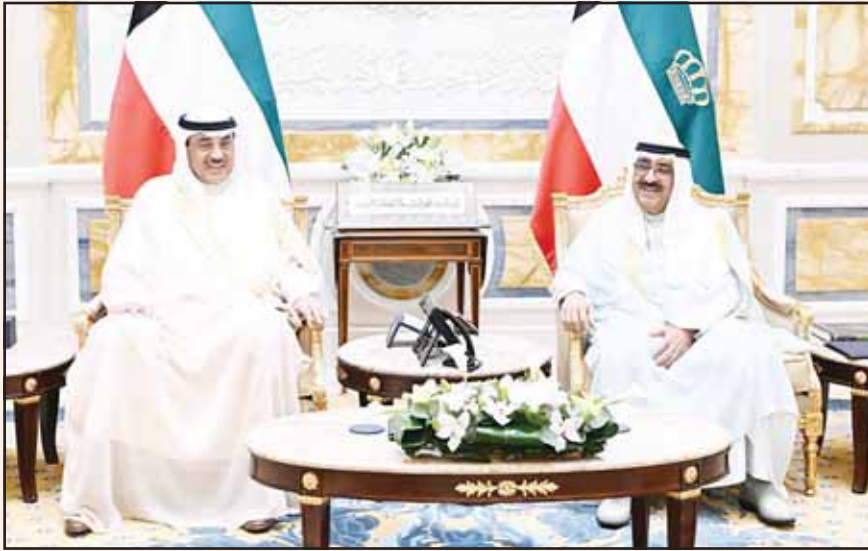


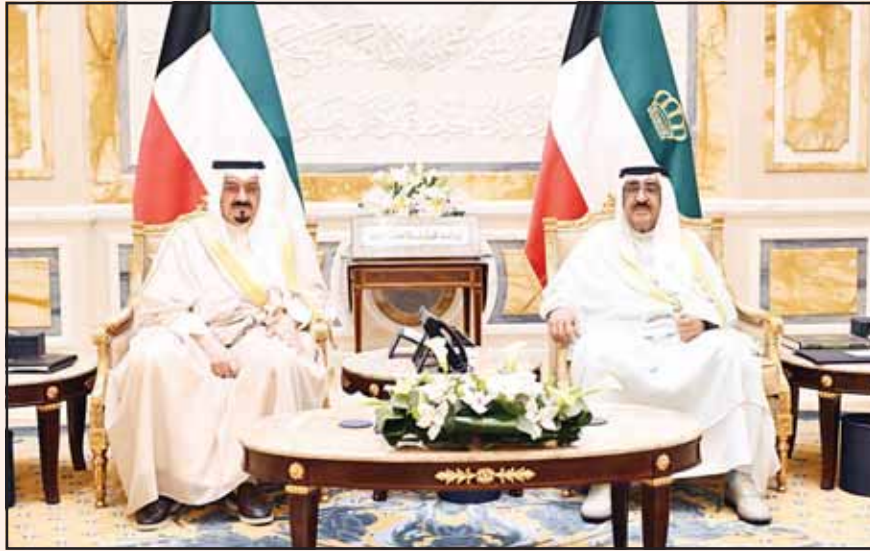


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HH the Amir receives HH the Crown Prince.

Amiri Diwan photo



HH the Amir receives HH the Prime Minister.

Amiri Diwan photo

HH Amir receives Crown Prince, PM

KUWAIT CITY, June 10, (KUNA): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah on Tuesday at Bayan Palace.

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

Also on Tuesday, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah received His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah at Bayan Palace.

Opinion

Kingdom of Abdulaziz secured the holy lands

■ Ahmed Al-Jarallah

Editor-in-Chief, the Arab Times

THROUGHOUT the history of the Hajj pilgrimage, many events have occurred, including repeated attempts to seize control of Makkah. However, God protected it, even during the most perilous times. One such event was the Qarmatian rebellion led by Abu Tahir al-Qarmati, the ruler of Bahrain, who was also a highwayman.

In 908 AD, Abu Tahir and his forces attacked the Grand Mosque (Masjid al-Haram) on the Day of Tarwiyah, massacring approximately 30,000 pilgrims, enslaving women, and looting everything in sight, including the Black Stone. The Black Stone was taken to Bahrain and remained in Qarmatian possession for 22 years. Eventually, the Qarmatians were defeated, the Black Stone was returned to Makkah, and the counterfeit structure they had built to replace the Ka'aba was demolished. Their downfall was seen as a divine punishment for their heinous crimes.

The Qarmatians also committed massacres along pilgrimage routes, blocking people's access to the Holy Land. Out of fear, pilgrims from Syria and Iraq were forced to suspend their Hajj pilgrimage. For decades, the roads to Makkah remained unsafe, plagued by gangs and looters.

This dire situation continued until King Abdulaziz Al-Saud unified the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and established lasting security along the roads leading to Makkah.

Since that time, security began to be restored, and the state has devoted all its resources to meeting the needs of pilgrims and visitors to the Sacred House, thus fulfilling what Allah Almighty stated in the Holy Quran, "And [mention] when Abraham said, 'My Lord, make this a secure city and provide its people with fruits – whoever of them believes in God and the Last Day'."

Each year during the Hajj season, the leadership of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, under the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, King Salman bin Abdulaziz, and his energetic Crown Prince, Prince Mohammed bin Salman, continues to impress the world with

new achievements. These include continuous expansion projects and enhancements in services to ensure the comfort and safety of pilgrims arriving in Makkah from all over the globe.

This commitment was evident during the most recent Hajj season, which was marked by the absence of epidemics or fatalities due to accidents. This success was attributed to the full readiness of medical teams and the introduction of advanced technologies, such as Artificial Intelligence (AI) and drones, used for the first time to monitor pilgrims around the clock.

There is no doubt that the movement of two million people within a limited space may lead to challenges and casualties. However, thanks to early organization and meticulous planning, this year's Hajj season passed without any notable incidents. Pilgrims were able to perform all rituals, including circumambulating the Ka'aba, standing on Mount Arafat, and spending the night in Mina and Muzdalifah, with ease and smoothness.

The development of the Two Holy Mosques has been a major concern for every king of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia since its founding. It is well known that the people of Makkah, and indeed most Saudis, eagerly await the Hajj season as an opportunity to serve the visitors of the Sacred House, offering support through food, shelter, and other forms of assistance.

For the exceptional success of this year's Hajj, which was free from major incidents, the government of King Salman bin Abdulaziz and his Crown Prince, Prince Mohammed bin Salman, deserves heartfelt gratitude. Their leadership delivered an unprecedented level of excellence in ensuring the safety, comfort, and well-being of pilgrims.

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1st Deputy PM receives Arab Times Editor-in-Chief, assures good health



First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad Yousef Saud Al-Sabah with Dean of Kuwaiti Journalism and the Editor-in-Chief of Arab Times and Al-Seyassah newspapers Ahmed Al-Jarallah.

KUWAIT CITY, June 10: The Dean of Kuwaiti Journalism and the Editor-in-Chief of Arab Times and Al-Seyassah newspapers Ahmed Al-Jarallah visited the First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad Yousef Saud Al-Sabah to check on his health and the progress of his treatment, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

During the visit, Al-Jarallah conveyed his sincere wishes for a speedy recovery and continued good health to Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousef.

In response, Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousef expressed his gratitude to Al-Jarallah for the kind gesture, assuring that he is in good health.

He was keen to get out of his bed and personally welcome Al-Jarallah and reassure of his well-being.

Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousef also extended his thanks to everyone who contacted him to inquire about his health, including his counterparts in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries.

Sip or puff, but don't lose focus

Only distracted drivers face fines: Kuwait GTD

By Munif Naif

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, June 10: Assistant Director of the Traffic Awareness Unit at the General Traffic Department in the Interior Ministry Lieutenant Colonel Abdullah Bu Hassan confirmed a 75 percent decrease in mobile phone

use and seatbelt use violations in May 2025 compared to May 2024; while the number of fatalities during the same period decreased by 55 percent and the number of speeding and red light violations decreased by 83 percent.

In a televised interview, Bu Hassan stressed that the goal of the amended Traffic Law is to protect the lives of

road users; indicating that a decrease in traffic violations means a decrease in accidents.

He pointed out that adhering to the Traffic Law and not being distracted by the mobile phone while driving contributes significantly to a decrease in traffic accidents; as the causes of accidents include mobile phone use while driving, running the red light and speeding.

Continued on Page 5

Newswatch

Humidity here to stay until Friday

KUWAIT CITY, June 10, (KUNA): Kuwait will continue to experience dusty conditions and high humidity through Friday morning, according to the Meteorology Department.

Dharar Al-Ali, acting director of the Meteorology Department said on Tuesday that the country is under the influence of a surface low-pressure system bringing hot, humid air and strong southeasterly winds exceeding 50 km/h.

The winds are expected to persist until midnight, reducing visibility particularly in open areas and causing sea waves to rise above six feet.

Tuesday's weather will remain hot and relatively humid during the day, with higher humidity levels along coastal areas overnight. Daytime highs are forecast between 39°C and 43°C, with lows ranging from 28°C to 30°C.

Al-Ali urged the public to stay updated through the departments official platforms and the governments "Sahel" app for the latest weather alerts and advisories.



Photo by Mohammad Morsi

Inside Kuwait's Ministry of Electricity, Water and Renewable Energy, where officials work to ensure the country's power and water needs are met.

Kuwait clocks high gov't employee turnout after Eid Al-Adha holiday

By Mohammad Ghanem, Fares Ghaleb, Jaber Al-Hamoud, Munif Naif, Najeh Bilal, Marwa Al-Bahrawi and Mohammed Al-Enezi
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, June 10: As the Eid Al-Adha holiday ended on Monday, most government sector employees -- with few exceptions -- resumed work in ministries, agencies and government institutions on Tuesday.

While attendance and absence rates varied from one sector to another; a note-

worthy observation was that attendance was significantly higher than absence -- even higher than in previous years. Some sources estimated the attendance rate at 75 percent of the workforce. They suggested that the reason behind the increase in government attendance rates could be the decisions issued to enhance discipline in the sector; including the mandatory third fingerprint or known as the 'flexible fingerprint', which began implementation in mid-August through a resolution from the Civil Service Commission (CSC).

Continued on Page 5

195 fugitives, 111 expat violators nabbed in Kuwait security sweep

By Munif Naif

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, June 10: The General Directorate of Emergency Patrols in the Interior Ministry continued its security campaigns in all governorates last week, resulting in the arrest of 25 drug users who were referred to the Drug Control General Department (DCGD).

Statistics issued by the General Directorate of Emergency Patrols

revealed the arrest of 195 persons wanted by law, 78 without valid identification documents, and 111 with expired residency permits; while 60 vehicles wanted by the judiciary were impounded, six fights were dealt with, and humanitarian assistance was provided to 572 people.

A security source confirmed that such security campaigns are ongoing in order to apprehend wanted persons and anyone proven to have violated the laws of the country.

Fee defaulters in Kuwait face automatic service suspension

KUWAIT CITY, June 10: The official gazette Kuwait Al-Yaum, in its latest issue, published Decree-Law No. 75/2025 concerning the collection of fees for the use of public utilities and services, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

Article 1 stipulates that government agencies acting as creditors must temporarily suspend services to debtors who fail to pay within thirty days of receiving a notification. The suspension will be automatically lifted in the agency's automated system once the debtor settles the full outstanding amount.

The final paragraph of Article 1 allows the creditor, upon the request of the debtor or their legal representative, to approve installment payments for those unable to pay the full amount at

once. This is subject to terms and conditions determined by a decision issued by the representative of the creditor agency.

The suspension of services shall be lifted by a decision of the creditor committee if it approves the debtor's request to pay in installments. However, if the debtor fails to pay any installment on its due date, the creditor shall issue a decision to revoke the installment decision and initiate enforcement proceedings to collect the debt or any remaining balance.

Article 2 of the decree stipulates that a lawsuit filed by the debtor concerning the temporary suspension of public

Continued on Page 5

2 PM, project team discuss NEZ strategy



8 Zain sponsors successful Environment Day event with National Geographic Ultimate Explorer at Assima Mall



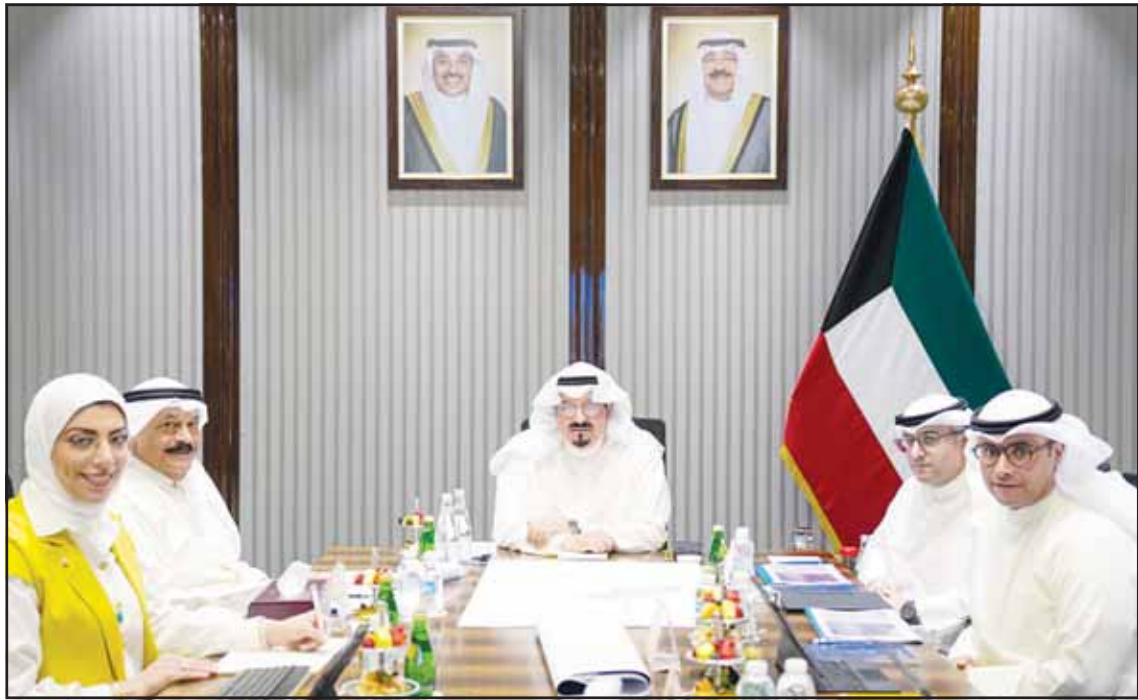
9 KFH wins 'Best Islamic Private Bank - Digital Innovation' award for 2025

Prayer Timings			
Fajr	03:13	Asr	15:21
Sunrise ..	04:48	Maghrib ..	18:47
Zohr	11:47	Isha	20:19

Local

Weather			
Expected weather for next 24 hrs:			
By Day: Hot and humid especially over coastal areas with light variable wind to light to moderate southeasterly wind, with speeds of 06-28 km/h with a chance for fog forming over coastal areas.			
Station	Max Exp	Min Rec	
Kuwait City	44	30	
Kuwait Airport	44	30	

Bubyan	38	31
Jahra	45	28
Failaka Island	38	31
Salmiyah	37	29
Ahmadi	39	25
Nuwaisib	42	26
Wafra	42	—
Salmiya	44	27



PM Diwan photo
His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah chairs the meeting.

