to stimulate structural reform policies in a way that promotes the empowerment of the private sector," she said in a statement.

She said that there are talks underway with the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank to receive funds valued at 300 million dollars.

January 2023-May 2024, 13 have been from Kuwait.

The report observes that while banks have been the main channel for distribution of funds, of late, fintech players have started playing a noteworthy role in marketing and distribution. Digitalization of operations and outsourcing are two emerging themes in operations of asset management firms. Digital platforms, cloud computing, artificial intelligence and roboadvisory are some technological developments that asset managers in the region have begun to adopt.

Regulatory regime pertaining to investment funds is evolving in GCC. The UAE and Saudi Arabia have come up with some standard frameworks and regulations in recent years such as UAE's foreign investment fund rules and Saudi

small funds adds pressure to margins and p the viability of business continuity at risk.

The report highlights emerging alternatives such as passive investment products, fragmented nature of the industry, revenue pressures and limited distribution channels as some challenges facing the industry. Geopolitical issues also present some headwinds for the asset management industry. But positive oil price outlook, rebound in non-oil activity, pick up in IPO momentum, supportive regulatory measures favour growth of the industry in the region. In the backdrop of favourable policy environment, the report discusses measures that could improve the industry's growth prospects such as further improvement in product range, targeting retail investors, pursuit of M&As and greater leveraging of technology.

US dollar strength pressures global currencies

Emerging market currencies face tough year

KUWAIT CITY, June 26: According to a report by the Financial Times, emerging market currencies were experiencing their toughest half-year performance since 2020, reports Al-Qabas daily.

The JPMorgan Emerging Markets Foreign Exchange Index has dropped by 4.4% year-to-date, more than double the decline seen in the same period over the past three years. This decline is attributed to several factors contributing to a challenging environment for these currencies.

One significant factor is the unexpected strength of the US dollar, which has put pressure on emerging market currencies. Investors have adjusted their expectations for US interest rate cuts in 2024, favoring a more cautious stance due to concerns over weak economies and expansive fiscal policies in some major emerging markets.

Luis Costa, global head of emerging markets strategy at Citigroup, highlighted that countries like Chile, Hungary, and Brazil have been reducing their interest rates amid subdued growth prospects for this year and the next. He noted ongoing global trade contraction and the complexity added by election cycles, further complicating economic outlooks.

The decline in emerging market currencies has also been influenced by the unwinding of carry trades, where investors exploit yield differentials between currencies. This strategy was popular earlier in the year but faced challenges, particularly in larger emerging markets, due to increased volatility driven by elections and uncertainties around domestic interest rate trajectories.

For instance, the Mexican peso saw significant weakness, depreciating by approximately 10% following the Morena Party's landslide victory, which raised concerns about fiscal policies and government intervention in the economy. This trend has spilled over to other Latin American currencies like the Colombian peso and the Brazilian real.

In response to these challenges, some investors have shifted their carry trades from larger markets such as Brazil to smaller, less-developed economies like Nigeria and Egypt, where higher local interest rates make investments in local currency bonds attractive despite economic volatility.

Asian currencies have also faced difficulties this year, particularly due to concerns stemming from the slowdown in the Chinese economy

The South Korean won depreciated by 7% against the dollar, while the Thai baht and Indonesian rupiah both saw declines of around 6.5%.

Overall, global currencies have struggled against the US dollar, which strengthened by 4.5% against a basket of major currencies. This appreciation followed robust US economic data and stable inflation figures, prompting a reassessment of interest rate expectations globally. These dynamics underscore the challenges faced by emerging market currencies amid a complex and evolving global economic landscape.

Ford Automotive and Star Refinery in top three

Tupras tops ISO 500 list as Turkey's leading company

ISTANBUL, June 26, (Xinhua): Turkish Petroleum Refineries Corporation (Tupras) was recognized as Türkiye's leading company in 2023, according to the "Top 500 Industrial Enterprises Survey" list published on Tuesday.

At a press conference in Istanbul, the Istanbul Chamber of Industry (ISO) unveiled the results of the survey dubbed ISO 500, which has been conducted uninterruptedly since 1968, identifying the stalwarts of the industrial sector.

"Tupras emerged as the largest organization by sales revenue, totaling 484 billion Turkish liras (14.7 billion U.S. dollars), maintaining its longstanding leadership position throughout the year," Erdal Bahcivan, chairman of the board of ISO, told reporters.

Tupras, with its four refineries located across the country, has an annual total crude oil processing capacity of 30 million tons. In 2023, the company saw a notable 42.1 percent year-on-year increase in production sales, according to the survey.

Bahcivan also revealed that Ford Automotive ranked second with sales of 238 billion liras based on production to sales, while Star Refinery secured the third position with 227 billion liras.

Bahcivan noted that there were 349 industrial organizations from outside Istanbul, the financial and industrial hub of the country, in the ISO 500. "We take pride today in the fact that over the past 50 years, Türkiye's largest industrial organizations have risen across all corners of our country," he pointed out.

Established in 1952, the ISO is Türkiye's largest industrial chamber with nearly 24,000 members, representing one of the strongest pillars of the Turkish industrial sector.

BUSINESS

GM brings in new CEO to steer Cruise robotaxi service

General Motors has named a veteran technology executive with roots in the video game industry to steer its troubled robotaxi service Cruise as it tries to recover from a gruesome collision that triggered the suspension of its California license.

Marc Whitten, one of the key engineers behind the Xbox video game console, will take over as Cruise's chief executive nearly nine months after one of the service's robotaxis dragged a jaywalking pedestri-an - who had just been struck by a vehicle driven by a human across a darkened street in San Francisco before coming to a stop.

That early October 2023 inci-dent prompted California regu-lators to slam the brakes on Cruise's robotaxis in San Francisco. It had previously giving

the driverless vehicles approv-al to charge for rides through-out the second densest city in the U.S., despite objections of local government officials who cited flaws in the autonomous

technology. General Motors, which had hoped Cruise would be generat-ing \$1 billion in annual revenue by 2025, has since scaled back its massive investments in the robotaxi service. (AP)

Spain eliminates sales tax on olive oil

Spain will temporarily eliminate the sales tax on olive oil to help consumers cope with skyrocket-ing prices, the government said Tuesday. Spain is the world's leading producer and exporter of olive oil, but its cost for domestic consumers has risen dramatically due to global inflationary pressures and a prolonged drought that decimated supplies. Prices have also surged in other Mediterranean countries

The price of olive oil has in-creased by 272% since Septem-ber 2020, according to Spain's agriculture ministry. A five-liter bottle of olive oil can cost over 50 euros (\$53) at a Spanish supermarket.

Spaniards use olive oil to cook and to garnish sandwiches, salads, vegetables and other dishes. Last year Spanish households consumed on average 6 liters per person, compared to 0.4 liters for nternational consumers, according to the agriculture ministry. But the rise in prices has made some switch to cheaper cooking oils. The government had already

slashed the sales tax on olive oil from 10% to 5% as part of an anti-inflation package. No sales tax will be applied to olive oil from July through September, when it will be taxed at 2% until the end of the year. From then on, it will be taxed at 4% and be considered a basic food stuff. (AP)

Microsoft overtaken as Wall Street's most valuable company

All eyes are on Nvidia's stock, so what's been going on?

NEW YORK, June 26, (AP): Nvidia shares rebounded Tuesday, halting a three-day skid that had surprised many investors and wiped away more than \$400 billion in market value.

Early last week, Nvidia overtook public company. Then it fell 13% over three days, its worst such stretch since 2022. Because Nvidia has become so massive in size, the movements for its stock carry extra weight on the S&P 500 and other indexes.

Any stock that climbs as much as Nvidia has - up more than $1{,}000\%$ since the autumn of 2022 - is vulnerable to some of its investors selling shares in order to lock in some profits. That earlier run makes a 13% drop over three days look like a relative trifle.

Monday, Nvidia shares rose 6.8%, bringing its market value to \$3.10 trillion, behind Microsoft at \$3.35 trillion and Apple at \$3.21 trillion.

Those three companies and a few others are responsible for much of the S&P 500's returns recently. Investors would prefer a market where many stocks are participating in the gains.

There's been nearly insatiable demand for Nvidia's chips to power artificial intelligence applications and the company has played a big role in

the U.S. stock market's recent record runs even as the economy's growth slows under the weight of high interest rates. But the AI boom is moving at such a rapid pace that it's raised worries about a possible bubble in the stock market and too-high expectations among investors.

Derren Nathan, head of equity research at Hargreaves Lansdown, said in a statement that while Nvidia's stock has declined in recent days, one must also look at the bigger picture.

"The shares have still gained 190% on a 12-month view, so it's no surprise some investors are locking in some profits," he said.

Nathan also isn't concerned about potential wider spread implications. "Although Nvidia has sneezed, the wider market hasn't caught a cold with a mixture of less extreme movements in both directions for the rest of the Magnificent 7." he said.

The Magnificent 7, which include Alphabet, Amazon, Apple, Meta Platforms, Microsoft, Nvidia and Tesla, are a small group of stocks that are responsible for a big chunk of the U.S. stock market's total return.

Some critics say Nvidia still looks expensive. Its stock is trading at a

price that's 73 times higher than the profit that it's produced over the last 12 months. That makes it look much more expensive than the broad S&P 500 index, where companies are trading at just 26 times their overall earnings. That itself looks pricey to skeptics, who say the broad U.S. stock market looks expensive compared with history.

The thing Nvidia has going for it is the possibility of continued, incredible growth as it ushers in a new era that proponents say will remake the economy.

Based on its expected profit over the next 12 months, Nvidia is trading at a still expensive but more reasonable price-earnings ratio of roughly 40. And if generative AI hardware deployments are still only in year two of what could be a three-to-five year deployment cycle, as analysts at Bank of America suggest, the possible runway of growth could make it look even more compelling.

Analysts estimate that the company's revenue for the fiscal year that ends in January 2025 will reach \$119.9 billion - about double its revenue for fiscal 2024 and more than four times its receipts the year before that.

Study commissioned by Brazil for G20 presidency

Tax the super-rich: new report

RIO DE JANEIRO, June 26, (AP): A global tax on the super-rich is proposed in a new report that Brazil commissioned for its current presidency of the leading 20 rich and developing nations.

Individuals with more than \$1 billion in total assets would be required to pay the equivalent of 2% of their wealth in income tax, according to the proposal in the report by Gabriel Zucman, a French economist who teaches at the Paris School of Economics

The report says global billionaires currently pay the equivalent of 0.3% of their wealth in taxes. It said a 2% tax would raise \$200 billion to \$250 billion per year globally from about 3,000 individuals - money that could fund public services such as education and healthcare as well as the fight against climate change.

"The super-rich pay proportionately less in taxes than other socioeconomic groups," Zucman told journalists, adding that the practice fuels inequality. He called a progressive tax system a "key pillar of our democratic societies," essenin bolstering Africa trade ties

CHANGSHA, June 26, (Xinhua): In the predawn mist off Kenya's coast, fishermen cast their nets into the sea, chasing wild anchovies. Little did they know, this catch would soon embark on a journey to China, where it would be made into tasty snacks destined for supermarkets across over 30 countries.

Jinzai Food Group Co., Ltd. in central China's Hunan Province drives this international operation. Since 2022, after Kenya's aquatic products gained access to the Chinese market, the company has emerged as one of the largest importers of these products.

"The company's sales of dried small deep-sea fish, have surpassed 1 billion yuan (around 140 million U.S. dollars) and tens of thousands of tonnes of fish are imported each year," said Zhou Jinsong, the company's chairman.

away from borders and coastlines, are actively driving institutional and practical innovations in economic and trade cooperation with Africa.

The China-Africa Economic and Trade Expo, regularly held in Changsha, Hunan's capital city, has become a crucial showcase for African agricultural products, enhancing their international visibility.

In the city's China-Africa Economic and Trade Headquarters Building, hosts from both countries sell African products via livestreaming to help them gain a footing in Chinese and global markets. Spanning over 100,000 square meters, the building commenced operations in mid-June and is expected to achieve a trade volume with Africa totaling 30 billion yuan over the next three years. Numerous construction compa-

'Consumer confidence' Central China 'solidifies' role in the U.S. falls in June



tial for strengthening social conesion and trust in governments.

In wealth, billionaires currently own the equivalent of 13% of the world's GDP, up from 3% in 1987, according to the new report.

The proposed tax would target billionaires who do not already pay the equivalent of 2% of their wealth in income tax, the report said. Most global billionaires probably pay below 2% but it is difficult to be more precise, Zucman said.

New G20 member the African Union has expressed interest in the proposal, as well as Belgium, Colombia, France and Spain, he said.

The issue of inequality is a priority for Brazil in its G20 presidency, along with the reduction of hunger, the promotion of sustainable development and reforms of global governance.

A global minimum tax on billionaires is one way of raising funds to make progress on those agendas, Felipe Antunes de Oliveira with Brazil's Finance Ministry told journalists.

He acknowledged that the way ahead would be far from smooth.

"We can expect the negotiations to be long," Oliveira said, echoing similar remarks by Finance Minister Fernando Haddad in February when the proposal was first discussed in Sao Paulo.

The gap between the super-rich and the bulk of the global population has grown since the coro-

Zhou added that the company has set up a fish-processing factory in Kenya, supports the local government in conducting fishing surveys, and helps train fishermen into skilled industrial workers.

Jinzai exemplifies the thriving economic and trade exchanges between Hunan and Africa. The province has stayed at the forefront of China-Africa economic and trade relations. Featuring advanced agricultural technology, equipment manufacturing and infrastructure construction, Hunan has sustained an annual growth rate of 23.1 percent in economic and trade cooperation with Africa, according to official data.