PM, project team discuss NEZ strategy

KUWAIT CITY, June 10, (KUNA): His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah chaired the Northern Economic Zone (NEZ) project team meeting at Bayan Palace on Tuesday.

During the meeting, they reviewed the Northern Economic Zone's preliminary strategy, emphasizing private sector involvement through a flexible legislative framework and incentives for industrial, commercial, and tourism activities.

Discussions also covered the project's legal framework, aiming to create a transparent, investment-friendly model under Kuwait's sovereignty. Attending the meeting were the Head of the Prime Minister's Diwan, Abdulaziz Al-Dakheel, Minister of State for Municipal Affairs and Minister of State for Housing Affairs, Abdullah Al-Mishari, and several specialists from the Northern Economic Zone project team.

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'Role in national development ensured'

Kuwait reiterates promoting disabled rights: Al-Huwailah

By Abdullah Al-Enezi

NEW YORK, June 10, (KUNA): Kuwait's Minister of Social Affairs, Family Affairs and Childhood, Dr. Amthal Al-Huwailah affirmed the country's strong commitment to promoting the rights of persons with disabilities and ensuring their participation in national development.

Speaking to KUNA ahead of the 18th session of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), held at the United Nations from June 9 to 12, Al-Huwailah highlighted Kuwait's efforts to align with international agreements and achieve social justice and sustainable developments.

She noted that this year's conference focuses on enhancing public awareness of the rights and contributions of persons with disabilities in the lead-up to the Second World Summit for Social Development.

Key topics of the conference include innovative financing, the role of technology and AI in promoting inclusion, and the rights of indigenous persons with disabilities.

Dr. Al-Huwailah also stressed the importance of Arab coordination, citing the regional meeting chaired by



Dr. Amthal Al-Huwailah

KUNA photo

Bahrain, which aimed to unify joint efforts, and underscored Kuwait's active role in implementing the CRPD and updating national legislation accordingly.

The minister revealed that Kuwait launched Kuwait Disability Guide 2025 in May, in cooperation with the World Health Organization (WHO), and is currently conducting a comprehensive review of its laws regarding persons with disabilities.

hensive review of its laws regarding persons with disabilities.

A high-level national committee has also been established to oversee implementation of international and local disability-related frameworks.

Dr. Al-Huwailah expressed support for Qatar's preparations to host the Second World Summit for Social Development in November 2025.

UK embassy honors ex-KSE head for reinforcing Kuwait-UK engineering ties



British Ambassador to Kuwait Belinda Lewis presents a certificate of appreciation to Eng. Faisal Duwaih Al-Atel.



Eng. Faisal Duwaih Al-Atel, Eng. Mohammad Al-Subaei, Belinda Lewis, British Ambassador to Kuwait, male and female engineers at the conclusion of the ceremony.

KUWAIT CITY, June 10: The British Embassy honored the former Chairman of the Kuwait Society of Engineers (KSE), Eng. Faisal Duwaih Al-Atel, for his outstanding efforts to strengthen ties between the UK and Kuwait's engineering communities. In a special ceremony held at her Residence on 26th May 2025, Her Excellency Belinda Lewis, British Ambassador to Kuwait, presented Eng. Al-Atel with a certificate of appreciation in recognition of his exemplary leadership and

contributions to bilateral relations.

The ceremony was attended by newly appointed KSE board members as well as representatives from the Embassy's Department for Business and Trade (DBT) team. Ambassador Lewis welcomed the new KSE Chairman, Eng. Mohammad Al-Subaei; praised the fruits of collaboration between the British Embassy and KSE under Eng. Faisal Al Atel's guidance; and expressed her optimism about

opportunities to strengthen further this partnership under KSE's new leadership.

Naz Noore Demir, First Secretary Commercial and Country Director Trade, also shared heartfelt remarks and commended Eng. Al-Atel's significant contributions to the progress of the engineering profession in Kuwait and the development of ties with the UK. The occasion served as a moment to reflect on the progress to date and set the ground for further collaboration between the British Embassy and KSE.

MEW gets SAB nod to import power from GCC grid: report

800 megawatts to help Kuwait through peak summer

By Mohammad Ghanem

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, June 10: The Ministry of Electricity, Water and Renewable Energy has obtained approval from the State Audit Bureau (SAB) to import 800 megawatts from the Gulf Cooperation Council Interconnection Authority (GCCIA) for June at a total cost of KD18,605,664 to support the local electricity grid this summer, say

sources from the ministry.

This is a confirmation of the report published by the newspaper on June 3, under the headline "Electricity Ministry requests 800 megawatts from the Gulf Interconnection at a cost of KD18.8 million".

Sources confirmed that the ministry had earlier obtained approval from SAB to import electricity from GCCIA for April and May; and that it is likely to continue importing varying quantities according to the actual need until September, when the peak of summer ends and consumption rates decrease.

Sources pointed out that high temperatures, increased consumption rates and high load index sometimes force the ministry to resort to scheduled power outages in many areas for limited periods to maintain

the stability of the electricity grid in the country.

Sources told the newspaper that the ministry was keen on obtaining approval from SAB after reviewing and auditing the request before entering into import agreements and contracts with the authority to ensure the integrity of procedures and the absence of violations.

Sources stated that the ministry continues to import from the interconnection network during summer, which ends in September of each year. "This is when temperatures drop, leading to a decline in consumption and load rates," sources added.

They explained that consumption quantities vary from month to month depending on the need to support the local grid, especially in the coming months when temperatures rise remarkably -- exceeding 50 degrees Celsius.

Legal center set up for those whose nationality is revoked

KUWAIT CITY, June 10: The Central Agency for Remedying Illegal Residence Status (CARIRS) has established a legal center for those whose Kuwaiti citizenship was revoked, reports Al-Rai daily.

The center will issue a card for this group with the phrase, 'Required to Adjust Status,' written on the front.

According to the agency, those whose citizenship has been revoked are granted only medical and education services under the new card. It explained that the inclusion of the above-mentioned phrase on this card makes it different from the security and health insurance cards granted to the illegal residents category.

It explained that due to the recent issuance of decrees amending certain provisions of Amiri Decree No. 15/1959 regarding the Kuwaiti Nationality Law, stating all individuals under the illegal residents category will be considered 'required to adjust their status'. This legal status was created for

the category.

After coordinating with various government agencies, including the security agencies; the agency decided that those who have adjusted their status or have a known nationality from neighboring countries whose governments officially issue passports like Iraq, Jordan, Syria, Iran and Saudi Arabia will be treated equally with their siblings and relatives.

The agency pointed out that the nationality statement of those who have relatives of known nationality has been amended (brother of... nationality), (son of... nationality), (uncle of... nationality), (cousin of... nationality) according to the nationality statement of their relatives; and the person concerned is given a card with the nationality column written on the front stating that he is (... nationality) according to the nationality of his relatives (... nationality according to the brother), (... nationality according to the son), (... nationality according to the uncle), (... nationality according to the cousin).

MoE faces shortage of around 1,000 teachers

KUWAIT CITY, June 10: The Ministry of Education has announced its need for more than 1,000 male and female teachers for the 2025/2026 academic year, reports Al-Anba daily.

Acting Undersecretary of the ministry Dr. Mansour Al-Dhafiri approved the required teaching specializations following the endorsement of Minister of Education Eng. Sayed Jalal Al-Tabtabaei. The official recruitment announcement is expected to be made after the Eid Al-Adha holiday.

Sources attributed the need for a large number of new teachers to several factors like resignations, promotions, retirements and terminations. They added that the opening of new schools in the upcoming academic year has further increased academic staffing requirements.

Sources confirmed that the ministry is confident in its ability to address the shortage; citing the availability of qualified graduates from the College of Education at Kuwait University, College of Basic Education at the Public Authority for Applied Education and Training (PAAET), and other local academic institutions.

The required teaching specializations are as follows:

■ **Male teachers:** Islamic Education, Arabic, English, French, Science, Chemistry, Physics, Biology, Geology, Mathematics, Social Studies, Computer Science, Philosophy, Interior Design and Electricity

■ **Female teachers:** English, Physics, Chemistry, Mathematics and Computer Science

Priority for appointments will be given to Kuwaiti nationals, followed by children of Kuwaiti women married to non-Kuwaitis, Gulf nationals, Bedouns and expatriates.

Other Voices

Mind boggling ... experts turn blind eye to tragedy in Gaza

By Ahmad alsarraf

Ehud Olmert, former Israeli Prime Minister (2006–2009), wrote in an article published in Haaretz, "What we are doing in Gaza is a war of destruction, indiscriminate killing, and crimes against civilians, all carried out as a result of a government policy dictated by malice, and a lack of sense of responsibility. Yes, we are committing 'war crimes.' How can Netanyahu openly say that Gaza must be starved and that two million people should be deprived of basic human needs? Yes, there are 'terrorists', and we must fight them, but what the government is doing is not a war on Hamas. Rather, it increasingly looks like a political war waged by a prime minister and a group of thugs representing the Israeli government."

* * *



alsarraf

Israeli Jewish historian and intellectual Ilan Pappé asked, "Why do intellectuals become fools when they defend Israel? It is surprising to see senior academics, politicians, and journalists continue to support the current Israeli government. These are highly educated, knowledgeable people on virtually every global issue, and we respect their expertise and perspectives. Yet, when it comes to Israel, we are forced to ask - How can some of the most capable and informed among them be so blind as to uncritically echo the Israeli narrative, without criticism or questioning, despite the critical thinking they apply elsewhere? This phenomenon demands serious investigation. We call it moral stupidity. It is unbelievable and utterly foolish."

"The Germans are particularly notable in this regard. I don't know if anyone has truly engaged with German intellectuals about why they still back Israel. It is deeply embarrassing and calls for careful analysis and understanding. It's as if they are willing to humiliate themselves while believing they are intellectuals, researchers, and journalists, yet they choose to appease a state that commits daily aggression against other people."

In a powerful speech to the Security Council about the situation in Gaza, American trauma surgeon Dr. Feroz Sidhwa shared his firsthand experience witnessing the severe impact on Gaza's healthcare system during his medical missions to Khan Yunis.

He said, "I am not here as a policymaker, but as a doctor who has seen the destruction of healthcare infrastructure, the targeting of medical personnel, and the suffering of an entire community."

Dr. Sidhwa described performing surgeries under extremely difficult conditions, including operating on unsanitary floors without adequate anesthesia, and treating children suffering from preventable conditions due to restricted access to medical supplies. He also recounted caring for pregnant women with severe injuries.

Dr. Sidhwa revealed that 83 percent of American medical personnel in Gaza reported treating children with gunshot wounds to the head or chest. "This is not a failure of the system. It has been systematically dismantled through violations of international law," he stated. He also condemned the man-made famine that is now claiming more civilian lives than the bombs.

His testimony culminated in the March 18 mass casualty incident at Nasser Hospital, where 221 wounded had arrived one morning. Ninety of them were found dead on arrival, nearly half of them children, killed by an assault overwhelming any besieged healthcare system. Parents identified their children's remains by their clothing.

Highlighting the psychological toll of the conflict, he said, "Nearly half of Gaza's children are now suicidal, some asking, 'Why didn't I die with my family?'"

Dr. Sidhwa appealed to the Security Council to implement seven urgent measures, including an arms embargo, condemning their inaction as "evidence of the collapse of the global conscience" while Gaza's last doctors and a generation of Palestinians face annihilation. He concluded his testimony with a powerful statement - "You cannot claim ignorance when children no longer want to live."

And yet, after all this, a controversial Kuwaiti writer called on Palestinians to surrender ... to their fate.

□ □ □

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diwaniya



A DIGEST OF PUBLIC OPINION

‘Be compassionate ... animals possess heart and mind too’

“WE face unbearable cultural constraints that are socially, culturally, and behaviorally imposed. This stems from the lack of genuine efforts to instill, promote, and embed meaningful culture within society,” columnist **Dr Khalid Ahmad Al-Tarrah** wrote for **Al-Seyassah** daily.

“A dog is a living being, a companion in life, and possesses emotions much like humans. Dogs can experience depression and happiness. At times, they behave like children, and at other times, like adults. Intelligence is not exclusive to humans. Many dogs demonstrate remarkable intelligence, empathy, compassion, and even creativity. They are capable of rescue, skillful tasks, and problem-solving. Dogs are widely used in detecting explosives and narcotics, as well as assisting in criminal investigations.



Dr. Khalid Al-Tarrah

“Unlike civilized societies that prioritize cultural awareness through schools, institutions, and public initiatives, we suffer from a complete lack of such awareness campaigns. As a result, many, both young and old, engage in acts of violence against domestic and stray dogs, often subjecting them to neglect, deprivation, and even alarmist panic. Some individuals take disturbing pleasure in torturing or starving dogs as a means of taming or subjugating them.

“For some, animals, trees, and flowers are seen merely as decorative accessories used for material or social display, revealing a deeper sense of mental emptiness. “A beautiful forum was recently held as part of a cultural initiative by the Public Authority for Youth, titled “Mercy in My Heart.” This event served as a gathering for dog and cat lovers, mostly young people and advocates of humanitarian causes. The goal was to promote compassion and raise awareness about humane treatment of animals in our society.

“Sheikha Al-Sa’adoun shared her personal story and experience with dogs, describing how she overcame her fear of them and began a compassionate mission to care for stray dogs and promote this culture of empathy within society.

“The initiative by the Public Authority for Youth, led by Intisar Taqi, along with her dedicated executive team and guests, represents a vital cultural and humanitarian effort aimed at correcting societal misconceptions about dogs, cats, trees, and flowers.

“I sincerely hope this initiative is just the beginning of a series of awareness campaigns that will continue to enrich and benefit our community. May God bless all those who contributed to the “Mercy in My Heart” forum and the meaningful dialogue about animals and humanitarian values.”

Also:

“In a previous article, I had stated that the decision to grant or revoke citizenship is a sovereign right of the state, which is undisputed. However, it remains the responsibility of those entrusted with this authority to exercise it with sensitivity, particularly when it comes to revocation. Timing matters greatly, and it is unfortunate that many of the decrees issued in this regard have coincided with holidays during occasions that are meant for joy, whether religious or national,” Kuwaiti writer **Abdulrahman Khaled Al-Hamoud** for **Al-Seyassah** daily.

“Sadly, this pattern has cast a shadow over our recent national celebrations. The revocation of citizenships, especially those affecting mothers and grandmothers, has brought profound sorrow to many families. This unprecedented action has left a significant segment of society in distress, and it is a scenario rarely, if ever, witnessed in other societies.

“Last Eid Al-Fitr coincided with the publication of a long list of individuals who had lost their Kuwaiti citizenship, including those who had acquired it dependently. What was meant to be a time of celebration and exchanging blessings turned into a period of sorrow and distress. A similar atmosphere has returned as we welcome Eid Al-Adha, with many choosing not to celebrate or extend greetings.

“As this process continues, I sincerely hope that those responsible for managing this sensitive file will give due consideration to the timing of such decrees, especially since they impact the futures of many individuals. Some are being penalized for fraudulent acts committed by their ancestors, despite the widely accepted principle that no soul shall bear the burden of another.

“It is important to distinguish between those who obtained citizenship through fraud and those deemed undeserving for other, unrelated reasons. Also, every official and employee at the Ministry of Interior who played a role in facilitating any fraudulent naturalization must be held accountable, even retroactively. The names of all individuals involved in such operations, whether living or deceased, should be publicly disclosed.”

□ □ □

“Kuwaiti theater is one of the most prominent cultural platforms in the Arabian Gulf; and it has played a pivotal role in addressing social and political issues in a satirical and purposeful artistic manner,” **Ghani Jumrah** wrote for **Al-Seyassah** daily.

“Among the recurring characters in Kuwaiti theater is the military character -- often a symbol of authority or the regime, and at other times a target of ridicule or social criticism. This character has appeared in Kuwaiti theater

since its inception, but it took on a more prominent form in the 1990s -- a period marked by political and security changes in the region.

“This character has been used to portray a variety of roles -- from the ordinary soldier to the authoritarian officer, providing playwrights with the opportunity to express political and social positions through this symbolism.

“One of the most prominent plays that dealt with this character in a striking manner was ‘Saif Al-Arab’, in which the military character sometimes appeared as a symbol of naivety. At the same time, it served as a means of critiquing subservience and blind imitation of dictatorship and injustice. This character also appeared in other works, such as ‘Obaid Bil-Jundi’ (Slave by Conscription) and ‘Desert Storm’ (Makhroush Taah Bakroush) serving as an artistic tool for raising questions about the relationship between the citizens and events, and the people in general.

“What is striking about this character is the balance between comedic presentation and political criticism. Kuwaiti theater has been able to present the soldier as a character whose behavior may be funny, but behind him lies a profound message about the concepts of authority, discipline and fear of change.

“This blend of comedy and criticism allowed the audience to accept the messages without feeling confrontational. Kuwaiti actors also played a major role in consolidating this image; including Abdulhussain Abdulredha, Ahmed Jawhar, Tariq Al-Ali, Abdulaziz Al-Muslim, Walad Al-Deira and Abdulrahman Al-Aqel who excelled in their portrayals of these characters, making them close to reality while simultaneously laden with symbolism.

“This contributed to raising social and cultural awareness among the public about the role of the military, not just as an executor of orders, but as a figure reflecting the entire system. This character evolved in Kuwaiti theater with the development of political events in the region, particularly after the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait in 1990.

“The military character became more closely associated with heroism and defense of the homeland, and its presentation shifted from mockery to glorification of the national role; reflecting the transformation in Kuwaiti collective consciousness after the harsh experience of the invasion.

“In conclusion, the military character remains a constant and influential element in Kuwaiti theater. Playwrights have been able to employ it in various ways to convey their political and social messages, exploiting the character’s comedic and symbolic nature. It is not just a military uniform on stage; it is a mirror that reflects the aspirations of the people and their challenges in dealing with reality.”

□ □ □

“The Hajj season has come to a close, and Eid has passed too, without exception,” Kuwaiti journalist **Sami Al-Enezi** wrote for **Al-Seyassah** daily.

“God Almighty is just, and He is the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful. He is capable of all things, glory be to Him. He alone holds His servants accountable, both in reward and punishment, according to His justice and mercy. He is the Just Judge, and His reckoning is always fair, whether through reward, reprimand, or penalty. Hajj itself is both a challenge and a manifestation of divine justice. Yes, a challenge, as God Almighty says in the Qur’an, “Say, ‘The spirit is from the command of my Lord.’”



Sami Al-Enezi

Let them present a meaning that contradicts it. But they cannot. This is a profound challenge from a Great Lord to all of creation until the end of time. It stands as a testament to God’s justice and mercy, a proof either against you or for you, depending on your belief in His mercy.

“Hajj, with its rituals and rites, stands as a challenge to all of creation, especially humanity, in this great pillar of Islam. It is also a powerful demonstration of justice and divine proof. Yes, it is as if, indeed, it is, declaring - Is there any religion, ideology, or movement that unites a nation composed of all races, languages, colors, and backgrounds, clothing them in a single garment, shaping them into a single form, as Hajj does? This extraordinary unity, achieved through the rituals of Hajj, embodies the essence of equality and submission before God.

“Furthermore, these millions of pilgrims gather within moments, standing in perfectly organized rows for prayer. This is the remarkable and uplifting power of Islam, its order, its grandeur, and its spiritual cohesion. It is the pinnacle of challenge, the essence of justice, and the embodiment of divine mercy. Here, the wrongdoer is held accountable only after the truth has been made clear, and the obedient are rewarded generously through God’s boundless mercy, which encompasses all things... and we are but a part of His creation. There are countless compelling truths in the Book of God Almighty. In touching upon the themes of Hajj and the spirit, we aim to speak to every soul with reason and a love for justice.

— **Compiled by Mahmoud Attiye/Simi K. Kutty**



KUNA photo
Head of the Directorate General of Civil Aviation Sheikh Hamoud Al-Mubarak Al-Humoud Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and Acting Undersecretary of the Kuwaiti Ministry of Interior Maj. Gen. Ali Al-Adwani during a tour of Kuwait International Airport.

Security teams receiving pilgrims win praise

KUWAIT CITY, June 10, (KUNA): Acting Undersecretary of the Kuwaiti Ministry of Interior Maj. Gen. Ali Al-Adwani on Monday commended the preparedness of security and supporting forces to receive pilgrims arriving back home after performing Hajj rituals.

This came in a press release issued

by the ministry following an inspection tour by Al-Adwani of Kuwait International Airport to check on relevant arrangements to welcome pilgrims back home.

The official spoke highly of security teams’ efforts to ensure smooth operations and provide a safe and orderly atmosphere

for the home-return of pilgrims.

Al-Adwani conveyed the greetings of First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad Yusuf Saud Al-Sabah to all ministry personnel, commending their commitment and dedication to serving the nation during this period.

Beware fake website...woman pays KD226 for KD 2.300 meal

MEW denies sending ‘refund’ links

KUWAIT CITY, June 10: **A female citizen filed a complaint at the police station about the deduction of KD226 from her bank account, although the price of the meal she purchased was only KD2.300, reports Al-Anba daily.**

The complainant -- born in 2004 -- revealed that at 11:00 pm on June 1, she ordered a meal from her favorite restaurant online and was asked to pay by credit card. After completing the transaction, she was surprised as there were five successive withdrawals from her account; indicating that the total amount withdrawn was KD226. She quickly contacted her bank, and then a customer service representative suspended the card and informed her that other withdrawals were being made to her account prior to the suspension and all those withdrawals were suspended as well.

This happened in the Capital Govern-

orate and the victim filed a bank document forgery case at a police station. The case was referred to the Commercial Affairs Prosecution.

Furthermore, a security source stated that the complainant accessed a fake website using the logo of a fast food company. The source stressed the need for caution when making online purchases and ensuring that the website being used is genuine.

□ □ □

MEW denies sending links: The Ministry of Electricity, Water and Renewable Energy has denied sending any email links for the refund of paid amounts, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The ministry warned customers against clicking on such links, stating that they contain fraudulent and suspicious messages that could lead to the hacking of customers’ bank accounts.

□ □ □

Duo held with drug pills: Two individuals from the Capital Governorate were referred to the Drug Control General Department (DCGD) at the Ministry of Interior for the possession of 350 narcotic pills, reports Al-Anba daily.

This step was taken after two security patrols arrested a man -- in his 30s and with a criminal record -- after he was found in possession of narcotics, drug paraphernalia and two firearms in West Abdullah Al-Mubarak, reports Al-Anba daily.

According to a security source, the arrest happened during a routine patrol. He said the officers got suspicious of a speeding vehicle and signaled the driver to stop. The suspect attempted to flee; but he was quickly apprehended, the source confirmed.

Upon arrest, the suspect was found to be under the influence of drugs. A subsequent search led to the discovery of narcotics, drug paraphernalia, a Kalashnikov rifle, a nine millimeter pistol and ammunition.

The suspect was taken into custody and referred to the Drug Control General Department at the Interior Ministry for further investigation.

Some top brass and employees sent for ‘probe’

KUWAIT CITY, June 10: The Kuwait Anti-Corruption Authority (Nazaha) has referred some supervisors and other employees of the Kuwait Municipality to the Public Prosecution on suspicion of unintentionally causing harm to public funds and facilitating the embezzlement of public funds, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

Nazaha reaffirmed its commitment to pursuing all necessary procedures related to the examination, evidence collection, and investigation of credible and legally compliant information submitted to it.

The authority also expressed its appreciation for the cooperation of whistleblowers and institutions that have assisted in providing crucial information and data related to corruption cases.

Nazaha highlighted its dedication to ensuring the highest levels of protection and confidentiality for whistleblowers, in accordance with the law and its executive regulations.

Custody granted to mom despite age of children

By Jaber Al-Hamoud

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff and Agencies

KUWAIT CITY, June 10: The Family Court (Jaafari Circuit) ruled to grant a Kuwaiti woman the custody of her children, despite the children having reached the age at which custody is typically transferred to the father. The decision was based on the father’s physical abuse of the children. The court also rejected the custody lawsuit filed by the father.

Attorney Muhammad Safar submitted the request to transfer custody from his client’s ex-husband to his client and sought a ruling requiring the father to pay two types of alimony - food and clothing - as well as nursery, housing rent, and furnishing expenses.

□ □ □

Smuggling drugs: Customs officers thwarted an attempt to smuggle around 50 kilograms of drugs into the country on the second day of Eid Al-Adha, reports Al-Anba daily.

The operation began when the customs team got suspicious of the contents of several bags arriving by air. These bags were subjected to a detailed inspection, which led to the discovery of around 33 kilograms of hashish and 17 kilograms of marijuana, originating from a European country.

The suspect was immediately arrested and transferred, along with the seized contraband, to the relevant authorities.



Farwaniya Governorate photo
Farwaniya Governor Sheikh Athbi Nasser Al-Athbi Al-Sabah receives senior security officers.

Farwaniya gov receives senior security leaders

KUWAIT CITY, June 10: Farwaniya Governor Sheikh Athbi Nasser Al-Athbi Al-Sabah received on Tuesday the Director of Farwaniya Security Command Brigadier General Mohammad Al-Mutairi and the Assistant Director of Farwaniya Security Command Brigadier General Nayef Al-Hajraf.

According to a press release issued by Farwaniya Governorate, they discussed the security situation in the governorate.

The governor commended the crucial role played by security leaders and personnel in maintaining security and stability in Farwaniya Governorate.

In a separate context, Sheikh Athbi Al-Nasser received Dr. Mubarak Al-Baghli and Salem Turki Al-Mujawb during a friendly visit. He praised such visits for strengthening community ties and enhancing constructive cooperation.

Bedoun, officer in brawl

KUWAIT CITY, June 10: A case of assault, battery and insulting a public employee -- registered at the Hawalli Police Station -- was referred to the competent authorities for re-investigation and a thorough review of the circumstances surrounding the incident, reports Al-Anba daily.

The case involves a Ministry of Interior officer and an illegal resident (Bedoun).

According to official records, the officer, born in 1998, stated: “I was dispatched in response to a report concerning a dispute between a woman and a child. Upon arrival at the scene, I encountered a man, an illegal resident (Bedoun). As I intervened to protect the child from harm, the individual began insulting and physically assaulting me.”

In contrast, the second party involved in the case, born in 1980, gave a different account. He alleged: “The soldier abused his position by physically and verbally assaulting me. He punched me in the face, which required medical attention.” He submitted a medical report supporting his claims, which confirmed he sustained a nasal fracture.

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Al-Mutairi sends sweeping reform bill to legal authority

Kuwait eyes stronger sports governance with new legislation

KUWAIT CITY, June 10: Minister of Information and Culture and Minister of State for Youth Affairs Abdulrahman Al-Mutairi has referred the new Sports Law to the Legal Advice and Legislation Authority for approval, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The new law includes regulations on salary spending, development and maintenance of sports facilities, strict financial oversight through the formation of independent oversight bodies to oversee spending rates, standardizing membership fees for all sports clubs, activating a unified electronic platform for registration and payment, and organizing club elections according to the single-vote system.

One of the most important eligibility requirements for candidacy is to hold a bachelor's degree (with the exception of international players). Candidates are not permitted to run for more than two terms.

The law also stipulates the following:

- Restructure the boards of directors by reducing the number of board members to seven and eliminating the secretary and treasurer positions;



Al-Mutairi

- Localize sports jobs;
- Standardize club membership requirements;
- Establish partnerships with investors and advertisers to set up facilities;
- Organize training camps;
- Settle the status of dismissed members;
- Reduce leadership positions in sports clubs, as the administrative structure of sports clubs is limited to the positions of Chairman of the Board of Directors and Vice President only;
- Abolish all other leadership positions of a protocol or non-executive nature;
- Consider sports club revenues as public funds sub-

ject to the supervision of official oversight bodies, including Kuwait Anti-Corruption Authority (Nazaha) and the Public Prosecution;

- A sports club Board of Directors must prepare periodic financial reports and submit them to the competent oversight bodies;
- Any disposition of funds without a legal basis is considered a crime that requires legal accountability and referral to the Public Prosecution;
- Financial rewards are regulated, such that sports clubs are allowed to pay financial rewards to players and the technical and administrative staff with a maximum not exceeding 15 percent of the annual budget.

KFAED allocates USD 11.4 billion for 540 developments projects in Africa

Fund's projects cover more than 50 African countries

KUWAIT CITY, June 10, (KUNA): Acting Director General of the Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development (KFAED) Waleed Al-Bahar said Tuesday, the fund financed 540 development projects in more than 50 African countries at a value exceeding USD 11.4 billion.

This came as Al-Bahar participated on Africa Day celebration held at the invitation of the ambassadors and heads of African diplomatic missions accredited to Kuwait to commemorate the founding of the African Union.

The fund's operations in Africa and its projects represent approximately 57 percent of its total global activity and have contributed to a qualitative shift in the economies of Af-



KUNA photo
Waleed Al-Bahar, Acting Director General of the Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development (KFAED)

rican countries and improved people's living, said Al-Bahar in a statement.

He expressed pride in KFAED's relations with African countries, stressing his commitment to strengthening bilateral relations and achieving greater progress, prosperity, and development for the peoples of the continent through ongoing cooperation.

Regarding Africa Day celebration, Al-Bahar said that the fund is participating for the ninth consecutive year with a special pavilion highlighting its development and humanitarian efforts on the African continent.

This year's celebration saw the participation of more than 30 African Union embassies, displaying their cultural and historical heritage through exhibits, collectibles, and craft tools that reflect the diverse professions and activities of each country, he added.