In addition to Hunan, the five other central provinces of China, have been encouraged to establish inland reform and opening-up highlands. The region will accelerate the development of platforms such as the pilot zone for deepening economic and trade cooperation between China and Africa, as highlighted in a May press briefing by the Ministry of Commerce.

Guided by the national strategy, the provinces, located far

navirus pandemic, according to anti-poverty organization Oxfam International, which praised the new report.

"This is a sensible and serious proposal that is in every government's strategic economic interest," interim executive director nies from neighboring Hubei Province have ventured into Africa, undertaking diverse engineering projects in sectors such as energy, transportation, municipal construction, housing, telecommunications, and metallurgy.

North of Zambia's capital Lusaka, about 88 kilometers along a major highway, lies rows of modern standard factories and a grid of straight roads. This area is Jiangxi Province's first overseas economic and trade zone, the Zambia-Jiangxi Economic Cooperation Zone, which was completed after five years of construction.

The area will be developed into a new eco-friendly urban area that combines industry, trade, logistics, comprehensive services, leisure, healthcare, education, and essential living facilities, said Xu Jianfeng, the zone's general manager.

"We see the booming trade as a win-win situation which keeps growing," said South African Ambassador to China Siyabonga Cyprian Cwele. "And the massive growth in bilateral trade has been translated into direct benefits to our people."

Amitabh Behar said in a statement.

According to a 2023 study by advocacy group Tax Justice Network, countries around the world could lose up to \$4.8 trillion in tax revenue over the next decade due to the use of tax havens by individuals and businesses.



Cathy Payne of Henderson looks at toys for her granddaughter at the Pigtails & Cowlicks consignment sale on April 20, 2024, in Owensboro, Ky. On Tuesday, June 25, 2024, the Conference Board issued its monthly survey of consumer confidence in the United States, which reflects Americans' assessment of current economic conditions and their outlook for the next six months. (AP)

Americans fret about near-term prospects

WASHINGTON. June 26, (AP): American consumers lost some confidence in June as expectations over the near-term future fell again.

The Conference Board, a business research group, said Tuesday that its consumer confidence index fell in June to 100.4 from 101.3 in May. The index's decline was not quite as bad as analysts were expecting.

The index measures both Americans' assessment of current economic conditions and their outlook for the next six months.

The measure of Americans' short-term expectations for income, business and the job market fell to 73 from 74.9 in May. A reading under 80 can signal a potential recession in the near future.

Consumers' view of current conditions rose in June to 141.5, up from 140.8 in May.

"Confidence pulled back in June but remained within the same narrow range that's held throughout the past two years, as strength in current labor market views continued to outweigh concerns about the future," said Dana Peterson, the Conference Board's chief economist.

Even though the unemployment rate ticked up to 4% in May, America's employers added a strong 272,000 jobs last month, a sign that companies are still confident enough in the economy to keep hiring despite persistently high interest rates.

Last month's sizable job gain was propelled by consumer spending on travel, entertainment and other services. U.S. airports reported near-record traffic over the Memorial Day weekend.

Despite the better-than-expected job gains in May, there is some visible weakening in the labor market: job postings for April hit their lowest level since 2021 and the number of Americans who are receiving unemployment benefits has risen for seven straight weeks.

On Monday, Mary Daly, president of the San Francisco Fed, said that the labor market remained healthy but that future slowing could trigger higher unemployment, something that needs to be monitored closely.

Most economic indicators show the U.S. economy in good shape by historical standards, though there have been some signs that growth is slowing.

The nation's economy slowed sharply in the first quarter to a 1.3% annual pace in the face of high interest rates, down from a brisk 3.4% growth rate in the final three months of 2023.

Retail sales inched up just 0.1% in May from April as still high prices on groceries and other necessities and high interest rates curbed spending.

More cautious spending in the face of inflation has some big retailers offering discounts this summer. The latest quarterly earnings reported by big retailers show that while consumers have not stopped spending, they are becoming more price-conscious and choosy.

Consumer expectations of a recession in the next year pulled back in June after rising the previous two months, the Conference Board said.

Microsoft breached antitrust rules by bundling Teams with office software, European Union says

LONDON, June 26, (AP): Microsoft violated European Union antitrust rules with "possibly abusive" practices by tying its Teams messaging and videoconferencing app to its widely used business software, the bloc said.

The European Commission said Monday it informed Microsoft of its preliminary view that the U.S. tech giant has been "restricting competition" by bundling Teams with core office productivity applications such as Office 365 and Microsoft 365.

The commission, the 27-nation bloc's top antitrust enforcer, said it suspects Microsoft might have granted Teams a "distribution advantage" by not giving customers a choice on whether to have Teams when they purchased the software. The advantage might have been widened by limits on the ability of rival messaging apps to work with Microsoft software, it said.

"We are concerned that Microsoft may be giving its own communication product Teams an undue advantage over competitors, by tying it to its popular productivity suites for businesses," Margrethe Vestager, the commission's executive vicepresident for competition policy, said in a statement.

"And preserving competition

for remote communication and collaboration tools is essential as it also fosters innovation on these markets.

The commission took aim at Microsoft a day after accusing Apple of breaching the bloc's new digital competition rulebook, in a flurry of regulatory action underlining Brussels' leading role as a watchdog for Big Tech companies.

Microsoft made some changes last year in an effort to head off an penalty, including offering the software packages without Teams for European customers. But the commission said Tuesday the changes are not enough to address its concerns and that it needs to do more to "restore competition."

"Having unbundled Teams and taken initial interoperability steps, we appreciate the additional clarity provided today and will work to find solutions to address the Commission's remaining concerns." Microsoft President Brad Smith said in a prepared statement.

In April, the company also gave customers worldwide the option to get Microsoft 365 and Office 365 without Teams. The two software suites include programs like Word, Excel and Outlook.

Microsoft now has a chance to

respond to the accusations, formally known as a statement of objections, before the commission makes its final decision. The company could face a fine worth up to 10% of its annual global revenue, or be forced to carry out "remedies" to satisfy the competition concerns.

The commission opened its investigation in July 2023 after rival Slack Technologies, which makes popular workplace messaging software, filed a complaint with Brussels. Alfaview, which makes videoconferencing software, also filed a separate complaint.

Slack, owned by business software maker Salesforce, had alleged that Microsoft abused its market dominance to eliminate competition - in violation of EU laws.

"The Statement of Objections issued today by the European Commission is a win for customer choice and an affirmation that Microsoft's practices with Teams have harmed competition," Salesforce President Sabastian Niles said. "We appreciate the Commission's thorough investigation of Slack's complaint and urge the Commission to move towards a swift, binding, and effective remedy that restores free and fair choice and promotes competition, interoperability, and innovation in the digital ecosystem."

10

What's On

Bank uses Sahel app to combat scams

NBK calls to ensure using official websites & apps when making bill payments

KUWAIT CITY, June 26: As part of its active efforts to enhance financial awareness and inclusion among all sectors of society, National Bank of Kuwait (NBK) continued to promote the "Let's Be Aware" campaign launched by the Central Bank of Kuwait, in collaboration with local banks and Kuwait Banking Association (KBA).

NBK intensifies awareness by sharing educational content including video clips, messages and tips on all its social media platforms and other digital channels, as well as reposting CBK's communications, aiming to raise awareness among the public and familiarize them with the various fraudulent schemes and protection methods.

NBK stressed that customers should ensure using official websites and apps when making bill payments, advising them to use the 'Sahel' app to direct them to official websites and apps to avoid any scams.

With the increasing fraudulent techniques used by scammers to deceive victims, NBK always seeks to raise awareness among customers and familiarize them with these different schemes as well as provide them with the tips and precautions to steer clear of these threats.

Fraud often occurs when users google a service website to pay bills, as they get many clones that



Diraya banner logo

simulate official websites, which exposes users to fraud, scams and stealing of their bank accounts when they click the bill payment links.

The bank stressed that precautions should be taken when making any service bill payments, by ensuring to use the entity's official website. The same should be followed also in case of online shopping by verifying that stores websites are secure and legitimate before signing in, and also checking that these websites are protected and encrypted using https protocol.

Furthermore, the bank warned of using public Wi-Fi for online shopping, as these networks are unsecure and unprotected, which makes them easily prone to hacking, and stealing customers' personal and banking information. It also urged customers to avoid saving any banking or personal

information on the browser used to log in to the online shopping store. NBK leverages its powerful customer com-

munication capabilities and sector-leading social media platforms to support the Central Bank's endeavors to protect customers and the national economy.

It is worth mentioning that NBK is a key promoter and participant in all CBK's campaigns and initiatives to increase financial and banking awareness among different segments of society. As the leading financial institution in Kuwait, the bank frequently organizes various activities to raise awareness on all topics related to the banking sector, as well as many training courses for its employees to enhance their knowledge and expertise in the areas of combating fraud and financial crime.

The "Let's Be Aware" campaign is the largest across the GCC region focusing on raising banking and financial awareness among banks customers. The campaign covers a variety of crucial topics including: anti-fraud tips, raising awareness on high-risk investments, maximizing benefit from banking services, promoting savings and investment culture, as well as other related topics.

13 tips for safe bank card usage on your travels **Gulf Bank promotes financial** literacy with Diraya campaign

KUWAIT CITY, June 26: Gulf Bank continued to support the "Diraya" awareness campaign, aiming to enhance financial literacy across various sectors of society. The bank achieves this goal by sharing informative and educational content through social media platforms, its website, and other media channels.

As summer approaches and the tourism season flourishes, Gulf Bank has provided a set of travel tips for those planning vacations abroad. The aim is to ensure that customers can use their banking cards securely and easily access the bank's various services. These tips include:

1. Ensure your card remains valid throughout your travels.

2. Keep your bank details updated, including your phone number and email address.

3. Confirm you have sufficient credit limits and check your account

The Conversation



Gulf Bank logo

balance.

4. Avoid writing down your PIN or personal information. If your card is lost or stolen, contact the bank immediately to block it. You can also block it through the mobile app or online banking.

5. Use the mobile app to track card usage and expenses while traveling. 6. Ensure access to online banking

services 7. Book travel through reputable

websites only. 8. Beware of suspicious offers to



Diraya awareness campaign

prevent fraud. 9. Keep antivirus software updated on devices used for bookings to protect card information.

10. Never share your PIN or OTP with anyone.

11. Read OTP messages carefully, verifying the store name and payment amount before using the code.

12. Never disclose personal information via email, phone calls, or text messages, and avoid clicking on links from untrustworthy sources.

13. Check for travel privileges offered by your card on the bank's website and Visa/Mastercard's sites. On another note, Gulf Bank highlighted that its branch at Kuwait International Airport in the Arrivals Hall operates around the clock, offering customers a wide range of banking services every day of the week.

These services include account opening, loan applications, credit card requests, cash withdrawals and deposits, currency exchange, and instant issuance of ATM cards. Furthermore, the branch provides safety deposit box services, aiming to offer secure storage solutions for bank customers traveling abroad to safeguard their valuable possessions.

'Leadership and innovation'

AUK 'appoints' Dr. Mounib as associate dean of CEAS

KUWAIT CITY, June 26: The American University of Kuwait (AUK) associate professor of electrical and computer engineering, Dr. Mounib Khanafer, has been appointed as associate dean of the College of Engineering and Applied Sciences (CEAS). Dr. Khanafer, who joined AUK in 2013, has distinguished himself through his commitment to excellence, innovation, and leadership.

Dr. Khanafer's academic journey began with a B.Sc. degree (with honors) in electrical engineering from Kuwait University in 2002, followed by a M.A.Sc. in electrical engineering and a PhD in electrical and computer Engineering from the University of Ottawa, Canada, in 2007 and 2012, respectively.

With three years of industrial expe-rience at Nortel Networks in Ottawa, Dr. Khanafer brings a rich blend of academic and practical knowledge to his new role. His postdoctoral research at the University of Ottawa's School Electrical Engineering and Computer Science focused on Wireless Sensor Networks, a field in which he has continued to excel.

Dr. Khanafer's scholarly achievements include co-receiving two Best Poster Awards and one Distinguished Paper Award, along with securing several research grants and professional development awards from AUK. In 2022, he was honored with the Dartmouth-AUK Fellowship to research privacy and security in



Dr. Mounib Khanafer

Internet of Things (IoT)-based smart homes. His contributions to the fields of Wireless Sensor Networks and IoT are evidenced by over 30 published papers on related protocols and applications.

Beyond AUK, Dr. Khanafer has shared his expertise as a visiting professor at the University of Ottawa and Dartmouth College in 2015 and 2022, respectively. He is an active member of the IEEE Computer Society and holds the distinction of being a senior member of IEEE.

His extensive experience, coupled with his passion for education and research, promises to advance the College forward in preparing future leaders and innovators.

NerdWallet

'Navigating credit building'

Pros and cons of adding kids as authorized users

By Lauren Schwahn NerdWallet

A s parents, we want the best for our children: health, happiness - and hardy credit. Having a strong credit profile can determine whether your kid gets approved for a loan or how much they'll pay for car insurance when they're grown. But establishing credit for someone with no credit history is challenging

ized user's credit will share the effects. If you give your child the card, set some ground rules. Talk about when it's OK to use the card, how much they're allowed to spend and who will make the payments. Some credit card companies let you place spending limits for authorized users.

Removing your kid as an authorized user can undo damage to their credit if the arrangement

'Balancing emotions and expectations'

Gentle parenting can be really hard on parents, new research suggests

By Annie Pezalla

Macalester College

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

A re you a gentle parent? If so, chances are good that, just like your children, you may need a nap.

The idea of gentle parenting has been around since the 1930s but received increased attention over the past few years on social media and blogs, as well as in popular books, magazines and newspapers.