KFAED was established in 1961 as the first development institution in the Arab region, before expanding its scope of activities to include developing countries starting in 1974, with its contributions reaching 105 countries to date.

83-year-old Kuwaiti pilgrim dies during Hajj rituals at holy sites

By Mohammed Al-Enezi
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, June 10: A Kuwaiti Hajj campaign has announced the passing of an 83-year-old Kuwaiti pilgrim, who died recently while performing Hajj rituals at the holy sites.

According to informed sources, the Kuwaiti pilgrim collapsed suddenly after traveling from Arafat to Muzdalifah and passed away on the spot. Necessary procedures were carried out in coordination with the relevant Saudi authorities.

The campaign expressed its deep sorrow over the pilgrim's passing and extended its condolences to his family.

Kuwait enters Al-Thuraya season

KUWAIT CITY, June 10: The Al-Ojairi Scientific Center announced that Kuwait is currently experiencing a new seasonal period known as "Al-Thuraya," which began on June 7. This season is associated with the appearance of the Thuraya star and lasts for 13 days, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

According to the center, this period is marked by rising temperatures and the onset of the "Bawarih" winds, which often carry dust.

The Thuraya star rises from the east and continues its path across the sky, becoming clearly visible

until June 19. During this season, the sun rises and sets from its most northern point.

The Al-Thuraya period is characterized by the drying of plants and marks the beginning of the "forty days", which is the hottest stretch of summer, often accompanied by dust storms.

Astronomically, Thuraya is a star cluster consisting of a group of closely positioned stars, visible as a cloud from which seven stars emerge.

It is one of the most well-known and celebrated star clusters in Arab tradition.

EID ADHA

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Visit highlights human capital

Minister Al-Mukhaizeem praises Eid workers at South Zour Plant

By Mohammad Ghanem
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, June 10: Minister of Electricity, Water and Renewable Energy Dr. Subaih Al-Mukhaizeem visited South Zour Power and Water Distillation Plant to greet the workers on duty during the Eid Al-Adha holiday and to review the progress of work at the plant.

The minister was accompanied by Undersecretary Dr. Adil Al-Zamel and Acting Assistant Undersecretary for Power Plants and Water Distillation Haitham Al-Ali.

In his speech during the visit, Al-Mukhaizeem emphasized that national workers are considered the cornerstone of the nation's progress. He underscored the importance of investing in human capital, keeping pace with scientific developments, and promoting research and innovation to support progress in the electricity and water sectors.

He also expressed his thanks and appreciation to all employees at the ministry, including those on duty during official holidays; praising their efforts, which stem from deeply rooted national and institutional values.

He added that working in this vital sector is not limited to performing a job, as it is rather a national responsibility that contributes to building cities and the well-being of people. He said such efforts are considered an incentive to do more in the service of the nation and its advancement.

He began his tour by visiting the thermal control room and the electrical control room, where he was briefed on the operating mechanisms and procedures followed at the plant. The minister listened to brief explanations presented by the plant's supervisors -- each according to their specialization -- who reviewed the daily workflow, periodic maintenance work and the technical challenges they may face.

Director of Zour South Power Plant Zahir Al-Saad explained in detail the electrical control system at the plant; indicating it has an installed capacity of 5,800 megawatts -- about 31 percent of the total energy production, in addition to a water production capacity of up to 140 million gallons per day.

Enriching Francophone education

Kuwaiti educator recognized with France's Order of Academic Palms

By Fares Ghaleb
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, June 10: French Ambassador to Kuwait Olivier Gauvin has awarded the Order of Academic Palms with the rank of Officer to Inspector General at the Ministry of Education Anwar Al-Radwan, in recognition of her outstanding efforts in supporting the French language and developing its teaching in Kuwait.

This was part of an educational and cultural ceremony held at the French Institute in Kuwait; which coincided with a ceremony to distribute official French language certificates (DELFP and DALFP) to a number of graduating students, in the presence of teachers, inspectors and parents.

Gauvin explained that the Order of Academic Palms -- the most prestigious French civilian award given to those working in the academic sector -- is the French government's official recognition of the outstanding contributions of Al-Radwan to the promotion of French language teaching and spreading Francophonie in the country.

He said "Al-Radwan's continued commitment is a valuable asset to the development of French language and culture in Kuwait. This has earned her this well-deserved award."

He added that "Al-Radwan, who studied in France between 1992 and 1998 and later contributed to the development of French language curricula and teacher training, currently serves as the Inspector General of the French Language in Farwaniya Educational District. She leads several media and educational initiatives, including television programs and competitions for students to promote learning and engagement with the language."

During the ceremony, the French Ambassador also praised the graduates of the DELFP diplomas, which are issued by the French Ministry of Education and are internationally recognized for life. He affirmed that they open up broad opportunities for students to study in France, obtain scholarships from Campus France, and join French-speaking institutions around the world.

He explained that advanced levels such as B2 and C1 allow direct admission to Francophone universities; while basic levels (A1, A2 and B1) are promising achievements that demonstrate the students' commitment and seriousness in learning a language that requires intellectual effort and cultural interest.

He also expressed his gratitude to the teachers at the French Institute in Kuwait, at partner schools, especially the Lycée Français, academic institutions such as Gulf University and the Public Authority for Applied Education, and the educational inspection teams; praising their pivotal role in the success of the DELFP exams and enhancing the quality of French education in the country.

The ambassador specifically thanked the parents who encouraged their children to learn French, asserting that the decision is a reflection of their commitment to a humanitarian vision based on pluralism and cultural openness.

He also commended Kuwait's successful events during Francophonie Month 2025; which included competitions, workshops, lectures and cultural performances with the participation of French-speaking ambassadors.

Crown Prince, PM extend wishes

Kuwait HH Amir congratulates Portuguese prez on Nat’l Day

KUWAIT CITY, June 10, (KUNA): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah sent a cable of congratulations on Tuesday to President Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa of the Portuguese Republic on the occasion of Portugal’s National Day. In the message, His Highness wished the Portuguese President continued good health and well-being, and expressed hopes for further progress and prosperity for Portugal and its people.

Ministry lifts bans on Iran and parts of US

MoCI imposes new restrictions on poultry import amid avian flu shift

KUWAIT CITY, June 10: The Official Gazette (Kuwait Al-Youm) recently published two decisions issued by the Ministry of Commerce and Industry regarding poultry imports, reports Al-Anba daily.

The first decision lifts the ban on the import of all types of poultry meat (fresh, chilled, frozen and processed); and their derivatives, products and table eggs. This decision was taken after the declaration of the end of the highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) outbreak in the Islamic Republic of Iran and several areas in the United States like Minnesota, California, North Dakota, Montana, Pennsylvania, Georgia, Washington and North Carolina.

The second decision imposes a ban on the import of all types of poultry meat, their derivatives, products and table eggs – except those heat-treated at 70 degrees Celsius

or higher – from certain parts of the United States due to the emergence of HPAI. The affected states include South Dakota, Wisconsin, Illinois, Indiana, Pennsylvania, New Jersey and New Mexico.

Moreover, two other decisions were issued to temporarily ban the import of all types of poultry meat, derivatives, products and table eggs from the Czech Republic and the Brazilian state of Rio Grande do Sul, also due to HPAI outbreaks. However, this ban excludes products that have undergone sufficient heat treatment to eliminate the virus. These products must meet approved health requirements and standards, and be accompanied by a health certificate from the competent authorities in the exporting countries; affirming that the items are either free from the virus or had been effectively neutralized.



KUNA photo
Kuwaiti Deputy Foreign Minister Ambassador Sheikh Jarrah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah on Tuesday chaired the Border Committee meeting, which was held at the Ministry and discussed all topics on the agenda.

12th-grade final exams begin

Education ministry enforces strict measures

By Abdulrahman Al-Shammari
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, June 10: The final exams for twelfth-grade students in both the science and arts sections will begin on Wednesday, June 11 with over 43,000 students of both genders participating in all educational zones, including approximately 26,000 from the science section and 17,000 from the arts section, for the 2024/2025 academic year.

Strict measures have been implemented to oversee the work of the examination committees.

The Ministry of Education has ap-

proved the names of the committee heads and established the regulations and procedures for their work.

It affirmed that the committee members must be employees of the Ministry of Education’s schools and must not be assigned to the school where their committee operates. Also, committee members must have no first-degree or second-degree kinship with any students in their committee and are required to submit an official declaration to this effect.

The procedure includes appointing one of the assistant principals to oversee administrative work within the original school, ensuring regular attendance, timely departure, and discipline throughout the examination period. The exam committee headquarters were scheduled to be handed over to their designated heads on Tuesday to allow adequate preparation before the start of the twelfth-grade exams.

The assignment period for exam committee heads runs from June 10 to June 23, covering 14 working days. The exams will conclude in the last week of June, followed by the correction of exam papers and the recording of students’ marks.

On Monday, the Ministry of Education reaffirmed its commitment to providing a fair and safe environment governed by equal opportunities during the twelfth-grade exams, stressing that it will not tolerate any cases of cheating or rumor-mongering.

The ministry stated that the exams will be conducted in an environment characterized by security, transparency, and fairness. It emphasized its full commitment to strictly enforcing the list of violations to uphold the integrity of the educational system and the principle of accountability, and apply rules and regulations that preserve the credibility and integrity of the examination process.

The ministry also announced the referral of 17 social media accounts and groups to the competent security authorities after they published misleading information and sample questions falsely claimed to be exam content. These accounts have been referred to the Anti-Cybercrime Department for legal action against those responsible.

Furthermore, the ministry affirmed its ongoing monitoring and tracking of information circulating during the exam period, in coordination with relevant security agencies, to promptly address any attempts to spread rumors or create anxiety among students.

Finally, the ministry urged students to fully comply with the regulations and instructions governing conduct within examination halls, including the prohibition of electronic devices, as such violations directly undermine the integrity of the exam process.

Continued from Page 1

Sip or

On drinking water or smoking while driving, Bu Hassan clarified “there is no traffic violation for drinking water or smoking while driving unless it distracts the driver from the road.” He pointed out that drinking water, for example, does not result in a traffic violation as long as the driver is attentive while driving. However, if the driver is distracted from the road, fails to pay attention, and puts his life and the lives of others in danger; this falls under the scope of the traffic violation, he added. “For example, if a cigarette falls inside the vehicle while driving, this will cause confusion for the driver and lead to distraction from the road, which will impact his driving and lead to inattention; thereby, putting his life and the lives of others in danger,” he elaborated.

On driving at a higher or lower speed than the specified limit, he said “drivers must adhere to the specified speed limit – whether the maximum or minimum. If traffic is flowing smoothly and the driver is traveling below the specified speed limit, a ticket will be issued to him for failure to adhere to the speed limit, which results in obstructing traffic. For instance, if the speed limit is between 80 and 120 kilometers per hour and the driver is driving at 60 kilometers per hour, a ticket will be issued to him. Nevertheless, if the road is congested, a ticket will not be issued, because he is compelled to do so.”

He urged drivers to ensure the safety of their vehicles, especially during summer, to avoid sudden breakdowns that could lead to traffic accidents. He stated that in the event of a vehicle breakdown, drivers should stop on the emergency lane, turn on the flasher, and take the necessary steps to remove the vehicle as quickly as possible.

Kuwait clocks

Sources pointed out that the absence from work and ‘closing the week’ phenomena are now at their lowest rates, compared to the situation before the implementation of the aforementioned resolution. Sources said this proves the effectiveness of the resolution; which has contributed to regulating attendance at work, promoting the value of commitment and optimal utilization of working hours, and preventing some people from dropping out of work.

Sources also confirmed that most absences were due to sickness with medical certificates, emergency leave or regular leave; indicating that some ministries and agencies -- particularly those with a service nature and interact with the public -- naturally experience high attendance under all circumstances, especially since the holiday is preceded by clear and specific instructions regarding the necessity of being present after the holiday and regulating employee attendance.

Despite the commitment of most employees to resume work, the newspaper noted some complaints about what they considered “short vacation period”. Nevertheless, a joyful atmosphere prevailed in many offices and corridors; where Eid greetings were exchanged, sweets and dates were distributed, incense was burned, and Arabic coffee was served. Employees also spent their breaks discussing details of their vacations and the best restaurants and markets they visited during the Eid holiday.

Following is a closer look at the situation in a number of ministries and government agencies:

The corridors of the Ministry of

Electricity, Water and Renewable Energy in South Surra witnessed an influx of employees who gathered around the fingerprint machines since early morning on Tuesday. Fingerprints were taken easily and conveniently, given the availability of fingerprint machines in many locations in the ministry.

Sources from the ministry indicated that employee attendance rate was around 75 percent in various sectors, departments and divisions; disclosing the absences are due to sick leave or regular leave. Sources confirmed that the ministry is keen on ensuring the presence of employees in order to avoid the disruption of workflow in the ministry and at its external locations; particularly the customer affairs offices, given the nature of work at these offices and their interaction with the public.

Sources said this is in addition to electricity and water production plants, which require the presence of employees during summer. Sources stated that there are clear instructions for regulating workflow in the sectors and controlling employee attendance during shifts in sectors, departments and technical divisions, including electricity and water emergencies and the hotline that receives reports on power outages and malfunctions. Sources added the ministry is preparing to launch initiatives to enhance compliance and discipline.

Meanwhile, Director of the Public Relations Department at the Ministry of Social Affairs Fatima Al-Salama revealed that the attendance rate of employees after the Eid Al-Adha holiday reached 50 percent. She said work is underway to monitor job discipline and a gradual return to full performance in various sectors and departments.

She affirmed that the ministry is committed to ensure the continuity of service provision despite the low attendance rate on the first day after the holiday. She emphasized that there is direct follow up by administrative leaders to ensure the employees’ commitment to resume work and carry out their tasks in accordance with established regulations.

She added the ministry is working hard to provide an encouraging work environment and it is preparing to launch a number of initiatives in the coming period to enhance commitment and discipline, as well as raise the efficiency of job performance to achieve the goals of the ministry in serving the community.

She stated that the ministry puts importance to job commitment, as it is the foundation of the success of any service institution. She disclosed that the remedial steps include gradual administrative procedures to ensure regular workflow, achieving quality and speed in meeting the needs of citizens and expatriates who benefit from the services of the ministry.

On the other hand, the courts at all levels (criminal, civil, commercial, personal status) and the Public Prosecution in all governorates resumed full operations on Tuesday.

According to reliable sources, attendance at the Ministry of Justice and the courts reached about 70 percent; with judicial and administrative departments operating at full capacity to receive clients and deliberate on cases in the court docket.

At the same time, prosecutors in the governorates resumed receiving reports, conducting examinations of detainees and conducting patrols, with urgent complaints being given priority.

Moreover, Ministry of Interior employees resumed work in all departments and service centers throughout the country.

Employees at the Residency, Na-

tionality and Passports Affairs general departments resumed work amidst remarkable commitment and high spirits to complete transactions efficiently and quickly.