Despite its growing popularity, what remains unclear is what, exactly, this parenting style entails. Parenting author and self-described "gentle parenting" founder Sarah Ockwell-Smith has described gentle parenting as "a way of being" and "a mindset," with "an emphasis on your child's feelings." But does it mean no yelling? No punishment? How is it different from other established approaches to parenting? Is it good for kids? Equally important: Is it good for parents?

To explore what this gentle parenting movement is all about, my fellow family studies professor Alice Davidson

and I gathered data from over 100 parents across the country with at least one child between the ages of 2 and 7. We asked these parents to tell us how they reared their kids, how they were reared by their own parents and how they respond when their child misbehaves. We also asked if they identified as a "gentle parent." For those who saw themselves as "gentle parents," we asked them: What do you mean?

These preliminary findings, which will be submitted soon for publication, should be interpreted with caution since the diversity of our sample was limited.

About half our sample identified as "gentle parents." Those who identified as gentle parents were almost all white - 84% - and highly educated. The one diverse aspect of their profile was their age. Participants ranged from 32 to 51 years old, including both Gen Xers and millennials.

When asked how they were reared as children, these participants described their parents in simplistic ways, with terms such as "confrontational" and "reactive." In contrast, when asked to describe their own parenting, they used

50% more adjectives, including terms such as "affectionate," "conscious," "accepting" and, of course, "gentle."

There was, overall, a theme within these parents' responses that they would do a better job at parenting than their own parents did with them. In open-ended responses, some participants stated this goal plainly. One father replied: "[My approach to parenting is to] do the opposite of my parents. No spanking or physical punishment." Perhaps gentle parenting is more than just a parenting style - it's also a rejection of the parenting styles of previous generations.

Shifts in generational approaches to parenting are not new, from the behaviorist movement of the 1920s - Don't hug your kid! - to the attachment parenting of the 1990s - Always hug your kid! - to the more contemporary free-range parenting movement of the 21st century - Where is my kid?

Each movement is a reaction to the evolution of parenting scholarship. Yet the embrace of gentle parenting advice seems unique in that, despite its popularity on social media, it is not born of scholarship. Child development researchers have not followed these families to determine the extent to which this approach to child rearing is good for either kids or parents.

Attempting to find a common definition, we analyzed these parents' open-ended responses that described what "gentle parenting" means to them. For most, gentle parenting was primarily about staying calm in challenging moments with their kids.

A 42-year-old mother of a 3-year-old only child wrote that gentle parenting meant "having a moderate reaction - never getting too alarmed or being too permissive, always monitoring and adjusting expectations to the needs of the child and environment." A 35-year-old mother of 6-year-old twins wrote that gentle parenting meant "trying not to yell, trying very hard to manage my own feelings so that I don't hurt their feelings." These parents are working hard to keep their cool.

A secondary theme of gentle parenting among the parents we surveyed was about validating their kid's big feelings. Picture a kid having a meltdown at the mall. Sometimes this validation involved parents labeling an emotion: "I see you are very angry right now." Or they might allow their kid to freely emote: "We sit with the feeling." Often it involved giving affection: "I ask them if they want a hug.

These parents were also extraordinarily well versed in parenting literature. Many quoted bestselling author Becky Kennedy's Good Inside parenting manual or referenced philosophies from world-renowned early childhood educator Magda Gerber in their responses. They used nuanced terms such as "hand-in-hand," "gentle rein" and "conscious" to describe their parenting. They had all done their homework on how to be an excellent gentle parent.

Yet we noted two troubling themes in these parents' responses. First, none of them mentioned raising their children with help from their friends, family or community.

Second, many of them acknowledged, without prompting, that they were struggling to feel competent. When asked to describe her parenting approach, a 36-year-old mother of two children under 5 reflected that she often feels like she "has nothing to give" and gets "easily overstimulated and overwhelmed all day every day." She ended her reflections with the simple confession: "I often feel out of control.'

She wasn't alone in those sentiments. Here are some others:

"I'm hanging on for dear life."

■ "I try to be gentle, but it can be challenging working full time and being stressed and having little support."

■ "I confess I have no idea what I'm doing much of the time.'

Over 40% of our "gentle parents" provided these sorts of confessions, illuminating a clear message: They are often not so gentle with themselves. They were frequently exhausted, uncertain, hard on themselves and lonely.

We are currently expanding our sample with the goal of recruiting a much more diverse group of parents - not only in race or ethnicity but also in education level. We want to test whether this gentle parenting phenomenon is primarily limited to highly educated white parents. We also plan to follow these families over time to explore the sustainability of this gentle parenting approach and to see how their kids are doing. We wonder: Will the kids of gentle parents show the same sort of emotional restraint as their parents? Or will these children only build in the emotional control they wield over their parents?

Until we analyze that data, our message to these parents is short and sweet: Go easy on yourselves. Also, go ahead and take that nap. (AP)

A common workaround is for parents to add their children as authorized users on their credit card accounts. Credit checks aren't required, and the user can quickly piggyback on the primary cardholder's credit history. But this arrangement isn't always the right move. Here's what to know about the potential limitations of adding your kid as an authorized user and alternative ways they can build credit.

THEY MIGHT BE TOO YOUNG TO REAP THE BEN-EFITS

If you're hoping to boost your child's credit before they even learn to tell time, you could face roadblocks. For one, your kid may not qualify for authorized user status. While some card issuers don't have age restrictions, others require a minimum age of 13 or older.

Even if you can add your child, the issuer may not report their account details to the credit bureaus. Some issuers allow kids as young as 13 to become authorized users but only report credit information for those age 18 and older. It's wise to ask your credit card company how authorized user arrangements work.

MISUSE CAN LEAD TO DAMAGED CREDIT

Being an authorized user doesn't guarantee improved credit. "Same as the primary account holder, it can affect your credit positively or negatively, depending on how the card is used," says Bruce McClary, senior vice president of membership and communications at the National Foundation for Credit Counseling.

If you have a record of on-time payments and don't use too much available credit, that can generate or help your kid's credit score. But your credit and your child's can suffer if either person uses the account unfavorably.

Ultimately, it's up to the parent to keep the account in good stand-

"When you add someone as an "bot's what they authorized user, that's what they are. They're authorized to use the card but they are not legally bound to pay the bill. You are legally bound to pay the bill," says Julie Beckham, an accredited financial counselor and financial educator in the Boston area.

You don't need to give your kid the credit card. As long as the primary cardholder keeps their account open and active, the author-

goes wrong

AUTHORIZED USER STA-TUS MIGHT NOT BE ENOUGH FOR FUTURE LENDERS

Some lenders don't take authorized user accounts into consideration when reviewing credit applications or give them much weight. "If you're a lender and you're looking at someone and you see the designation that they're an authorized user rather than the primary account holder, it's just telling you that this person did not have to go through a credit approval process to have access to that account," McClary says.

Having an account in their own name puts your kid in a stronger position because it shows they're equipped to manage payments. You can guide them toward opportunities in adulthood.

"There are credit-builder loans that are available. There are starter credit cards for young adult consumers, where the threshold for approval is a little bit lower. You can also look at options for secured credit cards that require no credit check, but they require a good faith deposit in order to open the account," McClary says.

Co-signing your kid's car or student loan can also help build their credit as they make on-time payments, but as with authorized user relationships, make sure you understand the risks.

EXPLORE OTHER WAYS TO GET YOUR CHILD CRED-**IT-READY**

The best way to set your child up for success is to talk to them about money, Beckham says.

You could look over your credit reports together or explain how many hours you need to work to pay for things like dinners or fun outings.

Encouraging good routines, like doing chores and turning in homework on time, is also important. "They're transferable habits that can help them in their life financially as they build credit," Beckham says.

Give your child opportunities to practice managing money before they graduate to credit. Beckham suggests letting kids test the waters with a checking or savings account. "Starting with their own money is always better because there is a sense of ownership and accountability to that," she says. (AP)



even in the face of adversity.

AT: Promoting baby clean products shows your dedication to health and wellness. How do you incorporate your values into the products and brands you promote?

Joelle: I derive immense joy from creating products that I genuinely believe in -- products that I would use for myself, my daughter, my son, and my family. My passion lies



Joelle Mardinian

TV star ... empowering communities

By Paul Francis X. Fernandes Arab Times/Al-Seyassah Staff

In the world of entertainment, beauty, business, philanthropy and a renowned TV presenter has captivated audiences with her charisma and insightful interviews, bringing stories to life on screen. Behind the scenes, her artistry as a makeup artist transforms faces into canvases of beauty, a skill honed through years of creativity and precision.

She is a visionary entrepreneur, who founded ventures that redefine industry standards and empower aspiring talents. Her journey is not just about business. As a dedicated philanthropist, she channels her influence and resources to support causes close to her heart, making a meaningful impact in communities around the globe.

In 2008, she started her entrepreneurial journey by founding her own company. This marked a significant transition from her earlier career as a freelancer, demonstrating her ambition to pursue business ownership and entrepreneur-

ship. Meet Joelle Mardinian the multifaceted talent, a true inspiration whose passion and dedication continue to shine bright in every endeavor who founded 'Maison de Joelle' -- a business venture related to beauty, fashion, and a bou-tique of some sort and given the name's French connotation suggests elegance and style.

As an entrepreneur, Joelle established and built her brand, potentially offering products or services that align with her personal vision and expertise and reflects her entrepreneurial spirit and desire for independence in her professional life.

In an exclusive interview with the Arab Times she takes the reader on a passionate journey and dedication to help the less fortunate.

Arab Times: Joelle, you've had an impressive journey as a TV presenter, makeup artist and entrepreneur. Can you tell us about the key moments that shaped your career?

Joelle Mardinian: When I believe in something, nothing can hinder me; I am like an unstoppable force, akin to a train without brakes. This determination has propelled me throughout my career journey. I recall the early struggles -struggling to speak Arabic fluently, unable to read from a teleprompter, lacking formal training as a TV presenter.

Yet, driven by my desire to showcase my abilities, I tirelessly improved with each episode of my show, evolving year after year. For 14 consecutive years, I dedicated myself to making the Joelle show one of the finest globally. I have come to realize, and it is crystal clear to me now, that I am engaged in a cause and the fight is ongoing. I face attacks from various sides aimed at silencing my support for Gaza. However, I refuse to waver in my commitment. I believe fervently in speaking out for justice, especially for the oppressed. Despite the challenges I encounter due to my unwavering support for Gaza, I remain undeterred. I am prepared to sacrifice my social media presence, friendships, and even business opportunities.

Notably, my daily advocacy for Gaza has cost me numerous contracts. These obstacles have only strengthened my resolve.

AT: What inspired you to create the "Joelle" program on MBC1, and how has the show evolved over the years?

Joelle: I was inspired by a British program called 'What Not to Wear', which focused on transforming women in the fashion industry, hosted by Trinny and Susannah. I was deeply captivated by the show and enjoyed it immensely. However, I found myself frustrated because it mainly centered on the clothes and physical transformations, showcasing new haircuts, beautiful makeup, but never delving into the entire process comprehensively.

My dream was to present the show differently and I approached the MBC (Middle East Broadcasting Center) and expressed my background as a makeup artist for top celebrities, I was unaware that the MBC had already acquired the rights and were looking for someone to anchor the Arabic version of the show. It seemed serendipitous that they had been searching for the right presenter, and I knocked on their door at the perfect moment.

AT: As the founder of Maison de Joelle, what was your vision for the salon, and how do you ensure it stays ahead in a competitive industry?

Joelle: Maison de Joelle came about due to my reputation as a makeup artist. Wherever I went with my clients to salons, I would instruct the workers on how I wanted the makeup, hair, or lips done. This left clients assuming I owned these salons. As my fame grew through TV shows on MBC1, and with the opening of Joelle salon, I saw an opportunity to innovate. At that time, people frequented different places for hairdo, makeup, nails, henna, lips, or eyelashes. I conceived the idea of offering all these services under one roof -- a cozy, homelike setting where clients could feel at ease. The result? Maison de Joelle -- a beautiful, unique concept that I adore.

AT: You have worked as a creative director for Max Factor, given this background how do you approach creating new makeup collections?

Joelle: For me becoming the creative director at Max Factor was like a dream come true for me. From the moment I first used Max Factor mascara, I fell in love with the brand. Founded 120 years ago, Max Factor himself was the original makeup artist who transformed the iconic looks of Hollywood celebrities. I was captivated not only by the makeup but also by Max Factor's remarkable success story -- offering superb quality at affordable prices.

During my tenure as creative director at Max Factor for a decade, I was driven by a desire to innovate. I believed in evolving with the times; what was trendy in makeup five or ten years ago shouldn't be the same today. Drawing inspiration from Max Factor's legacy, I strived to create new and modern trends, setting the stage for fresh looks and styles. It was a privilege to contribute to a brand that continues to define beauty and elegance in the industry.

AT: Clinica Joelle has become a well-known brand in aesthetic treatments. What sets it apart from other clinics, and what are your future plans for expansion?

Joelle: Clinica Joelle, founded in 2013, is a unique establishment where we house exceptional doctors under one roof. Each specialist works independently, not as a team. I take pride in our roster of top dermatologists, dieticians, skincare experts, and slimming specialists. What sets Clinica Joelle apart is the genuine passion our doctors have for their work. They are dedicated because our business is thriving and expanding, fueled by my longstanding reputation in the industry since my television debut in 2004.

My commitment to honesty has earned me a solid reputation among clients who trust that I always prioritize their best interests. Integrity is at the core of everything I do -- I have never compromised on quality or taken shortcuts. Above all, I value my reputation more than financial gain. Quality is paramount to me; I refuse to sacrifice it for quantity.

I've made substantial investments, confident that my dedication and high-quality offerings will be recognized and rewarded over time. The compliments from satisfied clients who adore our high-end products are the greatest testament to our success.

AT: You've recently launched a new collection of lenses. Can you share more about this latest venture and what makes this collection unique?

Joelle: In June of this year, I launched the EyeCandy Joelle, my third line of contact lenses, and I couldn't be more passionate about this product. For me, applying makeup without adding contact lenses is like serving a cake without the cherry -- it completes the look, enhances the eyes, and elevates overall beauty. It's transformative, turning the wearer into a trendsetter, jet setter, or fashion icon.

With the first and second lines of lenses under my belt, I carefully selected 11 colors for EyeCandy Joelle to infuse fun and glamour into every look, catering to all eye colors. I encourage people to experiment with lenses that match their

in filling gaps in the market with innovative solutions. For instance, in the realm of lenses, I was the pioneer in presenting lenses that seamlessly complement makeup stands, avoiding the typical drab packaging. Traditionally, lenses were packaged in nondescript boxes without any branding, and makeup options were limited, almost indistinguishable from one another.

My vision was to empower women. The initial product line, EyeCandy, was conceived to celebrate individual beauty and self-worth. It's about making women feel proud, beautiful, and confident, whether they are enhancing their features with makeup, lashes, or lenses. EyeCandy is not just about aesthetics; it's about empowerment. When you look good, you feel good -- it's like experiencing a touch of sweetness for the eyes. EyeCandy products are designed to transform the wearer, instilling a sense of courage, fearlessness, and strength -- qualities akin to wild animals thriving in their natural habitat.

The core message of EyeCandy goes beyond mere pack-aging; it's about self-affirmation. It's about saying, "I am beautiful, attractive, brave, independent, and strong." It's about embracing life with zest, dreaming big, and becoming a fashion icon, a globetrotter -- a jet setter. EyeCandy encapsulates this message, offering more than just gorgeous lenses; it's a declaration of confidence and empowerment.

AT: What are some of the biggest challenges you've faced as a businesswoman in the beauty and wellness industry, and how have you overcome them?

Joelle: One of the significant challenges I've faced, especially with Dabdub and other ventures, is competing with established giants like Johnson & Johnson. Regardless of personal opinions about them, these brands have built formidable reputations over many years. Their products dominate shelf space in every outlet, making it a daunting task to position our products alongside theirs.

Continued on Page 12



Joelle Mardinian

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People & Places

Entertainment

Multi-talented Joelle Journey of self-made visionary entrepreneur

Continued from Page 11

In the lens industry, for example, there are brands with longstanding recognition and trust. To compete, we've had to forge strong relationships with store managers, marketing teams, and decision-makers. Convincing customers to shift their loyalty from these established brands to newer, Arab-origin brands like ours requires building trust and demonstrating superior quality and value.

The core motivation behind this challenge is to instill pride in Arab heritage and offer opportunities for brands like ours to thrive. It's about proving that Arab brands can stand toe-to-toe with global giants and provide products that not only match but exceed expectations. This endeavor encapsulates one of the most significant hurdles I've encountered in my journey.

AT: Looking ahead, what new projects or goals do you

have for your brands and your

career in general? **Joelle:** Looking ahead, my aspiration is to establish a Joelle clinic in Europe, and I envision partnering with an investor who understands the complexities of launching and maintaining a reputable clinic in major European capitals like London or Paris. From the very first day of opening, I want our clinic to cater to clients not only from Europe but also from regions like the Americas and Australia, where there is

Mardinian

a strong demand for expert services. In modern times, people seek out experts, and I've noticed that Arabs, for instance, often gather in specific neighborhoods during their vacations, creating a sense of community and belonging. I believe that opening a clinic in Europe could similarly provide a hub where diverse clients feel welcomed and cared for.

My goal extends beyond the clinic itself; I aim to introduce all my products to the European and American markets. I envision establishing a brand that is proudly Arabic yet universally appealing and preferred by everyone. This expansion would not only fulfill a personal dream but also contribute to promoting Arab heritage and excellence on a global scale.

AT: The beauty and wellness industry is constantly evolving. How do you stay updated with the latest trends and ensure your brands remain relevant?

Joelle: Staying informed about industry trends has be-come incredibly accessible through social media, which constantly updates us on what's happening worldwide. For instance, when I travel to different cities like Dubai or London, I notice distinct trends in clothing, hairstyles, eyebrows, and makeup. Each place has its unique style and preferences.

Social media plays a crucial role in this by enabling us to observe these trends on a daily basis. It's a platform where trends emerge and evolve rapidly, allowing me to stay current and informed. This real-time information is invaluable for identifying gaps in the market and understanding where there's a need for improved quality.

My approach has always been to follow my intuition and passion, as I did with EyeCandy and Dabdub. By observing what is lacking in terms of quality and then pursuing those opportunities, I strive to bring products and services to market that meet and exceed expectations. This proactive strategy, combined with staying attuned to global trends through social media, has been instrumental in my entrepreneurial journey. AT: What advice would you give to aspiring entrepre-

neurs, particularly women, who want to enter the beauty and wellness industry?

Joelle: Launching a successful product requires a meticulous plan that ensures it meets customer demand



Camila Cabello performs at a concert during the 19th edition of Mawazine festival in Rabat, Morocco, Tuesday, June 25, 2024. (AP)



model wears a creation for the Chanel Haute Couture Fall-Winter 2024-2025 collection presented Tues-day, June 25, 2024 in Paris. (AP)

Variety

Beyoncé, Billie Eilish, Chief Keef among top picks

The best albums of 2024 so far

LOS ANGELES, June 26, (AP): The sun is hot, but the tunes are hotter. We're only halfway through 2024, and some of the biggest names in music have already released albums.

Music

That's as good a reason as any to take stock of this year's releases. Here are The Associated Press' picks for the year's best...so far.

Pop powerhouses

Beyoncé, "Act II: Cowboy Carter': It is rare for a pop album to function as a catchy body of work and an accessible masterclass on an underserved and undercelebrated history. But on "Act II: Cowboy Carter," Beyoncé's epic 78-minute, 27-track release, she accomplishes just that. Across the release, B positions herself in opposition to country music's rigid power structures and educates Kacey Musgraves, "Deeper Well," Usher's "Coming Home'

Rap Renassiance:

Chief Keef, "Almighty So 2": Something shifted when Chief Keef released his "Almighty So" mixtape in 2013. The exemplar of Chicago drill, the rap subgenre that would define its moment, Chief Keef was a viral teenager whose sound would be heard round the world. Eleven years later, his long-teased sequel, "Almighty So 2" delivers with the immediacy of the first - but it is markedly different. Keef has never sounded more polished, more professional but he stays true to himself.

Schoolboy Q, "Blue Lips": On his sixth album, the LA rapper Schoolboy Q pushes himself to traverse new, unexpected territory - five years since 2019's "Crash Talk," and undeniably genre-averse production, from the wet, funky bass of "Nuts," the avantgarde "Around the world in a day" to the surprising shoegaze of "Heaven."

Honorable mention: Carin León, "Boca Chueca, Vol. 1," Brittney Spencer, "My Stupid Life," Álvaro Díaz, "Sayonara," Ayra Starr, "The Year I Turned 21," Shaboozey, "Where I've Been, Isn't Where I'm Going

Albums vou might've missed:

Cindy Lee, "Diamond Jubilee": Where did "Diamond Jubilee" come from? Cindy Lee - the drag alter-ego of Women's Patrick Flegel, a fixture of Canadian indie rock since the early 2010s - released this lo-fi gem as an unmarked YouTube link. It meant listeners had to sink into its psych and garage rock in full - all two hours and 32-minutes. It's unusual that an

and stands out with unique qualities. Pricing is crucial; it must be competitive and affordable while maintaining quality. Presentation plays a key role in making a strong impression, and delivering consistent quality is essential for building trust and loyalty.

In business, the correlation between what you produce and its pricing is critical. It dictates your market position and customer perception. To achieve success. dedication is paramount. It often means working tirelessly, sometimes for months or even years, knowing that success may take time to materialize.

Équally vital is having the right personality for the business environment. It involves resilience, adaptability, and a steadfast belief in your vision. Despite setbacks or challenges, maintaining a positive outlook and determination are essential. Success may not come overnight, but with unwavering commitment, one can eventually reach their goals. This steadfast belief in eventual success is what drives entrepreneurs forward, no matter the timeline or obstacles encountered along the way

AT: With such a busy professional life, how do you manage to balance your work and personal life, especially being a mother?

Joelle: Balancing work and family is crucial, and I've structured my life to prioritize both. Over the past seven years, I've made it a point to take breaks when my children have school vacations. These breaks are sacred to me, allowing me to be fully present for my kids. How-ever, I sometimes find myself drawn into work-related meetings even during these breaks, which makes it challenging to completely disconnect from work while in Dubai.

To alleviate any guilt, my family and I travel to various destinations during festival times, whether it's to ski resorts in winter or summer getaways. This allows us quality time together, creating cherished memories.

During regular weekdays when my children are in school, I ensure I'm home by 7 pm to attend to Bailey and Ella helping with bedtime routines and reading bedtime stories especially to Nathan before he sleeps. I've established a system to ensure they don't miss out on anything

While weekdays are dedicated to work and can be intense, weekends and holidays are exclusively devoted to my children. This balance is essential for me, ensuring I'm there for my family while pursuing my professional endeavors with dedication and passion.

AT: Who are your biggest inspirations and mentors in life, and how have they influenced your career and personal growth? Joelle: Growing up in the UK, I got to know Oprah

Winfrey, and she deeply inspired me with her candid discussions about her struggles, her honesty, and her ability to captivate audiences who listened attentively. She fearlessly shared personal challenges, including one particularly difficult incident, and spoke about her determination to succeed from a young age on a local radio show. Her comfort with herself and her genuine honesty made her a true role model for me.

Richard Branson also left a lasting impression on me. Despite not completing university, he exemplified how vision and determination can lead to extraordinary success. His entrepreneurial spirit and unconventional path underscored his resilience and innovative approach.

Additionally, athletes like David Beckham have motivated me with their relentless pursuit of excellence in their careers. Their dedication and hard work serve as a testament to what can be achieved through perseverance and commitment.

In the UK, many individuals have bravely shared their stories of overcoming challenges. Each one serves as a reminder of the resilience and determination required to achieve one's goals. I am inspired by everyone who has worked tirelessly to succeed, knowing that their achievements are the result of hard work and unwavering dedication.

LAS VEGAS: A Nevada judge said Tuesday she wasn't immediately convinced of the legality of an effort by a hip-hop music figure to underwrite a \$750,000 bond to free a former Los Angeles-area gang leader from jail ahead of his murder trial in the 1996 killing of hip-hop music legend Tupac Shakur in Las Vegas.

Clark County District Court Judge Carli Kierny expressed doubts after hearing arguments about granting Duane "Keffe D" Davis' release to house arrest with electronic monitoring, but said she would review financial records submitted by his benefactor - Cash Jones, a music record executive who has managed performers such as rappers The Game and Blueface. In recent years, he's gotten into street fights and made controversial comments about the late Tupac Shakur and Nipsey Hussle.

The judge promised to post a brief description of her decision in the court record. She did not say when. Davis' attorney, Carl Arnold, told reporters outside court that he hoped for a decision later Tuesday Prosecutors Binu Palal and Marc DiGiacomo declined to comment.

Jones, who uses the moniker "Wack 100," offered sworn testimony by internet video link from an unspecified place in California. Under questioning by Arnold Jones said he paid 15% of the bail amount, or \$112,500, as "a gift" from his business accounts to secure Davis' release. (AP)

NEW YORK: Amazon is partnering with hip-hop star Megan Thee Stallion to boost sales for its 10th annual Prime Day discount event.

On Tuesday, the rapper unveiled a new original song called "It's Prime Day." An accompanying music video shows her purchasing a pink dog collar, fake eyelashes and other items from Amazon.

The online retailer's two-day discount bonanza is set to take place on July 16-17 this year. It will come after a four-day sales event hosted by Walmart, which said Monday it plans to offer its "largest deals" ever between July 8 and July 11.

Amazon's discounts are open to Prime members who pay \$14.99 per month, or \$139 per year, for access to deals and other perks, such as free shipping. The company doesn't disclose how much revenue it pulls in from such events. But it has been hosting more of them in recent years to attract consumers dealing with rising credit costs and high - but easing - inflation. (AP)

BEIJING: Domestic drama film "Moments We Shared" stayed at the top of the box office chart on the Chinese mainland on Tuesday, data from the China Movie Data Information Network showed.

The film tells a story about a young man who manages to live a quiet life in the company of his grandmother and friend in a small town after he escapes from city life. The film pocketed 29.78 million yuan (about 4.18 million U.S. dollars) in revenue on its fourth day of screening, bringing its total box office to 207 million yuan.

It was followed by Disney and Pixar's

listeners on its origins in Black music

Taylor Swift, "The Tortured Poets Department": Swift's 11th album is an amalgamation of her moody synth-pop (as heard on 2022's "Midnights") and literary folk compositions ("evermore" and "folklore") - the direct result of an artist who has spent the last few years rerecording her life's work and touring its material. Storytelling is at the fore, delivered through an ascendant vocal run or an elegiac verse that highlight her narrative powers.

Billie Eilish, "Hit Me Hard and Soft": Eilish's 10-track album is stacked with rewarding fake outs. Like in the opener "Skinny," which launches into the saccharine falsetto of her award-winning "Barbie" ballad "What Was I Made For?" only to abandon the format for the pulsating pop and sapphic yearning of "Lunch." There is techno and hyperpop, acoustic ballads and a return to her gothic vaudeville.

Ariana Grande, "eternal sunshine": For Grande's first album in four years, the pop singer teamed up with the mysterious Swedish hitmaker Max Martin for a collection of songs that range from earworm hooks filtered '90s house music ("yes, and?"), wobbly '00s R&B pop ("True Story"), Y2K revivalism ("The Boy Is Mine," inspired by the Brandy and Monica classic) and Robyn-esque euro-pop ("we can't be friends (wait for your love).")