Departments and centers witnessed a high turnout of employees, reflecting their commitment to complete transactions and facilitate procedures for citizens and expatriates.

The ministry previously announced that the Nationality and Passports Affairs General Department would receive women whose citizenship was revoked from 9:00 am to 9:00 pm during the Eid Al-Adha holiday; and would handover around 4,520 out of a total of 7,730 passports. The department worked at full capacity to handover passports to these women and facilitate their status adjustments within the specified period.

Also, on the first working day after the Eid Al-Adha holiday, the work schedule of officials and employees at the Ministry of Oil, Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) and its subsidiaries proceeded normally, with no reported absences, especially since oil sector employees usually work during holidays and other occasions, given the nature of the sector.

Sources stressed that “the system implemented by oil companies and approved by KPC does not permit or accept laziness at all.” They explained that despite the provision of facilities and privileges to employees in the oil sector, there are regulations on accountability in cases of unexcused absence. They added “the nationals working in the oil sector are up to the task and possess high professional capabilities.”

As usual, the Ministry of Health was not affected by the absence of its employees on the first day after the Eid Al-Adha holiday. Ministry employees resumed work in various sectors and departments; particularly those working in hospitals, primary healthcare centers, and related technical departments, including laboratories, radiology and others.

Sources confirmed to the newspaper that the smart fingerprint attendance system played a significant role in ensuring employees adhere to official working hours, as doctors and administrators are keen to be present at work at the specified times.

Fee defaulters

services, or any dispute regarding the debt amount, shall not be accepted unless the debtor first files a formal complaint with the relevant ministry.

The relevant ministry or committee must issue a decision on the complaint within thirty days of its submission. If this period expires without a decision, the complaint is considered rejected. The debtor may then file a lawsuit within thirty days, either from the date they are notified of the complaint rejection through modern electronic means or from the expiry of the decision period, whichever comes first.

Article 3 of the draft law stipulates that any amounts owed to state ministries or institutions under the provisions of this law shall take precedence over all of the debtor’s assets, whether movable or immovable.

Article 4 states that any document indicating the debt owed by the debtor, or any decision to collect or settle the debt issued by the competent authority or ministry, shall be deemed an “executive instrument” enforceable by law. Its execution shall be carried out in accordance with the rules and provisions stipulated in the Civil and Commercial Procedures Law, issued by Decree-Law No. 38/1980.

Economic growth or social risk?

Kuwait’s future through AI

By Najeh Bilal

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, June 10: With the spread of artificial intelligence in various fields and its growing role in increasing production rates, a number of experts have called for more integration of artificial intelligence into the economic cycle of the country, given its importance in increasing oil and other production, as well as reducing errors and risks and enhancing efficiency.

In separate interviews with the newspaper, these experts stated that the advantages of artificial intelligence include lowering product prices by reducing labor costs and reducing the rate of defection during production processes. They also pointed out that one of the disadvantages of the spread of artificial intelligence is the emergence of an unemployment crisis.

Cybersecurity and Information Technology expert Hoda Al-Kribani asserted it is impossible to separate artificial intelligence from its broader digital transformation landscape. She said “it is no longer a technical luxury, as it has become an economic and security necessity. It is no longer a Science fiction, but rather a real engine reshaping production, management and thinking.”

Regarding its impact on the economy, Al-Kribani said that it can create a quantum leap in reducing costs, accelerating operations, and even achieving sustainable efficiency and creating entirely new economic models. She cited the oil sector, where it is currently used to improve exploration, predict maintenance and analyze geological data; such that companies like Shell and Aramco are employing machine learning technologies to improve oil recovery and reduce waste, which directly impacts financial returns and production.

She explained that artificial intelligence enhances production volumes and contributes to decision-making quality and operational safety in sensitive industrial environments; such as the energy sector, where artificial intelligence can predict failures before they occur, reduce waste, and increase the safety of employees and facilities.

She stressed that it is impossible to hand over the keys to production to smart systems without securing them; because the more artificial intelligence is relied upon in the economy, the greater the need to protect it from cyber threats. “As much as artificial intelligence empowers us, it also exposes us to more sophisticated attacks, especially those that use artificial intelligence itself as a weapon. Artificial intelligence is not just a tool for improving production; as it is rather a strategic partner for the national economy, provided we employ it intelligently and fortify it with cybersecurity,” she added.

Economic activist and AI specialist Dr. Manal Al-Kandari emphasized that artificial intelligence has invaded human life worldwide and has become an integral part of public life. “All countries are competing to achieve the best in the field of artificial intelligence, spending millions to have an economy that keeps pace with the world,” she asserted.

She added there is no doubt that artificial intelligence has a promising future, as the world awaits many inventions that will contribute to creating a dignified and comfortable life for humanity. She said economic development has become the goal to achieve national security for members of society by providing job opportunities, restoring social balance, increasing foreign and local investments, raising the standard of living, and reducing unemployment rates. She stated that productivity growth resulting from artificial intelligence leads to the redistribution of job opportunities, restructuring of trade and investment, and diversification of sources of income in the country, especially since Kuwait is one of the countries exerting tremendous efforts in the field of artificial intelligence and working hard to activate its applications in various fields.

She underscored the importance of ensuring the quality of education and equipping students with the skills necessary to excel in the digital age. She also stressed the need to develop the infrastructure to enhance digital empowerment and spread the culture of artificial intelligence, pointing out the need to intensify community awareness on the importance of artificial intelligence and clarify how to benefit from it.

Administrative Development and Human Resources Advisor Dr. Abdullah Al-Abduljader disclosed that digital technology, including artificial intelligence, has reduced the work and tasks performed by employees, reducing reliance on expertise and manual labor, and reducing waste in documentary cycles by relying on applications that complete transactions electronically.

He said artificial intelligence has spread throughout the world, particularly systems that use technologies capable of collecting data and using it for prediction, recommendation or decision-making with varying levels of autonomy; as well as selecting the best course of action to achieve specific goals. “Therefore, artificial intelligence has an extremely rapid ability to increase business productivity and has played a major pivotal role in fields; such as medicine, science, engineering, advertising and data analysis,” he elaborated.

He was quick to add though that one of the drawbacks is the high cost, as artificial intelligence requires high investments in the initial units. He also cited the gradual elimination of humans that perform traditional job tasks, which will inevitably lead to increased unemployment as it reduces reliance on human brains. He went on to point out one of the disadvantages of artificial intelligence -- the ease of access to government data systems and bank accounts, which has led to the expansion of hacking operations, in addition to the use of its techniques to distort the governments of countries and spread news through fake video clips.

IQ, age and school type now key to decisions

PADA intends to reclassify disabilities by type and rehabilitation institution

KUWAIT CITY, June 10: The Public Authority for Disabled Affairs (PADA) intends to issue a new decision to reclassify disabilities by type and educational or rehabilitation institution, reports Al-Jarida daily quoting sources.

Sources disclosed the new decision stipulates that 12 disability categories will be identified by class or type.

Sources said those with developmental disabilities -- including hearing, visual, physical, motor and learning disabilities --will be referred to nurseries and special education schools. These students will be placed in the ‘needs’ class type and they must be referred to a medical committee for disability classification by the age of six.

Sources stated that students with learning disabilities will be under the ‘integrated’ class type, except those who are already enrolled in bilingual or private Arabic schools. Those classified as ‘slow learners’ may be transferred to the schools under the authority (Grades One to Three) and accepted conditionally. In order to obtain a high school diploma, these students must pass a second academic round and an IQ test.

Sources revealed that students with physical, psycho-

logical, motor, visual and hearing disabilities will be placed in ‘needs’ or ‘integrated’ classes, whether they are enrolled in bilingual or private Arabic schools. They must take an IQ test, and the decision will be based on the mental abilities and extent of educational and therapeutic support required.

Sources added that students with dual disabilities, especially those involving intellectual disabilities, may not meet the admission requirements of the Special Education Schools Administration, so their class type will be as follows:

■ If IQ is between 60-69: ‘Integrated’ class; if not accepted, then transferred to a vocational curriculum (‘needs’ class).

■ If IQ is below 60: ‘Needs’ class, with eligibility for a professional certificate accredited by the Ministry of Education and the Civil Service Commission (CSC).

Sources went on to say that those with Down Syndrome will be transferred to general education if IQ is 50 or higher. “If lower, the classification will follow the same procedure as moderate to severe intellectual disabilities,” sources disclosed.



From left: New Jersey Rep Josh Gottheimer; Newark Mayor Ras Baraka; Jersey City Mayor Steve Fulop; moderator NJ Spotlight News anchor Briana Vannozzi; moderator WNYC Morning Edition host Michael Hill; New Jersey Rep. Mikie Sherrill; and former state Senate President Steve Sweeney attend the New Jersey Democratic gubernatorial primary debate on May 12, in Newark, NJ. (AP)

Primary day in NJ gov’s race could offer hints on how voters feel about Trump

TRENTON, NJ, June 10, (AP): New Jersey voters on Tuesday will settle the Democratic and Republican primaries for governor in a contest that could send signals about how the public is responding to President Donald Trump’s agenda and how Democratic voters think their leaders should push back.

New Jersey is one of just two states with a race for governor this year - the other is Virginia - and the fact two-term Democratic Gov. Phil Murphy is term-limited has created fresh drama for the open seat.

There’s a six-way race on the Democratic side that features several seasoned political figures. Trump’s endorsement of former state lawmaker Jack Ciattarelli may have given him a boost on the Republican side, where he faces four primary challengers.

Polls are open from 6 a.m. until 8 p.m. Tuesday, but it’s not the only day of voting. Early in-person voting was held from June 3-8. Mail-in ballots were sent to voters beginning in April.

The contest hinges in part on New Jersey issues, including high property taxes and the soaring cost of living, but national politics are sure to figure in. Trump, who has long had a strong presence in New Jersey, waded into the race with his endorsement, attacking Democratic control of state gov-

ernment. Democrats are looking for a winning message and leadership after the sting of bitter losses in 2024.

“Because these are the first major elections since Donald Trump’s return to the White House, there’s a tremendous amount at stake simply through public perception,” said Ben Dworkin, director of the Rowan Institute for Public Policy & Citizenship.

For Democrats? “They’ll just get further in a hole if they don’t hold this seat,” he said.

For Republicans? They could win because New Jersey tends to be purple during gubernatorial years, Dworkin said, but that would be viewed as a tremendous victory for Trump.

The Democrats running are Mayors Ras Baraka of Newark and Steven Fulop of Jersey City; U.S. Reps. Josh Gottheimer and Mikie Sherrill; teachers union President Sean Spiller and former state Senate President Steve Sweeney. The Democratic campaign has been hard fought and pricey, with tens of millions spent in one of the country’s most expensive media markets.

On the Republican side, most of the candidates declared their support for the president’s agenda, pressing for a state-level version of the Trump administration’s Department of Government Ef-

iciency. They’ve also said they would end so-called sanctuary policies and, in a New Jersey-specific pitch, called for the end of the state’s 2020 law banning single-use plastic bags.

Also:

NASHVILLE, Tenn: The House Homeland Security Committee’s chairman, Republican Rep. Mark Green of Tennessee, announced Monday that he will retire from Congress once the House votes again on the sprawling tax and budget policy bill backed by President Donald Trump.

In a statement, Green said he was offered a private sector opportunity that was “that was too exciting to pass up” so he informed House Speaker Mike Johnson on Monday of his retirement plans. The move comes more than a year after Green announced he wouldn’t run again in 2024, but changed his mind when fellow Republicans implored him to stick around.

Green’s next election would have been in 2026.

Green voted for Trump’s sweeping legislation when it passed the House last month. The bill is now in the Senate’s hands, and would need to return to the House for agreement on any changes. Trump wants the bill on his desk for his signature by July 4.

Deployments reckless and ‘disrespectful to our troops’: Newsom

US President Trump sends Marines and more National Guard members to Los Angeles

LOS ANGELES, June 10, (AP): Another 2,000 National Guard troops along with 700 Marines were headed to Los Angeles on orders from President Donald Trump, escalating a military presence local officials and Gov Gavin Newsom don’t want and the police chief says creates logistical challenges for safely handling protests.

An initial 2,000 Guard troops ordered by Trump started arriving Sunday, which saw the most violence during three days of protests driven by anger over Trump’s stepped-up enforcement of immigration laws that critics say are breaking apart migrant families.

Monday’s demonstrations were far less raucous, with thousands peacefully attending a rally at City Hall and hundreds protesting outside a federal complex that includes a detention center where some immigrants are being held following workplace raids across the city.

Trump has described Los Angeles in dire terms that Mayor Karen Bass and Newsom say are nowhere close to the truth. They say he is putting public safety at risk by adding military personnel even though police say they don’t need the help.

Los Angeles Police Chief Jim McDonnell said in a statement he was confident in the police department’s

ability to handle large-scale demonstrations and that the Marines’ arrival without coordinating with the police department would present a “significant logistical and operational challenge” for them.

Newsom called the deployments reckless and “disrespectful to our troops” in a post on the social platform X.

“This isn’t about public safety,” Newsom said. “It’s about stroking a dangerous President’s ego.”

The protests began Friday after federal immigration authorities arrested more than 40 people across the city. The smell of smoke hung in the air downtown Monday, one day after crowds blocked a major freeway and set self-driving cars on fire as police responded with tear gas, rubber bullets and flash-bang grenades.

Additional protests against immigration raids continued into the evening Monday in several other cities including San Francisco and Santa Ana, California, and Dallas and Austin, Texas.

California Attorney General Rob Bonta filed a lawsuit over the use of National Guard troops following the first deployment, telling reporters that Trump had “trampled” the state’s sovereignty.

“We don’t take lightly to the presi-



Police use pepper spray as they move protesters away from a van leaving the Federal Building in Santa Ana, Calif, on June 9. (AP)

dent abusing his authority and unlawfully mobilizing California National Guard troops,” Bonta said. He sought a court order declaring Trump’s use of the Guard unlawful and asking for a restraining order to halt the deployment.

Trump said the city would have been “completely obliterated” if he had not deployed the Guard.

US officials said the Marines were

being deployed to protect federal property and personnel, including immigration agents. A convoy of 10 to 15 buses with blacked-out windows and escorted by sheriff’s vehicles, left the base at Twentynine Palms in the desert east of Los Angeles late Monday and headed toward the city, stopping around 1 a.m. at Naval Weapons Station Seal Beach, around 20 miles (35 kilometers) south

of downtown Los Angeles.

Despite their presence, there has been limited engagement so far between the Guard and protesters while local law enforcement implements crowd control.

On Monday, thousands flooded the streets around City Hall for a union rally ahead of a hearing for arrested labor leader David Huerta, who was freed a few hours later on a \$50,000 bond. Huerta’s arrest Friday while protesting immigration raids has become a rallying cry for people angry over the administration’s crackdown. He is the president of the Service Employees International Union California, which represents thousands of the state’s janitors, security officers and other workers.

Early protests had a calm and even joyful atmosphere at times, with people dancing to live music and buoyed by Huerta’s release.

Protesters linked hands in front of a line of police officers outside the downtown federal detention center where Huerta was being held. Religious leaders joined the protesters, working with organizers at times to de-escalate moments of tension.