Shakira, "Las Mujeres Ya No Lloran": In the seven years since Shakira's last album, she separated from soccer player Gerard Piqué, leading to what she's called the "dissolution of my family," and she faced charges of tax evasion in Spain. But she transformed that pain into art on "Las Mujeres Ya No Lloran," from the bachata "Monotonía" to the electro-pop "Te Felicito" to the mega viral "Shakira: Bzrp Music Sessions, Vol. 53" and beyond.

Honorable mention: Dua Lipa's "Radical Optimism," Tyla, "Tyla,"

animated film "Inside Out 2," which generated a daily box office earning of 8 million yuan. (Xinhua)

ANKARA: Located in the village of Haremtepe in the northeastern Turkish province of Rize, tea taster Ahmet Albayrak's lush garden offers tea-oriented tours followed by a "tea tasting ceremony."

"We are promoting the vibrant and diverse Turkish tea culture to an increasing numworth the wait. There are good time tracks ("THank god 4 me") and songs of disruption ("Germany '86"). It makes for an interesting tension - and room for discovery with each listen.

Sexyy Red, "In Sexyy We Trust": Last year's "Hood Hottest Princess" introduced listeners everywhere to a young, hot new Midwest MC - a fearless, funny rapper by the name Sexyy Red. This year, she's followed it up with a mixtape, "In Sexyy We Trust," a not-safe-for-work collection of bright, horny rap records. If you thought she was going to settle for just one viral moment, guess again.

Honorable mention (bold): Future and Metro Boomin, "We Don't Trust You," Young Miko, "Att.," Flo Milli, "Fine Ho, Stay," Vince Staples, "Dark Times"

Rulebreakers:

Charli XCX, "Brat": English pop singer-songwriter Charli XCX's sixth album oscillates between hedonism and anxiety - the euphoria of a late night on the dance floor and the creeping disquietude of the morning after as much as it does her in-between status as pop queen of the underground and sometimes mainstream success story. As "Brat" summer swings in full force, it seems like she's leaning more and more to the latter.

Kali Uchis, "Orquídeas": On her fourth studio album, the largely Spanish-language "Orquídeas" ("Orchids" in English), Colombian American singer Kali Uchis' ability to create lush, fluid sonic worlds reaches new heights. On "Orquídeas," it is all sultry songs about love, loss and divination. These are self-possessed songs across a spectrum of heritages, made cohesive through her unique filter.

RM, "Right Place, Ŵrong Person": The thoughtful leader of BTS, RM is usually philosophical in his solo work, unafraid to take big sonic risks, sometimes with big rewards. On "Right Place, Wrong Person," his second solo album, RM continues to ask the big questions atop elastic,

> bers of domestic and foreign tourists. During the peak season, over 3,000 people visit our gardens daily," said the owner, surrounded by sprawling green tea plantations.

Türkiye is reported to be one of the biggest per-person consumers of tea in the world. As an integral part in Turkish culture, tea is used for everything from welcoming guests to catching up with friends. It can also be consumed alone, during a perfect time of laid-back moment of relaxation and reflection. (Xinhua)

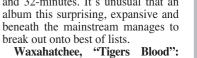








Megan



The indie artist Waxahatchee, known for her gut-wrenching alt-country, demonstrates mastery of her craft on her sixth studio album, "Tigers Blood." Waxahatchee, the musical moniker of Katie Crutchfield, is at her most evocative when documenting everyday realities. "Tigers Blood" finds simple joys; gone are tortured emotions and selfdoubt communicated through distorted riffs of her previous work. Start with "Right Back to It," featuring guitarist MJ Lenderman, which moves from country to indie rock seamlessly. It's about easing into the later years of a steady and reliable relationship - and it sounds exciting.

Mannequin P----, "I Got Heaven": Philadelphia punk band Mannequin P---- have never been accused of being restrained. On their latest album, "I Got Heaven," ferociousness, self-assurance and desire are one in the same. The band moves from lust and fear ("I Got Heaven") to dominance ("Loud Bark") and freedom ("Aching"), playing with Christian lyricism and sexuality in the same breath. It makes for a high-octane listen - not for the faint of heart, but certainly for anyone looking for an energizing record that moves from dreamy pop to abrasive hardcore with ease

Adrianne Lenker, "Bright Future": It may be the summer, but this sounds like spring. Big Thief's Adrianne Lenker's fifth solo album is simple, sparse, and singular. Her folk-y vocal tone, immediately recognizable to her most devoted listeners, is time-honored - with little more than an acoustic guitar and a harmony, she composes elegant songs with a classic sensibility. Sometimes, the most thoughtful creations utilize the fewest tools.

Honorable mention: Kim Gordon, "The Collective," Helado Negro, "Phasor," Hurray for the Riff Raff, "The Past Is Still Alive," Modu Moctar, "Funeral for Justice"

HEALTH/TECHNOLOGY

First-of-its-kind MOSAIC study shows benefits of bariatric surgery

Weight-loss surgery cuts death risk by 37% in sleep apnea patients

CLEVELAND, June 26: A study by global health system Cleveland Clinic shows that bariatric surgery performed in patients with obesity and moderate to severe obstructive sleep apnea is associated with a significantly lower risk of death and major adverse cardiovascular events, compared with patients who did not have the surgery. This study was published in the Journal of the American College of Cardiology.

Ali Aminian, M.D., director of Cleveland Clinic's Bariatric & Metabolic Institute and primary investigator of the MOSAIC study, said, "The research shows that weight loss achieved with bariatric surgery is significantly associated with a 42% lower risk of major adverse cardiovascular events and 37% lower risk of death in patients with obesity and moderate to severe obstructive sleep apnea."

According to a study published in The Lancet Respiratory Medicine, nearly 1 billion adults around the world have obstructive sleep apnea.



Ali Aminian, M.D. (left) and Steven Nissen, M.D.

One of the most common risk factors for developing the sleep disorder is obesity. The Obesity Medicine Association reports that about 70% of adult patients with obstructive sleep apnea have obesity.

Patients with obstructive sleep apnea – which can disrupt metabolism and cause more weight gain – are at an increased risk of developing life-threatening conditions, including heart attack and heart failure. The Cleveland Clinic-led MOSAIC (Metabolic surgery for OSA and Incident Cardiovascular disease) research is the first of its kind to report data on the long-term cardiovascular outcomes of bariatric surgery in patients with obstructive sleep apnea and obesity.

The observational study included 13,657 adult patients with a body mass index between 35-70 and the presence of moderate to severe obstructive sleep apnea (diagnosed by a sleep study test) between 2004 and 2018. Baseline clinical characteristics of 970 patients who underwent bariatric surgery were balanced with 12,687 patients in the nonsurgical control group using overlap weighting methods. Follow-up ended in September 2022.

At the end of the study period, results show that the cumulative incidence of major adverse cardio-vascular events at 10 years was 27% in the bariatric surgery group and 35.6% in the nonsurgical group. A major adverse cardiovascular event is defined as the first occurrence of

coronary artery events, cerebrovascular events, heart failure, atrial fibrillation, and all-cause mortality. Additional analysis shows that the cumulative incidence of all-cause mortality at 10 years was 9.1% in the bariatric surgery group and 12.5% in the nonsurgical group.

Steven Nissen, M.D., Chief Academic Officer of the Heart, Vascular & Thoracic Institute at Cleveland Clinic and co-senior author of the study, said: "There are currently no approved drug therapies for obstructive sleep apnea. Before the MOSA-IC study, no therapy had been shown to reduce the risk of major adverse cardiovascular events and death in patients with sleep apnea."

At 10 years, patients in the bariatric surgery group lost 33.2 kg and patients in the nonsurgical control group lost 6.64 kg. Patients in the bariatric surgery group maintained 25% weight loss at least up to 10 years following the procedure.

"The current management guidelines of obstructive sleep apnea recommend weight loss and lifestyle modifications," said Nancy Foldvary-Schaefer, D.O., director of Cleveland Clinic's Sleep Disorders Center. "The MOSAIC study findings support those recommendations. However, rather than focusing on lifestyle modification alone, treating obesity with more effective and durable methods such as bariatric surgery would be required to improve cardiovascular outcomes and survival in patients with obstructive sleep apnea and obesity." Dr. Aminian added, "In select pa-

Dr. Aminian added, "In select patients, bariatric surgery is a lifesaving treatment. The MOSAIC study suggests the presence of a dose-dependent response between the amount of weight loss and cardiovascular benefits in patients with obstructive sleep apnea; the greater the weight loss, the lower the risk of heart complications. With emergence of a new generation of obesity medications that can provide an average weight loss in the range of 15-20%, similar findings are theoretically possible from medical therapies."

Monkeypox screening

US issues alert on rising dengue cases worldwide

NEW YORK, June 26, (Agencies): US health officials on Tuesday warned doctors to be alert for dengue cases as the tropical disease breaks international records.

The virus, which is spread by mosquitoes, has been surging worldwide, helped by climate change. In barely six months, countries in the Americas have already broken calendar-year records for dengue cases.

The World Health Organization declared an emergency in December, and Puerto Rico declared a public health emergency in March.

Dengue remains less common in the continental United States, but in the 50 states so far this year there have been three times more cases than at the same point last year. Most were infections that travelers got abroad, and officials note there is no evidence of a current outbreak. But they also warn that local mosquitos pose a threat.

In its health alert Tuesday, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention advised doctors to know the symptoms, ask questions about where patients recently traveled and consider ordering dengue tests when appropriate.

Symptoms

Dengue (pronounced DEHN'-gay) is caused by a virus spread by a type of warm weather mosquito that is expanding its geographic reach because of climate change, experts say.

Many infected people don't get sick, but some experience headache, fever and flu-like symptoms. Severe cases can involve cause serious bleeding. ela Paz-Bailey, the Puerto-Rico-based chief of the CDC's dengue branch. There is no widely available medi-

cine for treating dengue infections. Vaccines have been tricky. US officials in 2021 recommended one vaccine, made by Sanofi Pasteur. The three-dose vaccine is built to protect against all four dengue types and is recommended only for children ages 9 to 16 who have laboratory evidence of an earlier dengue infection and who live in an area - like Puerto Rico where dengue is common.

Given those restrictions and other issues, it hasn't been widely used. As of late last month, only about 140 children had been vaccinated in Puerto Rico since shots became available there in 2022, and Sanofi Pasteur has told the CDC it is going to stop making the vaccine.

A different vaccine made by the Tokyo-based pharmaceutical company Takeda is not currently licensed in the U.S. Others are in development.

Across the world, more than 6.6 million infections were reported by about 80 countries last year. In the first four months of this year, 7.9 million cases and 4,000 deaths have been reported, according to the World Health Organization. It's been particularly intense in the Americas, including in Brazil and Peru.

In the United States, the numbers have been far more modest - about 3,000 cases last year in U.S. states and territories. But it was the worst in a decade, and included more infections that occurred locally, courtesy of native mosquitoes. Most were in Puerto Rico, but about 180 were in three US states - Florida, Texas and California. So far this year, there have been nearly 1,500 locally-acquired US cases, nearly all of them in Puerto Rico.

SANTA BARBARA, Calif., June 26, (AP): Sovato, a company enabling remote surgery and procedures, announced the use of the Sovato Platform in the successful completion of a series of remote robotic-assisted surgery (RAS) procedures in a preclinical technology demonstration.

As part of the preclinical tests, seven surgeons across four specialties performed Nephrectomy, Hysterectomy, Colectomy, and Cholecystectomy procedures, validating the broad application of remote surgery.

The preclinical test results and surgeon experience were presented at the Society of Robotic Surgery 2024 Annual Meeting in Orlando, Florida. The surgeons completed a user experience assessment based on the NASA Task Load Index, a self-evaluation tool used to measure a subjective mental workload assessment of a participant while performing a task.

The results revealed a high degree of confidence while performing the remote procedures. Surgeons also reported the ability to communicate effectively with the bedside assistant and having comparable situational awareness of the remote operating room compared to in-person surgery.

"I could not tell the difference between doing surgery in my operating



Sovato Platform proves effective in test

Sovato performs successful remote

robotic surgeries across 500 miles

Dr. Michael Jobst, from Bryan Health, speaks with the remote surgical care team 500 miles away through the Sovato Platform. (Business Wire)

room or in an operating room that was 500 miles away," stated Francesco Bianco, MD, Associate Professor of Surgery, Division of General, Minimally Invasive & Robotic Surgery Department of Surgery, at the University of Illinois, Chicago, who presented the results. "The experience was seamless. There was no detectable delay. There was absolute comfort in communicating with the team on the remote side. Everything looked like a normal day in my operating room."

The Sovato Platform is a first-ofits-kind, comprehensive solution for enabling and orchestrating remote robotic-assisted surgeries and procedures. Sovato brings together the remote surgery ecosystem, including healthcare providers and any RAS system, to deliver the curated fiberoptic network, clinical workflows, data, and supporting infrastructure required to enable safe, scalable, and profitable remote surgery and procedure programs. For healthcare organizations, Sovato's platform supports the complete remote surgery program spanning the entire surgical journey for surgeons, care teams, and patients.

In the preclinical tests, the Sovato Platform was paired with a modified version of Virtual Incision's MIRA Surgical System to enable surgeons from multiple disciplines to perform the procedures across a 500-mile distance. The Sovato Platform enabled low latency, curated, fiberoptic connectivity from the surgeon console to control MIRA's arms and integrated an articulating camera at the remote location for full situational awareness. Surgeons maintained immersive verbal and visual communication with the remote care team using the Sovato Platform.

"Remote surgery offers the ability for surgeons and healthcare teams to care for patients who may not have access to minimally invasive surgery in many parts of the world," stated Marty Martino, MD, Medical Director, Gynecologic Oncology and Robotic Surgery at Ascension St. Vincent's. "To think about a surgeon located in one city and performing a remote surgery more than 500 miles away - all while feeling like you're right there in person with the patient and care team - is history in the making."

shock and death. Repeated infections can be especial-

ly dangerous.

There are four types of dengue virus, simply known as 1, 2, 3 and 4. When someone is first infected, their body builds antibodies against that type for life. If they get infected with another type of dengue, the antibodies from the first infection may fail to neutralize the second type - and actually can help the virus enter immune cells and replicate.

That's a concern in Puerto Rico, which for the last two decades has been widely exposed to type 1. Last month, the island reported its first dengue death of the year.

"We're currently seeing is increases in the cases due to dengue 2 and dengue 3, for which the population has very little immunity," said Dr. GabriMost cases in the continental US continue to be people who were infected while traveling internationally.

Also:

JOHANNESBURG: South Africa has started screening visitors into the country for monkeypox at all ports of entry due to a recent increase in cases of the disease, said the Border Management Authority (BMA) on Tuesday.

The commissioner of the BMA, **Michael Masiapato**, announced that port health officials have developed an outbreak preparedness plan that outlines the response in dealing with monkeypox, also known as Mpox.

Doctors treat thousands of heatstroke victims

Pakistan's intense heatwave leaves 25 dead

ISLAMABAD, June 26, (Agencies): At least 25 people were killed and thousands have been admitted to hospitals after suffering heatstroke during an intense heatwave in Pakistan's southern port city of Karachi over the last three days, rescue teams and local media said on Tuesday.

Doctors said many patients became dehydrated due to the high temperatures and were discharged after receiving first aid.

However, some individuals with pre-existing conditions, such as heart ailments and cancer, are being kept in the hospital for further treatment, local media quoted hospital sources as saying. According to Pakistan's Meteorological Department, the maximum temperature crossed the 40 degrees Celsius mark over the last three days, mainly due to the suspension of sea breeze to the city.

city. The weather department forecasts that sea breezes will resume in Karachi on Wednesday evening, leading to a gradual drop in temperature. Enditem

A days-long intense heat wave has disrupted normal life in Pakistan, especially in its largest city, Karachi, where doctors treated thousands of victims of heatstroke at various hospitals, health officials said Tuesday. Several people fell unconscious in the city and some of them later died, local media said.

Temperatures soared as high as 47 degrees Celsius (117 degrees Fahrenheit) in Sindh province on Tuesday. Authorities in Karachi, the provincial capital, are urging people to stay indoors, hydrate, and avoid unnecessary travel.

Weather forecasters say the heat wave, which began in May, will subside next week.

According to local media, the days-long heat wave also killed more than two dozen people in Karachi, but no government spokesman was available to confirm the number of heatstroke-related deaths.



SPORTS

Over 80% of qualifying schedule has been completed

One-month countdown: Paris getting ready for Olympics



Cyclists, (front from right), Carlos Ramirez Yepes, of Colombia, Sam Willoughby, of Australia, and Amidou Mir, of France, compete in the BMX cycling quarterfinals during the 2016 Summer Olympics in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. In the (background left) is Kyle Evans of Britain. Sam Willoughby made a mistake during practice, doing something he did every day for 10 years prior, and broke his back. (AP)

Lynx beat Liberty to grab **Commissioner's Cup title**

Collier and Minnesota put WNBA on notice

NEW YORK, June 26, (AP): Napheesa Collier and Minnesota Lynx put WNBA on notice that they are a championship caliber team.

Bridget Carleton scored 23 points and Collier added 21 to help the Lynx win their first Commissioner's Cup championship with a 94-89 victory over the New York Liberty on Tuesday night.

"Means a lot. Testament to where we are at this season," Collier said. "This is the best group. Our personalities mesh so well. Any night anyone can have 20. Bridget had an outstanding game. It's so fun." The Lynx be-came the fourth different team to win

First trade between NY rivals since 1983

'Knicks set to acquire Bridges'

NEW YORK, June 26, (AP): Mikal Bridges is being traded by the Brooklvn Nets to the New York Knicks. where he will join Jalen Brunson and his other former Villanova teammates, two people with knowledge of the details said Tuesday. The first trade between the New

York rivals since 1983 will put Bridges in the lineup alongside Brunson, Josh Hart and Donte DiVincenzo, play-ers who helped the Wildcats win two The swingman scored 19.6 per game in 2023-24 but the Nets slipped to 32-50 and missed the postseason.

And while his team was struggling, he couldn't help but notice how much fun his friends were having just a few miles away

The Knicks signed Brunson in the summer of 2022, traded for Hart in the 2022-23 season and then signed DiVincenzo last summer, and reached the second round in both

peared to be the four players smiling during a group video call.

The teams hadn't made a deal since 1983, when the Nets were still in New Jersey and sent Len Elmore to New York for a future draft pick. This one gives Brooklyn more picks to build through the draft or package in further trades

The Knicks had picks to move and have been looking to strengthen a team that has been on the rise. They were a game away from their first appearance in the Eastern Conference finals since 2000 last season despite losing a number of key players to injuries before and during the postseason.

PARIS, June 26, (Xinhua): With one month to go until the opening ceremony, Paris is in the final stages of olympics. Here is a look at how the French capital is shaping up to stage the world's largest sporting event for the third time in its history.

Over the coming days and weeks, the Paris 2024 organizing committee will step up its transition from preparation to operation mode. Major facilities and venues that will open their doors include the Main Press Centre, the International Broadcast Centre and the Olympic Village, which will accommodate over 14,000 residents, comprising athletes, coaches, support staff and officials.

The Paris 2024 Main Operations Center, which has been functional since mid-April, was due to start its full Games-time operations on June 26, while finishing touches are also being made to other venues.

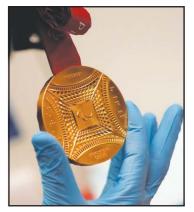
OLYMPICS

The construction of temporary facilities at key Parisian sites like the Concorde and Trocadero public squares, the Invalides monument and the Eiffel Tower is nearing completion. These works include provisional grandstands to accommodate 37,000 spectators for events such as basketball, skateboard-ing, BMX, and breakdancing. Authorities have also implemented traffic detours designed to make large swaths of the city pedestrian friendly.

On the competition front, more than 80% of the qualifying schedule has been completed, representing more than 8,000 athletes. The remaining event slots will be confirmed by the end of June, and national committees have until July 8 to register their athletes. Paris 2024 will mark the first time that athlete participation at the Olympics will feature full gender parity.

More than eight million tickets have been sold so far for Paris 2024, already ensuring that it will be one of the bestattended Games ever.

The organizing committee has re-ported particularly high demand for athletics, swimming, basketball, football and rugby sevens. Other popular events include volleyball, handball, beach volleyball, field hockey, tennis



An employee holds a medal for the upcoming 2024 Paris Olympic and Paralympic Games after the finishing touches were added, in the workshops of La Monnaie de Paris, in Paris. (AP)

and water polo.

Fan enthusiasm has already been evident in the buildup to the Games, with over 2.5 million people attending the Olympic torch relay in France, including 150,000 in Marseille. Another six million people have followed the relay on television.

The general public can also participate in the mega-event through the Paris 2024 Cultural Olympiad, a multidisciplinary artistic and cultural program that features over 2,000 projects, 80 percent of which offer free entry.

Additionally, more than 900 activities for fans have been set up across France, providing opportunities to watch the Games, engage in cultural and sports activities, explore cities and enjoy the local cuisine.

Amid concerns over potential threats such as drone attacks, the French government has halved the spectator capacity for the Olympic opening ceremony

Up to 300,000 people will be able to watch the ceremony from stands located on the banks of the River Seine, down from an initial plan to accommodate 600,000. The curtain-raising event will feature national teams parading in boats along a 6km (3.8 mile) stretch of the Seine through central Paris.

However, French President Emmanuel Macron has indicated that the ceremony could be relocated to an enclosed stadium if security risks escalate.

'We don't take things for granted'

Chinese athletes aim high as Paris Olympics get near

BEIJING, June 26, (Xinhua): With Chinese team will strive for gold in the Paris Olympics just one month all five events," said Zhang Jun, away, Chinese athletes are in the president of the Chinese Badminton home stretch of their preparations for Association. the world's premier sporting event,

Shi Yuqi, ranked world number one in men's singles, has already secured the top seed for the Paris Games. "Facing the Paris Olympics, I need to overcome off-court distractions, focus on the matches, and pursue my dream of becoming an Olympic champion," he said. In the swimming pool, Olympic champions Zhang Yufei and Wang Shun, alongside world champion Qin Haiyang, will spearhead China's starstudded squad and look to surpass their haul of three gold medals from

the Cup in the event's four-year history and continued the trend of the host team losing. New York was trying to be the first to repeat as champions after winning in Las Vegas last season.

"It's really good, always want to win championships," Collier said. "This is a championship we won, but there's still work to be done. A lot of games

BASKETBALL

to be played. We want to build on this. We don't want to peak here. This is amazing at the end of the day we want to achieve bigger things than this at the end of the season." The game was tied at 60 late in the third quarter when Carleton and Cecilia Zandalasini hit consecutive 3-pointers to start a 10-0 run that spanned the periods.

Breanna Stewart scored nine straight points to get the Liberty within 70-69, but they could never regain the lead. Courtney Williams and Carleton scored the next five points for Minnesota and New York never really threatened again.

"What I'm proud of is we answered every run on the road and that tells you everything about our basketball team,' Minnesota coach Cheryl Reeve said.

Collier, who also had six rebounds and three assists, won the game's MVP award

Stewart scored 24 points and Sabrina Ionescu added 23.

"I think that they executed better

NCAA championships and were the core of a Knicks lineup that reached the Eastern Conference semifinals last season

The Knicks will pay big to get him, with ESPN reporting that they are sending Bojan Bogdanovic to the Nets along with four unprotected first-round picks and one protected pick. The deal was confirmed to The Associated Press under condition of anonymity because it is not yet official.

The Nets acquired Bridges from Phoenix in the deal for Kevin Durant in February 2023 and he went on to average 26.1 points the rest of that season in helping Brooklyn reach the playoffs.

than us and that's it, both ends of the floor," Stewart said. "We weren't able to get anything we wanted. Twentyone turnovers is never going to win the game." Jonquel Jones, who has been fantastic for the Liberty all season, struggled on Tuesday night. She missed all three of her field-goal attempts and didn't score until hitting two free throws with 1:20 left.

"JJ has been playing great, they really took her out of the game, made it hard for her to catch the ball," Liberty coach Sandy Brondello said.

The game was moved from the Liberty's usual home Barclays Center to UBS Arena - about 20 miles away because the NBA draft was being held there Wednesday night and there wasn't enough time to changeover the arena after the game.

seasons

BASKETBALL

The four players helped Villanova win the 2016 NCAA title, and Brunson, Bridges and DiVincenzo were still there when the Wildcats won again in 2018.

They clearly can't wait to get the band back together.

"This is crazy lol," Bridges wrote on the social media platform X after the deal was reported.

Hart posted a picture of what ap-

Even though it wasn't their normal home, the Liberty faithful showed up and were loud, trying to spur on their team to victory.

New York built a 47-37 lead midway through the second quarter before the Lynx scored eight straight points to get within two. The Liberty led 50-47 at the break as Ionescu had 18 points and Kayla Thornton 14.

The Liberty welcomed back Courtney Vandersloot, who hadn't played since June 4 to be with her mom who passed away two weekends ago. She checked in for the first time with 3:30 left in the opening quarter and finished with four points.

"Shows a lot about who she is and how much she cares about being a part of this team," Ionescu said. "Wanting to sacrifice to suit up and be available to us. Credit to her, it's so tough to do

Their new addition, on the other hand, doesn't get hurt.

Bridges was the runner-up for Defensive Player of the Year in 2022 and is currently the NBA's most durable player, which should quickly make him a favorite of Knicks coach Tom Thibodeau. He has played in all 474 games in his career - and never missed a game in college, either - and led the league in minutes played in both 2021-22 and 2022-23.

what she's doing." New York also saw the return of Betnijah-Laney Hamilton, who had been sidelined with right knee soreness for the past week. She was back in the starting lineup, finishing with 13 points.

The teams for the WNBA Commissioner's Cup will split a prize pool of \$500,000. Players on Minnesota can make up to \$30,000 while each player on New York makes \$10,000. Every player competing will also receive \$5,000 in crypto currency.

There was also a charitable component with New York raising \$15,000 for Women Creating Change and Minnesota earning \$13,500 for Gender Justice. The Lynx earned an additional \$10,000 for their charity by winning and the Liberty received \$5,000 for finishing second.

Traditionally strong in table tennis and shooting, China made an impressive showing at the Tokyo Olympics, securing four gold medals in each of these sports. This time around, Chinese table tennis players are hoping to improve their medal haul after narrowly missing out on the mixed doubles title in Tokyo.

aiming for medals, diplomas (top

eight finishes), and to show their

mettle against the world's best com-

petitors.

"We cannot take for granted that these five gold medals belong to the Chinese team. All five gold medals are in Paris, and they are reserved for the brave and the wise, for those who excel the most," said Liu Guoliang, president of the Chinese Table Tennis Association.