There was a heavy law enforcement presence in the few square blocks including the federal detention facility, while most in the immense city of

some 4 million people went about their normal business on peaceful streets.

As the crowd thinned, police began pushing protesters away from the area, firing crowd-control munitions as people chanted, “Peaceful protest.” Officers became more aggressive in their tactics in the evening, occasionally surging forward to arrest protesters that got too close. At least a dozen people remaining in the busy Little Tokyo neighborhood were surrounded by police and detained.

Other protests took shape Monday across LA County. Outside a clothing warehouse, relatives of detained workers demanded at a news conference that their loved ones be released.

The family of Jacob Vasquez, 35, who was detained Friday at the warehouse, where he worked, said they had yet to receive any information about him.

“Jacob is a family man and the sole breadwinner of his household,” Vasquez’s brother, Gabriel, told the crowd. He asked that his last name not be used, fearing being targeted by authorities.

Several dozen people were arrested throughout the weekend protests. Authorities say one was detained Sunday for throwing a Molotov cocktail at police and another for ramming a motorcycle into a line of officers.



Smoke covers the sky above the city following Russia’s massive missile and drone attack in Kyiv, Ukraine on June 10. (AP)

Russia’s large-scale drone and missile attack on Ukraine kills 3

Russia sent waves of drones and missiles in an attack on two Ukrainian cities early Tuesday that killed three people and wounded at least thirteen others, Ukrainian officials said.

The attack struck the capital, Kyiv, and the southern port city of Odesa. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy in an online statement called the attack on Kyiv “one of the

biggest” in the war that has raged for over three years, and said that Moscow’s forces had fired over 315 drones, mostly Shaheds, and seven missiles at Ukraine overnight.

“Russian missile and Shahed strikes are louder than the efforts of the United States and others around the world to force Russia into peace,” Zelenskyy wrote, urging “concrete action” from the U.S.

and Europe in response to the attack.

A maternity hospital and residential buildings in the center of the southern port city of Odesa were damaged in the attack, regional head Oleh Kiper said. Two people were killed and nine injured in the city, according to a statement from the regional prosecutor’s office. (AP)

Suspected gunman dead 10 killed in Austria school shooting

VIENNA, June 10, (Agencies): At least 10 people were killed in a school shooting in Austria’s second-largest city of Graz, local media reported on Tuesday.

The incident also caused a double-digit number of serious injuries, including students and teachers, local media cited the police as saying.

According to Austria’s largest newspaper, the Kronen Zeitung, the shooting occurred at the school of BORG in Dreierschützengasse in the Lend district shortly before 10 a.m. (0800 GMT) on Tuesday. Police confirmed the suspected perpetrator as a 22-year-old shooter, who used to be a student at BORG, but he is reported to have shot himself.

The school shooting on Tuesday is considered one of the most serious shootings in the history of Austria, the Kronen Zeitung added.

Police have been mobilized in the region, with a helicopter deployed. The school has been evacuated, and further danger is excluded, local police stated on the social media platform X.

As the capital city of the southern Austrian province of Styria, Graz is known as a college and university city, with four colleges and four universities. Mayor Elke Kahr described the



Rescue service personnel attend the scene of a shooting at a school in Graz, Austria on June 10. (AP)

events as a “terrible tragedy,” the Austria Press Agency reported. It added that the fatalities were seven students and one adult. Kahr said that many people were taken to hospitals with injuries.

Police said they believe the assailant acted alone.

Special forces were among those

sent to the BORG Dreierschützengasse high school, about a kilometer (over half a mile) from Graz’s historic center, police wrote on social network X that the school had been evacuated and everyone had been taken to a safe meeting point. They wrote that the situation was “secured” and there is no longer believed to be any danger.

British government reverses policy that limited home heating subsidies for retirees

LONDON, June 10, (AP): The British government on Monday reversed its unpopular plan to end winter home heating subsidies for millions of retirees.

British Prime Minister Keir Starmer had signaled the u-turn last month after a loud outcry from the public and some members of his Labour Party who thought the relatively modest 1.5 billion-pound (\$2 billion) savings were too politically costly.

Treasury chief Rachel Reeves, who canceled the payment for home heating on all but the poorest retirees after Labour came to power last summer, said the benefit would be restored to 9 million people, or three-quarters of pensioners, in England and Wales whose incomes are below 35,000 pounds (\$47,500). Reeves said the move was necessary last year because the previous Conservative government had left public finances in a dire state.

“Targeting winter fuel payments



Britain’s Prime Minister Keir Starmer gestures as he talks to students at Suffolk New College, Ipswich, England on June 10. (AP)

was a tough decision, but the right decision because of the inheritance we had been left by the previous government,” Reeves said. “It is also right

that we continue to means-test this payment so that it is targeted and fair, rather than restoring eligibility to everyone including the wealthiest.”

Europe

Ex-Kosovo independence leader Bukoshi dies:

Bujar Bukoshi, a former Kosovo independence leader who for years headed a self-proclaimed government-in-exile, died early Tuesday morning after a long illness, his family said. He was 78.

He died in Germany, where he was being treated for cancer and receiving financial support from the Albanian government, according to his family.

Kosovo’s President Vjosa Osmani expressed deep regret for the loss of “a visionary physician and a statesman of unparalleled dedication.”

“Dr. Bukoshi, former Prime Minister in Exile, will forever be remembered for his contributions to strengthening the cause of a free and independent Kosovo in the most difficult times for our people,” she wrote in a letter of condolence to his family. (AP)



Bukoshi

Czech prez appoints new justice minister: Czech President Petr Pavel swore in a new justice minister on Tuesday, another step in a political crisis caused by a bitcoin-related scandal.

Pavel appointed Eva Decroix after her predecessor Pavel Blažek resigned from the post on May 30. He was under fire from the opposition because his ministry accepted a donation of bitcoins and sold them for almost 1 billion Czech koruna (\$46 million) earlier this year.

Blažek said that he wasn’t aware of any wrongdoing, but didn’t want the four-party coalition government led by Prime Minister Petr Fiala to be harmed by the scandal. Fiala said that he appreciated his resignation and believed that Blažek acted with goodwill.

Blažek was a close ally of Fiala in the government and also in his conservative Civic Democratic Party. The new minister is from the same party. (AP)

Student kills school employee: A French middle school employee was stabbed to death by a teenage student during a bag check Tuesday at their school in eastern France, the national gendarme service said. The student was detained.

A police officer helping with the bag checks was slightly injured during the arrest by the student, using the same knife he used against the school employee, the gendarme service said. The attack at the Francoise Dolto School in Nogent, north of the Burgundy city of Dijon, was being investigated.

“While she was looking after our children in Nogent, an educational assistant lost her life, a victim of senseless violence,” French President Emmanuel Macron said in a post on X. “The nation is in mourning and the government mobilized to bring crime down.” (AP)

Chinese defense minister meets with South African military chief

China’s Xi underlines bilateral cooperation, multilateral coordination with S.Korea

BEIJING, June 10, (Agencies): Chinese President Xi Jinping underlined Tuesday strengthening bilateral cooperation and multilateral coordination between Beijing and Seoul, to jointly safeguard multilateralism and free trade, and ensure stable and smooth global and regional industrial and supply chains

Chinese News Agency (Xinhua) reported that Xi made these remarks during a telephone conversation with newly elected South Korean President Lee Jae-myung.

He stated that China and South Korea should lift their strategic cooperative partnership to a higher level, to deliver more benefits to the two nations and bring greater certainty to the turbulent regional and international landscapes.

Since the establishment of diplomatic ties 33 years ago, the two countries have transcended differences in ideology and social systems, and actively advanced exchanges and cooperation across various fields, contributing to each other’s success and achieving common development, he said.

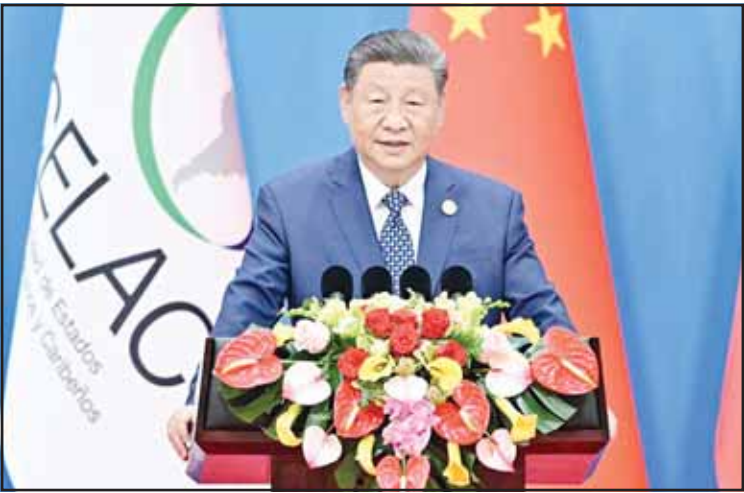
President Xi extended his congratulations to Lee on his election as the South Korean president, indicating that Chinese-South Korean relations remain stable conforming to the trends of time, serving the fundamental interests of the two nations as well as contributing to regional and global peace, stability, development and prosperity.

China and South Korea should stay committed to the original aspiration of establishing their diplomatic ties, uphold good-neighborliness and friendship, and strive for mutual benefit and win-win outcomes, Xi said.

The two sides, he said, should enhance exchanges at various levels and across various areas to increase strategic mutual trust.

They should respect each other’s core interests and major concerns and keep bilateral relations on the right track to ensure the sound and steady growth of China-South Korea relations, he added.

Lee, for his part, stressed the close geographical proximity, longstanding exchanges, and close economic, trade, and cultural connections between



Chinese President Xi Jinping attends the opening ceremony of the fourth ministerial meeting of the China-CELAC (the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States) Forum and delivers a keynote speech at the China National Convention Center in Beijing, capital of China, May 1. (Xinhua)

South Korea and China.

He expressed that he attaches great importance to South Korea-China relations, and is ready to work with China to deepen their good-neighborly and friendly relations, enhance mutual goodwill between the two peoples and achieve more results in bilateral cooperation.

Also:

BEIJING: Chinese Defense Minister **Dong Jun** met with **Rudzani Maphwanya**, chief of the South African National Defense Force (SANDF), in Beijing on Tuesday. During the meeting, Dong praised the enduring friendship between the two countries and the special bilateral ties that have deepened amid global changes. Dong emphasized China’s readiness to work with South Africa in practicing true multilateralism, opposing hegemony and bullying, standing against power politics, and rejecting division and confrontation. He also called for greater efforts to expand bilateral military cooperation. Maphwanya expressed appreciation for the Chinese military’s long-standing support for the SANDF. He pledged to work with the Chinese side to advance practical cooperation in areas such as joint exercises and training, military education, personnel development, and maritime security.

□ □ □

HAIKOU: China’s southernmost island province of Hainan issued a Level IV typhoon alert at 11:30 a.m. on Tuesday, as a tropical depression has formed over the central South China Sea, and is expected to grow into this year’s first typhoon within the next 24 hours. It is expected to gradually move toward the eastern coast of Hainan and is likely to make landfall in the area around Friday, according to the provincial meteorological bureau. In preparation, the maritime authority of Sansha, China’s southernmost city, has also issued a warning of strong convective weather for parts of the waters around Xisha Qundao.

Since Monday, large vessels such as cargo ships and engineering vessels have been evacuated from the waters off Xisha Qundao. Smaller boats have been hoisted ashore, and professional rescue ships are on standby. China has a four-tier flood-control emergency response system, with Level I being the highest level.

Asia

Malaysian PM wins reprieve in civil suit: Malaysian Prime Minister **Anwar Ibrahim** on Tuesday won a reprieve in a civil suit accusing him of sexual misconduct, after a court approved his bid to temporarily suspend the trial due to start next week.

The suit was filed in 2021 by his former research assistant, Muhammed Yusoff Rawther. Yusoff, 32, alleged that Anwar harassed him in 2018 - before Anwar became premier, in November 2022. Anwar, 77, denies any wrongdoing and accuses Yusoff of fabricating the charge to ruin his political career.

The case gained attention after Anwar sought immunity from prosecution, sparking criticism from the opposition and others. The High Court dismissed his application last week, saying everyone is equal before the law. Anwar has turned to the nation’s top court, which will hear his case on July 21.

The Court of Appeal on Tuesday approved Anwar’s bid for a temporary stay to the trial that was due to start June 16, pending next month’s hearing in the Federal Court.

Anwar wants the Federal Court to rule on several legal questions including whether a sitting prime minister has immunity from lawsuits stemming from alleged private events before his appointment. His lawyers claimed the legal action could impair his ability to govern and risk destabilizing the government.

The case could undermine Anwar, who heads a unity government comprised of rival factions. He has denied seeking personal immunity or trying to escape legal scrutiny.

“It concerns the integrity of our constitutional system and the need to ensure that high public office is protected from litigation that may be strategically timed, politically motivated or institutionally disruptive,” he wrote on Facebook last week. (AP)



Anwar

New Zealanders relocating to South: New Zealand’s population remains highly mobile, with 2.2 million people -- nearly half of the national population -- changing address between 2018 and 2023, according to a new census from the statistics department Stats NZ on Tuesday.

The proportion of movers, at 45.2 percent, is consistent

with the previous five-year period, highlighting a sustained trend of internal migration, Stats NZ said.

Most relocations, about 77 percent, occurred within the same region, while 16.6 percent involved moves to different regions on the same island, it said, adding one in ten New Zealanders now lives in a different region than they did five years ago.

Inter-island migration patterns show a clear southward drift. At least 4 percent of each South Island region’s 2023 population previously lived in the North Island, Stats NZ said, adding South Island’s Otago leads with 9.9 percent of its residents having relocated from the North Island since 2018.

In contrast, most North Island regions saw less than 2 percent of their 2023 population arrive from the South Island, with the capital Wellington the only exception at 2.6 percent, statistics show.

“Housing affordability and study opportunities are likely to be strong factors for drawing so many people to Canterbury and Otago (in the South Island) from the North Island,” said Stats NZ spokesperson Rosemary Goodyear.

Rising house prices and increased remote work have fueled movement from major New Zealand cities to nearby districts, Goodyear said, adding the largest city Auckland continues to lose residents to internal migration, but international arrivals and births offset these losses. (Xinhua)

Tough talk drags on in border standoff: Cambodia’s defense ministry on Monday said that the country’s troops haven’t withdrawn from a patch of land whose ownership is hotly disputed by neighboring Thailand, but the declaration also echoed recent statements by both sides seeking a peaceful resolution to their competing border claims.

Cambodian and Thai authorities engaged in saber-rattling last week, after an armed confrontation at the border on May 28 left one Cambodian soldier dead. The incident, which each side blamed on the other, reportedly took place in a relatively small “no man’s land” constituting territory along their border that both countries claim is theirs.