The Chinese diving squad, also known as the "Dream Team," will be sending a mix of established stars and young talents. Cao Yuan will become a four-time Olympian, while Quan Hongchan, Chen Yuxi, Wang Zongyuan, and Xie Siyi will be competing in their second Olympic Games. As usual, the first gold medal of the Paris Olympics will be determined in shooting when the mixed team 10m air rifle event starts hours after the opening ceremony. China, represented by two pairs - world champions Han Jiayu and Du Linshu, and Olympic silver medalist Sheng Lihao and

Huang Yuting - stands a good chance of claiming the coveted honor. Also eyeing a clean sweep of Olympic titles is the Chinese badminton team, who has secured the maximum two Olympic spots in each

of the five badminton events. "The

OLYMPICS

the Tokyo Games

The Weightlifting World Cup in April saw the Chinese team win 11 gold, 9 silver, and 7 bronze medals. breaking five world records. With into their competitors' insights strength, the Chinese weightlifters are now strategically fine-tuning their preparations for Paris. With titles including World Cup

runners-up, Asian Cup champions, and Asian Games champions, the Chinese women's basketball team has high expectations for the Paris Olympics. However, the team managed only one win against four losses in recent warmup games.

Injuries have plagued the basketball team, putting significant pressure on their defense and rebounding. "Time is very tight, but the whole team is overcoming difficulties and actively preparing. We are diligently training every day, hoping to adjust the team's condition through our European tour,' said head coach Zheng Wei.

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Morgan left off the 18-player U.S. soccer roster

Team headed to the Olympics

WASHINGTON, June 26, (AP): U.S. national team forward Alex Morgan was left off coach Emma Hayes' roster for the Paris Olympics. Morgan, a four-time Olympic veteran, was the

most notable absence on the

I, ViNode Kumar

Holder of indian

Would Like To make

mame to be Read as

my Wife,s Name from

Devi in my Passport

Correctiom in my

assembled for a pair of U.S. friendlies against South Ko-Change Name rea earlier this month.

Morgan, who has 123 goals in 224 appearances with the national team, Passport No. Z 3017402 missed the latest Wave match last weekend as an excused absence.

announced on Wednesday.

The Olympic roster is smaller than the 23 players who are included on teams Vinod Kumar, change for the Women's World Cup and other competitions. Malti Kumari to Malti Hayes saw just the games against South Korea with the team in-person after she

arrived in the United States 18-player roster that Hayes from Chelsea.

ing that it was an extremely kle on April 19, but she had since returned. She also was named to the squad Hayes the past 10 months," Hayes said in a statement.

Versatile veteran Crystal Dunn, who in recent years has played on the back line, was included as a forward, along with Trinity Rod-man, Sophia Smith, Mallory Swanson and 19-year-old Jaedyn Shaw.

Goalkeeper Alyssa Nae-her was included on the squad despite a recent thigh injury that kept her out of the team's last two matches. Naeher recently returned to play for her NWSL team, the

Chicago Red Stars. Hayes also selected goal-keeper Casey Murphy, while Jane Campbell was included among the team's four alternates, with midfielders Hal Harshfelt and Croix Bethune, and forward Lynn Williams.

Hayes, named U.S. coach last November, stayed in Europe to wrap up her final season as coach of Chelsea, which won a fifth straight Women's Super League title. Former coach Vlatko Andonovski resigned from the U.S. team following last year's disappointing finish at the Women's World Cup. Twila Kilgore led the team in the interim while awaiting Hayes' return, and now serves as an assistant coach.

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The 34-year-old Morgan "Making an Olympic rosmissed more than a month ter is a huge privilege and an with the San Diego Wave honor and there is no denyafter she injured her left an-

competitive process among the players and that there were difficult choices, especially considering how hard everyone has worked over

15

SPORTS

Martinez sends Argentina into Copa last eight

Canada pip Peru

EAST RUTHERFORD, June 26, (AP): After nearly 90 minutes of total domination, Lionel Messi and defending champion Argentina advanced to the Copa America quarterfinals after the ball ricocheted in front of the net during a frantic scramble that led to the breakthrough.

Lautaro Martínez scored off the last in a series of rebounds in the 88th minute, lifting the Albiceleste over Chile 1-0 and into the quarterfinals with a game to spare.

Messi started the leadup to the goal with a corner kick that was sent sent toward goal with a glancing header by defender Lisandro Martínez. The ball landed in front of goalkeeper Claudio Bravo, where Argentina's Giovani Lo



Canada's Alistair Johnston, (front), and Peru's Marcos López vie for the ball during a Copa America Group A soccer match in Kansas City, Kan., Tuesday, June 25, 2024. (AP)

Celso and Chile's Nicolás Fernández were wrestling. Lo Celso kicked the ball off Bravo and it rebounded to Chile's Igor Lichnovsky, who tried to poke it wide.

Lautaro Martínez, who entered in the 73rd, calmly one-timed that rebound into the roof of the net on Argentina's 21st shot. Players stood and waited for three minutes while the goal, Martínez's 26th for the national team, was confirmed in a video review.

Argentina leads Group A with six points, followed by Canada with three, and Chile and Peru with one each. The Albiceleste finish the first round against Peru at Miami Gardens, Florida, on Saturday, when Canada meets Chile in Orlando, Florida.

SOCCER

Playing a day after his 37th birthday, Messi frequently flaunted his talent to spin around and slalom through defenders before an adoring sellout crowd of 81,106 at MetLife Stadium, site of the 2026 World Cup final. Argentina dominated 22-3 in shots and 11-0 in corner kicks. Chile didn't take its first attempt until the 72nd minute. Messi came the closest to scoring b

efore Martínez with a 30-yard shot that glanced off the post to Bravo's left in the 36th minute. Messi had received treatment on the thigh area of his right leg for nearly two minutes after getting kicked by Gabriel Suazo in the 24th.

Nicolás González's shot from another Messi pass in the 62nd was parried off the crossbar by Bravo.

Argentina outshot Čhile 17-0 before Rodrigo Echeverría's 72nd-minute effort following a turnover was saved by Emiliano Martínez, who blocked the ball while falling after it deflected off Alexis Mac Allister. The goalkeeper then used his right hand to bat another Echeverría shot in the 76th that deflected off a toe of defender Cristian Romero.

On the 46th anniversary of Argentina's first World Cup title, the teams returned to the stadium where Chile beat Argentina on penalty kicks in the



Argentina's Nicolas Gonzalez, (right), dribbles past Chile's Dario Osorio during a Copa America Group A soccer match in East Rutherford, N.J. (AP)

2016 Copa America final. That defeat prompted Messi to announce his international retirement only to reverse his decision seven weeks later.

At least 90% of the fans wore Argentina jerseys, most with Messi's name and No. 10.

There were some small brown patches behind one goal on a grass field installed at a stadium where the usual surface is artificial turf. The surface was narrow, with construction scheduled to allow a wider field for the World Cup.

Bravo, at 41 the oldest player in

Copa America history, had eight saves in his 150th international appearance. He and Messi, former Barcelona teammates, spoke with each other while leading their teams onto the field for the national anthems.

Jonathan David scored in the 74th minute, and Canada beat Peru 1-0 in the Copa America for its first victory over a South American opponent in 24 years. Peru played a man short after

Miguel Araujo was given a red card in the 59th minute for a studs-up tackle on Jacob Shaffelburg, a call made after a video review. Canada got its first win in four matches under Jesse Marsch, the American hired as coach last month, and beat a South American team for the first time since a 2-0 victory over Colombia in the 2000 CONCACAF Gold Cup final.

David's goal, his 27th for Canada, ended the national team's 391-minute scoreless streak. Twenty-six of his goals have come in competitive matches.

The game was paused in first-half stoppage time when an assistant referee running on the non-shaded part of the stadium collapsed and needed medical attention. He got to his feet briefly and was taken off the field in a stretcher. He had been running down the line on the non-shaded part of the stadium.

Canada (1-1), in its first Copa America, rebounded from an opening 2-0 loss to defending champion Argentina, and Peru began with a 0-0 draw against Chile. The Canadians close Group A on Saturday against Chile at Orlando, Florida, the same day Peru (0-1-1) faces Argentina at Miami Gardens, Florida. The top two teams advance to the quarterfinals.

Hypocritical and double standard' Banka criticizes politicization of anti-doping in US Yamal, Williams & Pedri not

BEIJING, June 26, (Xinhua): The World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) president Witold Banka criticized the United States for politicizing anti-doping and called it hypocritical and double standard in a statement published on WADA's official website on Wednesday.

The United States House Committee on Energy and Commerce on Tuesday held a hearing titled "Examining Anti-Doping Measures in Advance of the 2024 Olympics," which disguised under its title a focontamination case from 2021 involving 23 Chinese swimmers "The hearing sought to further politicize a relatively straightforward case of mass contamination that has been turned into a scandal by a small number of individuals, mainly in the United States," Banka said in the statement. "WADA's job as the global regulator for clean sport is to strive to ensure that athletes of the world enjoy the same protections, rights and responsibilities whether they are from Boston or Beijing. When we review cases, we must always think about what is fair to those athletes, what-



"To this day, 90% of athletes in the U.S. do not enjoy the protections provided by the World Anti-Doping Code (Code). That is because the main professional leagues and college associations refuse to be brought in under the system overseen there by the USADA.

"Even the remaining 10% of athletes in the U.S. are not receiving the sort of support they deserve, a reality illustrated by the fact that 31% of American athletes under the Code were not sufficiently tested in the 12 month-period prior to the Tokyo **included in Spain's Oly squad** MADRID, June 26, (AP): Lamine Yamal, Nico Williams and Pedri have not been included in Spain's Olympic soccer squad for next

month's Paris Games despite being young enough to make the team. The trio are younger than 23 but are playing with Spain at the European Championship in Germany and will get some time off after that tournament ends.

Fermín López and Álex Baena are



In this file photo, Zhang Yufei of China poses with her gold medal after winning the women's 200-meter butterfly final at the 2020 Summer Olympics in Tokyo, Japan. (AP)

ever their sport and whatever their nationality." The world anti-doping chief quoted in the statement American politician Adlai E. Stevenson's saying "A hypocrite is the kind of politician who would cut down a redwood tree, then mount the stump and make a speech for conserva-

tion" when addressing the talks in the hearing, led by Travis Tygart of the U.S. Anti-Doping Agency (US-ADA), who claimed other countries and WADA were not playing by the rules when numbers showed themselves are far from fulfilling their due responsibilities in anti-doping.

Alcaraz, 3 others to compete in tennis exhibition

De Minaur, Ajla to lead Australia's tennis team

SYDNEY, June 26, (AP): Alex de Minaur is set to make his Olympic debut in Paris three years after being forced out of the Tokyo Games because of COVID-19.

Ninth-ranked de Minaur was among the nine tennis players chosen Wednesday for Australia's Olympic team. Ajla Tomljanovic will be the only Australian in the women's singles draw in Paris.

"Obviously last time round I got a little bit unlucky to not be able to play in Tokyo, but I've had my eyes set on Paris and I am super excited to now be officially part of this team," de Minaur, who has nine career ATP titles, said.

Alexei Popyrin, Chris O'Connell and Rinky Hijikata will join de Minaur in men's singles. Matt Ebden, No. 1 in the doubles world rankings, will team with Tokyo 2020 mixed doubles bronze medalist John Peers in men's doubles. De Minaur and Popyrin will also compete in men's doubles.

SOCCER

Ellen Perez, the world ninthranked women's doubles player, will partner Daria Saville in women's doubles.

Triple Olympian and two-time Grand Slam singles champion Lleyton Hewitt will captain the men's team. Sam Stosur, Australia's only five-time tennis Olympian and 2011 U.S. Open singles champion, will lead the women's team.

Roland Garros will host the Paris tennis competition from July 27 to

Aug. 4, the first time since Barcelona in 1992 that the Olympic tournament is being played on clay.

Meanwhile, defending Wimbledon champion Carlos Alcaraz will take part in a tennis exhibition in Charlotte on Dec. 6.

The third-ranked Alcaraz will face Frances Tiafoe in one match, while Madison Keys and Sloane Stephens will meet in another at the Spectrum Center, home of the NBA's Charlotte Hornets.

"All eyes will be on Charlotte as some of the biggest names in tennis face off in an event unlike any other," Charlotte Sports Foundation executive director Danny Morrison said. "Expect unparalleled, elevated hospitality that only the Queen City can provide and, of course, elite competition in a sport that's captivated the world."

Alcaraz won this year's French Open, making him the youngest male tennis player to win a Grand Slam on all three playing surfaces - hard, clay and grass.

"I am appreciative for the opportunity to compete in the Charlotte Invitational this December," Alcaraz said. "Fans can expect an incredible night and we look forward to providing an unforgettable experience for all in attendance."

Match times are still to be determined.

Tickets for the event will go on sale in the middle of July.



Spain's Carlos Alcaraz attends a training session ahead of the Wimbledon Championships, at the All England Lawn Tennis and Croquet Club in Wimbledon, London. The tournament starts on July 1st. (AP) Games.

"In 2023, USADA collected 7,773 samples from 3,011 athletes, according to its own annual report. It is quite a disappointing result, considering the country's population, high number of athletes and size of their Olympic team. With twice the budget, USADA collects less than half the number of samples as its counterpart in Germany. The French NADO also collects significantly more samples than USADA with a little more than one-third of the budget. USADA also collected less than the National Anti-Doping Organizations (NADOs) in China, Russia, Italy and Britain, as well as three international sports federations.

"Yet, to distract from its own failings, USADA tries to undermine U.S. athletes' confidence in the integrity of their rivals overseas. One wonders how USADA uses its annual budget of more than USD 31 million, apart from hiring lobbyists and spending its valuable time attacking WADA and weakening the global anti-doping system." Banka took the example of the case of American athlete Erriyon Knighton to illustrate USADA's double standard. The promising sprinter tested positive for a banned steroid earlier this year but was allowed to compete in the U.S. national trials for the Paris Olympics after an arbitrator ruled this as a no-fault contamination case in mid-June.

"Without commenting on the merits, it is difficult to understand how USADA can declare in a statement that 'justice was served; in this case, given it had argued in the hearing that the analytical result was incompatible with meat contamination and had sought a sanction of four years against the athlete. It is particularly intriguing that USADA made this sudden U-turn in its opinion without even having seen the reasoned decision, which is not yet available.