A declaration by the Cambodian defense ministry on Monday had “No Withdrawal of Troops” as its first principle. It said that “Cambodian forces have not been withdrawn from any areas under Cambodian sovereignty where they have been stationed for an extended period.” The wording left unclear exactly which positions had been occupied for “an extended period.” His statement also reaffirmed Cambodia’s territorial claims covering not only the spot near Morakot village in Cambodia’s northwestern province of Preah Vihear where the soldier was killed, but also three other pieces of disputed land. (AP)

United Nations warns of instability and growing humanitarian needs in central Africa

NEW YORK, June 10, (Agencies): Despite its wealth of natural resources and potential, Central Africa continues to face serious challenges, from political instability to growing humanitarian needs, warned UN Head of the Regional Office for Central Africa (UNOCA) Abdou Abarry on Monday.

With violence worsening in both the Lake Chad Basin and the Great Lakes, the Security Council met on Monday to examine the threats confronting the wider region.

“Central Africa remains rich in potential, but the challenges are still significant,” Abarry added.

While countries such as Chad and Gabon have made progress in terms of political development, newly elected authorities must capitalize on this momentum to implement key democratic reforms, said Abarry.

In Chad and Gabon, recent elections and reforms have promoted greater participation of women in the democratic process.

Today, women represent 34 percent of Chad’s National Assembly, while Gabon’s new electoral code mandates that women must account for at least 30 per cent of electoral lists provided to voters.

In recent months, online disinformation and hate speech have been on the rise in Cameroon, said Abarry.

UNOCA reported that 65 percent of political content shared on social media between January and April this year was either false or previously manipulated. At the same time, Cameroon has seen a surge in intercommunal violence in the southern and central regions of the country.



This undated photograph handed out by the French military shows three Russian mercenaries, right, in northern Mali. (AP)

This trend underscores the importance of UNOCA’s work in supporting development strategies aimed at preventing conflict related to electoral processes.

Also:

DAKAR, Senegal: Even as it pounds **Ukraine, Russia** is expanding its military footprint in Africa, delivering sophisticated weaponry to sub-Saharan conflict zones where a Kremlin-controlled armed force is on the rise. Skirting sanctions imposed by Western nations, Moscow is using cargo ships to send tanks, armored vehicles, artillery and other high-value equipment to **West Africa**, The Associated Press has found.

Relying on satellite imagery and radio signals, AP tracked a convoy of Russian-flagged cargo ships as they

made a nearly one-month journey from the Baltic Sea. The ships carried howitzers, radio jamming equipment and other military hardware, according to military officials in **Europe** who closely monitored them. The deliveries could strengthen Russia’s fledgling Africa Corps as **Moscow** competes with the United States, Europe and China for greater influence across the continent.

The two-year-old Africa Corps, which has links to a covert branch of Russia’s army, is ascendant at a time when **US** and European troops have been withdrawing from the region, forced out by sub-Saharan nations turning to Russia for security.

Mali, Burkina Faso and Niger have been battling fighters linked with al-Qaida and the Islamic State group for more than a decade.



Britain’s King Charles, (right), and Samoan Prime Minister Afioga Fiamē Naomi Mata’afa, (left), talk during the opening ceremony for the Commonwealth Heads of Government meeting in Apia, Samoa on Oct 25, 2024. (AP)

Samoa to hold snap election on Aug 29

NEWCASTLE, Australia, June 10, (AP): Samoa will head to the polls on Aug. 29, a half-year earlier than expected, after Prime Minister Fiamē Naomi Mata’afa’s government collapsed following a budget defeat in parliament late last month.

Fiamē, who became the South Pacific island nation’s first female prime minister in 2021 and ended four decades of Human Rights Protection Party rule, now faces a three-way political battle that has ramifications far beyond Samoa.

The snap election comes at a time of heightened geopolitical interest in the South Pacific, with Samoa viewed as a strategic player in the growing contest for regional influence between China and traditional partners like Australia and the United States.

Police kill 4 gunmen

Mexico prez open to meeting Trump at G7

MEXICO CITY, June 10, (Agencies): Mexican President Claudia Sheinbaum confirmed Monday she will attend the Group of Seven (G7) summit in Canada and expects a meeting with her US counterpart Donald Trump.

At a daily press conference, Sheinbaum said Secretary of Foreign Affairs Juan Ramon de la Fuente is finalizing her bilateral meeting agenda with participating leaders. “I have decided I am going to the G7,” said Sheinbaum, adding that “it is very likely” she will meet with Trump, their first meeting since she took office. Though the two leaders have yet to meet in person, they have held six phone calls to address the bilateral relationship amid tensions over tariffs, crime and immigration.

Before the summit, Sheinbaum will meet with U.S. Deputy Secretary of State Christopher Landau on Wednesday to discuss bilateral ties and US. Secretary of State Marco Rubio’s upcoming visit to Mexico.

Also:

TAPACHULA, Mexico: Mexican state police killed four gunmen near the border with **Guatemala**, then pursued more suspects into that country in three armored police



Image provided by the Mexico’s Presidency shows Mexican President Claudia Sheinbaum during her morning press conference at the National Palace in Mexico City, capital of Mexico, on Jan 21. (Xinhua)

vehicles, where they engaged in a shootout in the streets of a border town. Authorities in both countries said Monday they were investigating.

The rare case of Mexican law enforcement crossing the border into Guatemala on Sunday in La Mesilla

was captured by onlookers in videos widely circulated online. With the border crossing a short distance in the background, armed men in ballistic vests and carrying rifles can be seen shouting at the open driver side door of a Chiapas state police armored vehicle.

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MEXICO CITY: Tropical Storm Barbara gradually weakened Tuesday as it continued heading northwest away from land after earlier strengthening to a hurricane. The storm marked the first hurricane of the eastern Pacific hurricane season.

The U.S. National Hurricane Center in Miami said swells generated by the storm system will affect portions of the coast of southwestern and west-central Mexico, as well as the southernmost portions of Baja California, on Tuesday. Those swells are likely to cause life-threatening surf and rip current conditions.

Hurricane Barbara was located about 180 miles (290 kilometers) west-southwest of Cabo Corrientes, Mexico. It strengthened into a hurricane on Monday, but its maximum sustained winds had since decreased to about 60 mph (95 kph).

Lat/Am

Bolivian ex-prez Morales under investigation: Bolivian legal authority opened an investigation of former President **Evo Morales** on Monday on alleged electoral sabotage in connection to ongoing protests demanding that he be allowed to run for reelection. Attorney General Roger Mariaca told a press conference Monday that the Public Prosecutor’s Office has decided to address a complaint filed by the Justice Ministry against Morales for certain criminal offenses.

The complaint accuses Morales of “terrorism,” obstructing the electoral process, disobeying constitutional resolutions, disrupting public services, and destroying state property, among other crimes, linked to road blockades that paralyzed key regions of the country last week.

The government said it has evidence showing that the former president ordered his supporters to “encircle towns” after electoral authorities rejected his bid to run for a fourth term in the general elections on Aug. 17. Since last week, roadblocks put up at some 20 critical transportation points across the country have been concentrated mainly in Cochabamba department. Clashes and shortages of supplies have been



Morales

reported in the affected areas.

The prosecutor said the roadblocks violate fundamental rights and endanger the lives of Bolivians. The Public Prosecutor’s Office has ordered the tactical withdrawal of its prosecutors to safer areas within that region, as they continue to operate in coordination with the police. (Xinhua)

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‘Sen barely responded to medical intervention’: Miguel Uribe, a conservative Colombian presidential hopeful, was in critical condition on Monday after being shot in the head from close range during a rally over the weekend.

In a statement, doctors said the 39-year-old senator had “barely” responded to medical interventions that included brain surgery following the assassination attempt that has had a chilling effect on the South American nation.

Uribe was shot on Saturday as he addressed a small crowd of people who had gathered in a park in Bogotá’s Modelia neighborhood.

On Sunday hundreds of people gathered outside the hospital where Uribe is being treated to pray for his recovery. Some carried rosaries in their hands, while others chanted slogans against President Gustavo Petro.

“This is terrible,” said Walter Jimenez, a lawyer who showed up outside the hospital with a sign calling for Petro’s removal. “It feels like we are going back to the 1990’s,” he said, referring to a decade during which drug cartels and rebel groups murdered judges, presidential candidates and journalists with impunity. (AP)

Kuwaiti oil price up USD 1.36 to USD 66.35 per barrel

KUWAIT CITY, June 10, (KUNA): The price of Kuwaiti oil rose by USD 1.36 to reach USD 66.35 per barrel Monday, compared to Friday's USD 64.99 pb, according to Kuwait Petro-

leum Corporation (KPC). In global markets, Brent Crude increased by 57 cents to USD 67.04 as West Texas Intermediate rose 71 cents to USD 65.29.

Business

Event focuses on sustainability and environmental awareness

Zain sponsors successful Environment Day event with National Geographic Ultimate Explorer at Assima Mall

KUWAIT CITY, June 10: Zain recently sponsored a successful Environment Day event in collaboration with National Geographic Ultimate Explorer, held on June 5th, 6th, and 7th at the ground floor of Assima Mall.

The event focused on sustainability and environmental awareness, offering families and children a variety of interactive and educational activities. From recycling workshops to engaging games, visitors enjoyed hands-on experiences that emphasized the importance of protecting our environment.

Mr. Hamad Al-Musaibeh, Corporate Relations Department Manager at Zain Kuwait, commented:

“Zain places great importance on environmental and sustainability causes. Our support for this event stems from our commitment to raising awareness within the community, especially among children. Partnering with National Geographic Ultimate Explorer allowed us to deliver an inspiring experience that plants the seeds of sustainability thinking in the next generation.”

Ms. Maryann Bagnakeh, Marketing Manager of National Geographic Ultimate Explorer, added:

“We believe that educating children through purposeful play is one of the most effective ways to build environmental awareness. This collaboration with Zain brought that vision to life and reflected our shared values of responsibility, learning, and fun.”

This collaboration reflected Zain's ongoing commitment to corporate social responsibility and environmental sustainability. National Geographic Ultimate Explorer brought its unique educational approach to life, engaging little minds in a fun and meaningful way.

The event attracted a large turnout, showcasing the community's strong interest in eco-friendly initiatives and environmental engagement.

National Geographic Ultimate Explorer is a Family Entertainment Center that offers visitors amazing interactive experiences that simulate the world around them, from the depths of the ocean to the outermost space. The center aims to inspire children from 5 -14 years old and their families to explore through edutainment activities that include innovative and modern games.



Zain and National Geographic Ultimate Explorer officials during the event.



A rich and engaging experience that instilled environmental values and sustainable practices in children.



The turnout reflected the community's growing interest in environmental issues.

In partnership with National Geographic Ultimate Explorer

Zain inspires young minds with hands-on sustainability experience

KUWAIT CITY, June 10: In celebration of World Environment Day, observed annually on June 5, Zain hosted an interactive educational experience at Assima Mall in collaboration with National Geographic Ultimate Explorer. The initiative came as part of the company's strategic efforts to promote environmental sustainability awareness within the community, particularly among younger generations.

The event offered a rich and enjoyable experience, featuring a variety of innovative activities that combined learning and fun. These included an art workshop using recycled materials, a tree planting corner where children decorated eco-friendly plant pots, a dedicated space for

environmental quizzes about nature and wildlife, and a photo zone to capture memories and encourage social media sharing.

Through this activation, Zain aimed to instill environmental values and sustainable practices in children from an early age by engaging them in interactive activities that stimulate creativity and personal responsibility toward the environment. These goals were reflected in the collaboration with National Geographic Ultimate Explorer, a leading global brand known for delivering educational content through engaging and entertaining formats that captivate young minds.

The event witnessed a strong turnout from children and fami-

lies, reflecting the community's growing interest in environmental causes and reinforcing the importance of continuing such awareness initiatives to help raise a more environmentally conscious generation.

This step falls under Zain's broader corporate sustainability strategy, which reflects its deep commitment to fostering environmental awareness across all segments of society, from children to the company's operational ecosystem. It also aligns with the company's long-term vision of achieving net-zero emissions by 2050 and contributing meaningfully to sustainable development both within Kuwait and across the region.

Boursa Kuwait ends session on positive note

General index climbs 57.36 points

KUWAIT CITY, June 10, (KUNA): Boursa Kuwait ended Tuesday's session on a positive note, with the general index climbing 57.36 points, or 0.70 percent, to close at 8,216.99. Trading activity was robust, as 369.9 million shares changed hands through 21,325 transactions, generating a total value of KD 101.9 million (approximately \$311.8 million).

The Premier Market Index led the gains, advancing 70.37

points, or 0.79 percent, to finish at 8,924.60. Trading volume on the Premier Market reached 222.5 million shares across 12,829 transactions, with a turnover of KD 84.5 million (about \$258.5 million).

Meanwhile, the Main Market Index edged up by 16.50 points, or 0.24 percent, settling at 7,007.87. Investors traded 147.4 million shares in 8,496 deals, with a total value of KD 17.4 million (roughly \$53.2 million).

The Main 50 Index also posted gains, rising 14.72 points, or 0.20 percent, to close at 7,196.18. A total of 128.2 million shares were traded through 5,931 transactions, amounting to KD 13.8 million (\$42.2 million).

Bank helps parents choose schools and nurseries

Warba Bank announces strategic partnership with 'Ruba' platform

KUWAIT CITY, June 10: In line with its commitment to supporting innovation and purposeful initiatives launched by national talents that benefit society, Warba Bank has announced a strategic partnership with "Ruba," a Kuwait-based digital platform dedicated to helping parents choose the right schools and nurseries for their children. The platform also offers the option of flexible payment solutions by connecting parents to financing institutions that provide services compliant with Islamic Sharia.

This partnership reflects Warba Bank's dedication to empowering the community by offering smart banking solutions tailored to the needs of specific segments such as parents. The "Ruba" platform allows users to easily browse and compare educational institutions, while offering integration with financial institutions like Warba Bank that provide Sharia-compliant flexible payment options.

Commenting on the partnership, Chief Digital Officer at Warba Bank, Nasser Maher Al-Mutawa, said: "We are proud to start this collaboration with Ruba, which aligns with our mission to deliver banking solutions that meet our customers' needs throughout all stages of life. We believe that facilitating access to better education is a key pillar of genuine community empowerment, and we are honored to be partners in supporting Kuwaiti families."

Al-Mutawa added that this collaboration showcases Warba Bank's commitment to supporting Kuwaiti startups. He emphasized that the bank continues to provide Sharia-compliant financial services that align with the aspirations of the Kuwaiti community, while contributing to a more prosperous future driven by innovation, strategic partnerships and a strong commitment to sustainable development, all in line with its motto: "Let's Own Tomorrow."

Warba Bank continues to play an active role in supporting startups and



Officials pose for a group photo after the launch.

innovative projects in Kuwait, prioritizing local solutions that offer real value to the community. In recent years, the bank has launched several initiatives and partnerships aimed at empowering entrepreneurs and creating a nurturing environment for their growth, anchored in the bank's vision of being the community's trusted financial partner.