"I cannot help but wonder what USADA would be saying if this had involved an athlete in China," Banka said.

Banka also pointed out that data collected in project involving law enforcement agencies and NADOs in Europe revealed that the U.S. is one of the world's largest markets for illicit steroids and performanceenhancing drugs.

The WADA president also expressed determination to build on global anti-doping systems that protect clean athletes and create level playing field independent of political influence. the only two players who will do the double of Euros and Olympics. The Games tournament is played with under-23 squads but each nation can add three overage players.

SOCCER

Barcelona's teenage defender Pau Cubarsí, who was not included in the Euro squad, made the Olympic team.

The three over-age players picked by Olympic coach Santi Denia in his 22-player list were 23-year-old Sergio Gómez of Manchester City, 24-year-old Abel Ruiz from Sporting Braga and 24-year-old Juan Miranda of Real Betis.

The players will report to training camp on July 1. Spain will debut on July 24 against Uzbekistan. It will then face the Dominican Republic and Egypt in Group C.

Squad: Goalkeepers: Arnau Tenas (Paris Saint-Germain), Joan García (Espanyol), Alejandro Iturbe (Atletico Madrid)

Defenders: Juanlu Sánchez (Se-

Spain's Lamine Yamal takes part in a training session at his base camp in Donaueschingen, Germany. (AP)

villa), Marc Pubill (Almería), Eric García (Barcelona), Pau Cubarsí (Barcelona), Jon Pacheco (Real Sociedad), Cristhian Mosquera (Valencia), Miguel Gutiérrez (Girona), Juan Miranda (Real Betis)

Midfielders: Aimar Oroz (Osasuna), Beñat Turrientes (Real Sociedad), Álex Baena (Villarreal), Adrián Bernabé (Parma), Pablo Barrios (Atletico Madrid)

Forwards: Fermín López (Barcelona), Sergio Gómez (Manchester City), Abel Ruiz (Sporting Braga), Samu Omorodion (Alaves), Sergio Camello (Rayo Vallecano), Diego López (Valencia)

Best of the Rest

Shenhua smash Meizhou: Cephas Malele's two goals gave Shanghai Shenhua a comfortable 3-0 victory over Meizhou Hakka in the 16th round of the Chinese Super League (CSL), extending their unbeaten streak to 16 games this season.

In the 9th minute, Malele opened the scoring with a header following a free kick, helping Shenhua acquire a dream start.

A few minutes into the second half, Malele danced past Meizhou's defenders and shot from a tight angle, changing the score to 2-0. In the 88th minute, Xie Pengfei's header in the box sealed the win.

Elsewhere, Chengdu Rongcheng trounced Qingdao Hainiu 5-1 on the road. Romulo, Felipe Silva, Manuel Palacios and Zhou Dingyang combined for five goals, and the home team only notched a goal from the penalty.

Shandong Taishan were held 2-2 by home side Changchun Yatai. Beijing Guoan crushed Cangzhou Mighty Lions 4-0. (Xinhua)



Varga back in Hungary: Hungary forward Barnabás Varga has been released from hospital and is already back in his home country, two days after undergoing surgery on facial fractures he sustained in a collision at the European Championship.

Varga returned to Hungary on Wednesday as his teammates waited in Germany to find out if they have reached the round of 16 as one of the four best third-place teams. The 29-year-old will take no further part at Euro 2024.

His club Ferencváros posted a picture of Varga on X, formerly Twitter, with the caption: "Barnabás is back at home!".

The injury occurred midway through the second half of Sunday's match against Scotland when Varga collided with goalkeeper Angus Gunn. Hungary went on to win 1-0 thanks to a stoppage-time goal from substitute Kevin Csoboth.

In concerning scenes, the match was halted for nearly 10 minutes so that Varga could get treatment. Several teammates appeared to be in tears and they held up blankets to shield the stricken forward as medical staff tended to him.

Varga was taken straight to hospital in Stuttgart and had surgery on Monday after breaking several bones in his face. (AP)



England's Phil Foden, (left) chests the ball next to Slovenia's Petar Stojanovic during a Group C match between England and Slovenia at the Euro 2024 soccer tournament in Cologne, Germany. (AP)



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Kuwait women's fencing team.

South Korea lead

Curtain falls on Asian Fencing Championship

KUWAIT CITY, June 26: Today marks the conclusion of the Asian Fencing Championship (men's and women's) for the general category, which began last Friday at the Fairgrounds Hall in Mishrif. The event was organized by the Kuwaiti Fencing Association and featured 350 players from 36 countries.

The tournament saw intense competition among the teams. The South Korean team clinched the top spot in the rankings, surpassing Japan, which had been leading in previous days. The Korean team secured the gold medal in the men's saber team competition by defeating Iran, which took the silver medal, while Hong Kong claimed the bronze. In the women's team epee competition, South Korea triumphed over China, which

FENCING

won the silver, with Hong Kong again taking the bronze. South Korea leads the overall rankings with 8 medals: four gold, one silver, and three bronzes. Japan follows in second place with the same number of medals (two gold, two silvers, and four bronzes), and China is third with 6 medals (one gold, three silvers, and two bronzes). Abdul Karim Al-Shamlan, President of the Kuwaiti Fencing Association, noted that the Asian Championship continues to showcase strong performances, with the technical level of the competitions rising each day. He highlighted the presence of top Asian teams qualifying for the World Olympics, such as South Korea, Japan, China, Hong Kong, Iran, and Kazakhstan. Al-Shamlan emphasized that hosting the Asian Championship in Kuwait greatly benefits Kuwaiti athletes, who gain valuable experience by competing against world-



Kuwait shooting delegation.

10th 'edition' of Amir's international shooting competition kicks off in Italy

UMBRIA, June 26: Approximately 240 shooters from around the world are competing for top honors as the 10th edition of His Highness the Amir's International Shooting Competition commenced on Tuesday in the central Italian region of Umbria.

He praised the competition for its international prominence, noting that the sport of shooting has reached new heights in Kuwait, partly due to the recent positive results achieved by Kuwaiti shooters.

International Shooting Sport

Poland deny France top spot, England win group

Austria upset Netherlands

BERLIN, June 26, (Xinhua): England claimed top spot in Group C despite being held to a goalless stalemate by stubborn Slovenia while Denmark finished in second after sharing the spoils with eliminated Serbia in the last round of group play.

Slovenia started highly motivated into the encounter knowing that at least one point would see them advance into the knockout stage whereas the Three Lions were already through.

Benjamin Sesko created the first clearcut opportunity after testing England goalkeeper Jordan Pickford with a header from close range in the fifth minute.

England sparked to life midway



Poland's Kacper Urbanski fights for the ball against Adrien Rabiot of France during a Group D match between the France and Poland at the Euro 2024 soccer tournament in Dortmund, Germany. (AP)

to be in control of our own destiny. It was a tough match, but we improved a bit compared to our last game. We controlled the ball but failed to finish the job in the final third," said Kane. England coach Gareth Southgate added: "We were the better team and dominated. We had several chances to win the game but me missed the final pass." In the other Group C clash, Denmark couldn't break the deadlock against Serbia, but the goalless draw was enough for the Danes to reach the knockout stage as runner-up. With the results, England tops the group with five points, followed by Denmark, Slovenia (both 3 points) and Serbia (2 points). The top two of each of the six groups and the best four third finishers will enter the round-of-16 knockout stage. Enditem Austria won Group D after Marcel Sabitzer's late 3-2 winner stunned the Netherlands whereas Robert Le-wandowski helped Poland hold France to a 1-1 stalemate in the last round of group play on Tuesday. The Netherlands caught the worst possible start at Berlin Olympia stadium as Donyell Malen cleared Alexanders Prass' square pass into the wrong goal, giving Austria a 1-0 lead with six minutes played.

ni Reijnders squandered two promising opportunities as the match progressed.

Austria remained dangerous though as Sabitzer tested goalkeeper Bart Verbruggen with a low shot in the 38th minute.

The Netherlands caught a perfect start two minutes into the second half as Xavi Simons initiated a counterattack before feeding Cody Gakpo, who curled the ball into the far post corner with a well-placed shot.

It was a short-lived joy for Ronald Koeman's men as Austria bounced back and took the lead again after Florian Grillitsch's pinpoint cross allowed Romano Schmid to nod home at the hour mark.

The Netherlands remained unimpressed and made it two all with 75 minutes gone as Memphis Depay tapped home Wout Weghort's assist by header.

Austria had the last laugh and clinched the group win after Sab-

Kuwait is represented by a team of seven shooters participating in the skeet and trap events. Kuwaiti Ambassador to Italy, Nasser Al-Qahtani, highlighted that this year's competition coincides with the 60th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Kuwait and Italy.

ranked athletes.

Rashid Al-Shamali, a member of the Board of Directors of the Kuwaiti Fencing Association and the technical director of the tournament, expressed his satisfaction with the championship's progress. He remarked that Asian teams have dominated fencing in recent years, with South Korea, Japan,

SHOOTING

Federation chief, Luciano Rossi, echoed the ambassador's sentiments, recognizing Kuwait's success in the sport and appreciating its support for shooting on a global scale.

and Hong Kong securing the top three positions in the last World Championship. Al-Shamali added that this tournament in Kuwait offers a valuable opportunity for Asian teams to advance and develop, especially with the 2024 Paris Olympic Games approaching. He extended his best wishes to all participants.

through the first half and thought it had broken the deadlock but for all that Bukayo Saka's goal was ruled offside.

Harry Kane posed threat in the closing stage of the first half after heading narrowly wide following Kieran Trippier's dangerous cross into the box.

After the break, chances were at premium as England controlled possession without doing damage to Slovenia's well-positioned defence.

Slovenia's defence kept England on the distance and secured one point to keep its Euro campaign alive.

"We wanted to complete the group stage atop the standings and

U-19 coach Pesic expected to make some changes

Kuwait look to bounce back against Saudi Arabia

By Khaled El Anzi Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

TAIF, Saudi Arabia, June 26: The Kuwaiti under-19 team is set to face the host Saudi team at 9:00 pm at King Fahd Sports City Stadium in Taif, Saudi Arabia, in the second round of the first group competitions of the West Asian Championship. Earlier, at 5:00 pm, Oman and Yemen will clash at the same venue.

In the first round, Kuwait lost 1-2 to Oman, while Yemen and Saudi Arabia ended their match in a 2-2 draw. The tournament features 12 teams divided into three groups, with matches being held at King Fahd Sports City Stadium and Okaz Club Stadium, continuing until July

The teams compete in a singlestage league system in the first round. The top team from each group, along with the best secondplaced team across all groups, advances to the semi-finals.

Despite its initial loss, Kuwait demonstrated a strong performance in the second half against Oman, creating numerous opportunities but



Kuwaiti players attempt to score against Saudi Arabia.

failing to equalize. Croatian coach Dario Pesic focused on addressing defensive lapses in a recent training session, emphasizing the need for proper organization to secure a positive result and enhance its chances of qualifying for the semi-finals.

Coach Dario Pesic is expected to make some changes to improve performance and secure a victory, as a defeat would significantly hinder their qualification prospects, while a draw would also diminish its chances.

This tournament is part of Kuwait's preparation for the Asian Cup qualifiers, with group competitions set for September. Following the West Asian Championship, the team will resume training in Kuwait before heading to Serbia for an external camp from mid-July to August 6 in preparation for the qualifiers.

Pesic has called up 28 players for the tournament, including Youssef Sabah, Ahmed Khorshid, Jassim Shamouh, Abdul-

SOCCER

lah Al-Ayoub, Abdullah Fares, Miqdad Safar, Abdul-Wahab Jassim, Youssef Majed, Hussein Al-Kankouni, Talal Al-Matroud, Abdul-Wahab Al-Shalal, Jassim Matar, Abdulaziz Abdeen, Fadel Al-Sarraf, Ahmed Boodi, Muhammad Al-Omran, Turki Al-Yousef, Omar Al-Azmi, Muntaser Suleiman, Bandar Qannas, Eid Talal, Thamer Al-Sulaili, Khaled Al-Kharqawi, Abdullah Al-Sarraf, Muhammad Arhama, Muhammad Al-Surai, Saud Al-Kandari, and Jassim Al-Anazi.

The Dutchmen responded well and tried to restore parity, but Tijja-



brates after scoring a penalty kick during a Group D match between France and Poland at the Euro 2024 soccer tournament in Dortmund, Germany. (AP)

SOCCER

itzer finished off Christoph Baumgartner's good build-up work from tight angle to round off the 3-2 vic-

"The team showed a great will today. They always came back and that against a strong opponent which is remarkable. In the end, we secured a deserved victory here. It is unbelievable that we have won this group after staring with a defeat," said Austria head coach Ralf Rangnick.

In the other Group D clash, France failed to secure the group win as veteran striker Robert Lewandowski cancelled out Kylian Mbappe's opener to ensure a 1-1 draw.

With the result, Austria finished the group atop the standings with six points, followed by France (5 points), the Netherlands (4 points) and Poland (1 point).

"I would like to thank the fans for showing up today despite us being eliminated. We fought until the end, and we had some really good spells," said Poland coach Michal Probierz.

Meanwhile, Phil Foden has "temporarily" left England's Euro 2024 base and returned to the U.K. for a "pressing family matter", the Football Association said.

English soccer's governing body did not elaborate further on the reason for Foden's departure.

The Manchester City forward played in Tuesday's 0-0 draw with Slovenia.

England has advanced to the round of 16 and plays its next match on Sunday. It is not known how long Foden will be away from the team's base in Blankenhain, or if he will be available to play in that match.

The English Footballer of the Year started all three of the games in the group stage of the Euros and was expected to be in the starting lineup for the round of 16.



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