On his part, Chief Executive Officer of Ruba, Ameen Ali Nadoom, highlighted the importance of this strategic partnership, stating: "Ruba represents a promising model that combines technology with community responsibility. We connect parents with educational institutions and offer tools to help them secure better educational opportunities for their children, and therefore benefiting society as a whole. Our partnership with Warba Bank is a major step forward in expanding our impact and delivering on our vision."

This latest step is part of Warba Bank's broader approach to investing in high-impact initiatives that enhance customer quality of life, particularly in key areas such as education, healthcare, and entrepreneurship. The bank believes that enabling

parents to make better educational choices and easing financial burdens contributes to family stability and strengthens the educational infrastructure in Kuwait.

Building a Better Tomorrow

Guided by its slogan "Let's Own Tomorrow," Warba Bank is committed to setting new standards for the future of Islamic banking, redefining the customer experience and building a sustainable, inclusive financial system. As one of the fastest-growing Islamic banks in Kuwait, Warba Bank remains anchored in excellence, innovation and sustainability, cementing its reputation as a trusted partner for individuals and businesses alike.

Warba Bank has achieved significant success in a short period, holding a leading position in Islamic digital banking. It also ranks among the local banks with the largest shareholder base, which strengthens its closeness to all segments of society. This success reinforces its reputation as a reliable financial partner combining innovation with social responsibility in delivering top-tier financial services and products.

Signs of thawing relations

Lebanon aims to lure back wealthy Gulf tourists to jump-start war-torn economy

BEIRUT, June 10, (AP): Fireworks lit up the night sky over Beirut's famous St. Georges Hotel as hit songs from the 1960s and 70s filled the air in a courtyard overlooking the Mediterranean Sea.

The retro-themed event was hosted last month by Lebanon's Tourism Ministry to promote the upcoming summer season and perhaps recapture some of the good vibes from an era viewed as a golden one for the country. In the years before a civil war began in 1975, Lebanon was the go-to destination for wealthy tourists from neighboring Gulf countries seeking beaches in summer, snow-capped mountains in winter and urban nightlife year-round.

In the decade after the war, tourists from Gulf countries - and crucially, Saudi Arabia - came back, and so did Lebanon's economy. But by the early 2000s, as the Iran-backed militant group Hezbollah gained power, Lebanon's relations with Gulf countries began to sour. Tourism gradually dried up, starving its economy of billions of dollars in annual spending.

Now, after last year's bruising war with Israel, Hezbollah is much weaker and Lebanon's new political leaders sense an opportunity to revitalize the economy once again with help from wealthy neighbors. They aim to disarm Hezbollah and rekindle ties with Saudi Arabia and other Gulf countries, which in recent years have prohibited their citizens from visiting Lebanon or importing its products.

"Tourism is a big catalyst, and so it's very important that the bans get lifted," said Laura Khazen Lahoud, the country's tourism minister.

On the highway leading to the Beirut airport, once-ubiquitous banners touting Hezbollah's leadership have been replaced with commercial billboards and posters that read



Fireworks light up the sky at an event launching the country's tourism season at the St. Georges Hotel in Beirut, Lebanon. (AP)

"a new era for Lebanon." In the center of Beirut, and especially in neighborhoods that hope to attract tourists, political posters are coming down, and police and army patrols are on the rise.

There are signs of thawing relations with some Gulf neighbors. The United Arab Emirates and Kuwait have lifted yearslong travel bans.

All eyes are now on Saudi Arabia, a regional political and economic powerhouse, to see if it will follow suit, according to Lahoud and other Lebanese officials. A key sticking point is security, these officials say. Although a ceasefire with Israel has been in place since November, near-daily airstrikes have continued in southern and eastern Lebanon, where Hezbollah over the years had built its political base and powerful military arsenal.

As vital as tourism is - it accounted for almost 20% of Lebanon's economy before it tanked in 2019 - the country's leaders say it is just one piece of a larger puzzle they are trying to put back together.

Lebanon's agricultural and industrial sectors are in shambles, suffering a major blow in 2021, when Saudi Arabia banned their exports after accusing Hezbollah of smuggling drugs into Riyadh. Years of economic dysfunction have left the country's once-thriving middle class in a state of desperation.

The World Bank says poverty nearly tripled in Lebanon over the past decade, affecting close to half its population of nearly 6 million. To make matters worse, inflation is soaring, with the Lebanese pound losing 90% of its value, and many families lost their savings when banks collapsed.

Tourism is seen by Lebanon's leaders as the best way to kickstart the reconciliation needed with Gulf countries -- and only then can they move on to exports and other economic growth opportunities.

"It's the thing that makes most sense, because that's all Lebanon can sell now," said Sami Zoughaib, research manager at The Policy Initiative, a Beirut-based think tank.

Gold price drops to USD 3,310 per ounce

KUWAIT CITY, June 10, (KUNA): Gold prices declined to USD 3,310 per ounce last week affected by strong American labor market data, specialized economic report showed.

A report by Kuwaiti Dar Al-Sabak mentioned that the week started with a high of USD 3,403 an ounce, but gradually decreased due to lack of incentives profit making.

American jobs report for the month of May included the addition of 139,000 job, surpassing expectations of 125,000, with unemployment rates remaining at 4.2 percent, supporting strength of the dollar and increasing bond yields.

The report stated that trade talks

between the United States and China played a role in limiting gold's gains after the two presidents held a phone call that helped calm tensions, followed by the announcement of an upcoming trade meeting in the British capital, London.

It indicated that geopolitical tensions in other regions, such as the Russian-Ukrainian crisis and escalating events in the Middle East remain supportive factors for gold prices, in addition to the continuous intensified purchases the precious metal by central banks around the world, in a strategic shift away from dollar-denominated assets.

The report noted that global markets are awaiting the release of US

inflation data this week, starting with the Consumer Price Index on Wednesday, followed by the Producer Price Index on Thursday, followed by the University of Michigan's Consumer Confidence Survey on Friday.

It indicated that this kind of data is pivotal in determining the path of monetary policy by the US Federal Reserve ahead of its meeting scheduled for the 17th and 18th of this month.

Locally, the price of 24-karat gold reached KD 32,750 per gram (approx. USD 107), while the price of the 22-karat gram reached KD 30 (approx. USD 98) and the silver kilogram KD 407 (approx. USD 1,329).

Recognition by Global Private Banker

KFH wins ‘Best Islamic Private Bank – Digital Innovation’ award for 2025

KUWAIT CITY, June 10: Kuwait Finance House (KFH) has been awarded “Best Islamic Private Bank – Digital Innovation 2025” by Global Private Banker magazine.

This award recognizes KFH’s successful transformation of its private banking and wealth management services for wealthy and high-net-worth clients. The honor also reinforces KFH’s standing as Kuwait’s largest bank by market capitalization and the world’s second-largest Islamic bank.

Global Private Banker magazine recognized KFH for its excellence due to its innovative digital infrastructure, strong financial performance, high operational efficiency, significant investment growth, and effective overall strategy.

The selection criteria considered how private banking propositions are proactively leveraging emerging technologies to derive personalized recommendations and meet increasing client demand for unique and customized journeys.

The assessment process also investigated how the application of artificial intelligence and data analytics is being deployed at scale to ensure the delivery of bespoke strategic solutions for private banking and wealth management clientele.

Additionally, the award provider takes into account the development of various platforms to effectively offer banking services, expand into diverse markets, and adopt a prudent planning process to offer solutions aimed at preserving wealth across generations and ensuring its sustainable growth.

The magazine also assessed meeting clients’ expectations for instant portfolio updates, the development of digital platforms to more effectively serve clients in addition to including thematic investments that balance environmental, social and governance considerations alongside portfolio growth.

During the award ceremony held in Singapore, KFH General Manager



Hamad Mohammed Alghannam receiving the award.

Private Banking and Wealth Management, Hamad Mohammed Alghannam, said: “We are honored to receive this prestigious award, which reinforces our global leadership in the private banking and wealth management sector. It is a testament to the success of our ongoing efforts and our ability to unlock broad investment opportunities that align with the future aspirations of high-net-worth clients, helping them grow and sustain their wealth.”

Alghannam highlighted KFH’s presence in key markets across the Middle East, Asia, and Europe, with nearly 600 branches in 8 countries, most notably Kuwait, Bahrain, Turkey, Egypt, the UK, and Germany, “This presence gives clients a competitive edge. They benefit from a wide range of premium financial and wealth management services, including regional portfolio management, international equity

and real estate funds, Ijarah financing, trade finance, treasury and investment solutions, along with other investment solutions in the local and international markets,” he added, “These offerings are tailored to meet the clients’ lifestyles and long-term goals, while remaining responsive to global economic and market developments.”

He expressed his sincere appreciation to the Private Banking and Wealth Management team, noting that this recognition is the result of their dedication and hard work to deliver outstanding services that exceed client expectations.

The Global Private Banker magazine awards are recognized globally for their transparency and reliability. Winners are chosen based on their innovations, customer experience, financial performance, and organizational strategy.

Agreement signed

Google, Chile to deploy trans-Pacific sub cable

SANTIAGO, Chile, June 10, (AP): Google signed an agreement with Chile on Wednesday to deploy an undersea fiber optic cable connecting South America with Asia and Oceania, a first-of-its-kind project that aims to cement the South American country’s status as a major digital hub.

The Humboldt Cable, envisioned for deployment in 2027, is a 14,800-kilometer (9,200-mile) submarine data cable that will connect Chile’s coastal city of Valparaíso with Sydney, Australia through French Polynesia.

The initiative is being launched almost a decade after it was first proposed in 2016, and six years after the initial studies to determine its feasibility. “This is the first submarine cable in the South Pacific, so it’s an important commitment”, Chilean Transport Minister Juan Carlos Muñoz told journalists.

Chile, home to one of Google’s largest data centers in Latin America, is currently connected to the United States and the rest of the region via an undersea cable. This cable also provides Chile with a longer route to other continents.

Officials from both Google and the Chilean government hailed the project as critical infrastructure with potential to attract millions of dollars in investment from major tech companies, mining and banking firms in Chile and Australia.

“The idea of building this cable is that it can also be used not only by Google but also by other users, such as technology companies operating in Chile,” said Cristian Ramos, director of telecommunications infrastructure for Latin America at Alphabet, Google’s parent company.

Although Google did not disclose its total investment, Patricio Rey, general manager of local partner Desarrollo País, a state-owned infrastructure company, estimated the cable project’s value at \$300 million to \$550 million, with Chile contributing \$25 million.

The Humboldt Cable will establish Chile as a data gateway for the Asia-Pacific, while strengthening its relations with Asian nations, especially China, its largest trading partner. It also comes as demand for undersea cables surges due to increased reliance on cloud computing services.

The next stages involve installing the submarine cable, selecting and contracting a telecommunications operator, and constructing landing stations in Chile.

The initiative could heighten tensions as Chile finds itself caught in the middle of an intensifying rivalry between China and the Trump administration. Undersea cables have long been flash points in geopolitical disputes.

World Bank sharply downgrades global growth forecast to 2.3 pct

WASHINGTON, June 10, (AP): U.S. President Donald Trump’s trade wars are expected to slash economic growth this year in the United States and around the world, the World Bank forecast Tuesday.

Citing “a substantial rise in trade barriers” but without mentioning Trump by name, the 189-country lender predicted that the U.S. economy - the world’s largest - would grow half as fast (1.4%) this year as it did in 2024 (2.8%). That marked a downgrade from the 2.3% U.S. growth it had forecast back for 2025 back in January.

The bank also lopped 0.4 percentage points off its forecast for global growth this year. It now expects the world economy to expand just 2.3% in 2025, down from 2.8% in 2024.

In a forward to the latest version of the twice-yearly Global Economic Prospects report, World Bank chief economist Indermit Gill wrote that the global economy has missed its chance for the “soft landing” - slowing enough to tame inflation without generating serious pain - it appeared headed for just six months ago. “The world economy today is once more running into turbulence,” Gill wrote. “Without a swift course correction, the harm to living standards could be deep.”



An employee welds metal at a steel tank factory in Mexico City, Feb. 11, 2025. (AP)

America’s economic prospects have been clouded by Trump’s erratic and aggressive trade policies, including 10% taxes - tariffs - on imports from almost every country in the world. These levies drive up costs in the U.S. and invite retaliation from other countries.

The Chinese economy is forecast to see growth slow from 5% in 2024 to 4.5% this year and 4% next. The world’s second-largest economy has been hobbled by the tariffs that Trump has imposed on its exports, by the collapse of its real estate market and by an aging workforce.

The World Bank expects the 20 European countries that share the euro currency to collectively grow just 0.7% this year, down from an already lackluster 0.9% in 2024. Trump’s tariffs are expected to hurt European exports. And the unpredictable way he rolls them out - announcing them, suspending them, coming up with new ones - has created uncertainty that discourages business investment.

India is once again expected to be the world’s fastest-growing major economy, expanding at a 6.3% clip this year. But that’s down from 6.5% in 2024 and from the 6.7% the bank had forecast for 2025 in January. In Japan, economic growth is expected to accelerate this year - but only from 0.2% in 2024 to a sluggish 0.7% this year, well short of the 1.2% the World Bank had forecast in January.

Companies buy bitcoin for different reasons

Crypto’s hottest new trend: publicly traded companies buying bunches of bitcoin

WASHINGTON, June 10, (AP): It’s one of crypto’s hottest trends: publicly traded companies buying bitcoin and then buying even more.

President Donald Trump’s media company just announced a plan to raise \$2.5 billion to buy bitcoin, joining a growing number of so-called “bitcoin treasury companies” as the world’s most popular cryptocurrency hits all-time highs.

The companies buy bitcoin for different reasons: Some hold it as a hedge against inflation or to signal support for the cryptocurrency industry, while some firms have made using debt and stock sales to buy bitcoin their primary business strategy. “The world at large has no idea what’s happening and they’re in for a big shock,” Dylan LeClair, an executive at the Japan-based Metaplanet, which recently went from being a budget hotel firm to a bitcoin treasury company, said at a recent crypto conference. “This is a one-way train, nothing is going to stop this.”

The massive increases in some firms’ stock price may seem to validate LeClair’s bravado, but there are plenty of warnings that a downturn in bitcoin’s prices could lead to large selloffs. Here’s a look at bitcoin treasury companies by the numbers:

That’s how many bitcoins owned by MicroStrategy - the undisputed goliath of bitcoin treasury companies. With nearly 3% of the total bitcoin supply, MicroStrategy owns more bitcoins than every other bitcoin treasury company combined. It also owns more bitcoin than every nation state combined, according to the tracking site bitcointreasuries.net.

Now called Strategy, the software company first started buying bitcoin in 2020 with reserve cash. Now, its software business is a small part of a perpetual bitcoin-buying machine that uses a variety of strategies - like selling shares or issuing debt - to keep growing its bitcoin holdings.

That’s how much MicroStrategy’s stock price has increased in the last five years, compared to around 1,000% gain in bitcoin and the 1,500% jump for chipmaker and stock market darling Nvidia during that same period.

The company’s success has boosted the profile of MicroStrategy’s founder and chairman, Michael Saylor, who has visited Trump at Mar-a-Lago and the White House while becoming bitcoin’s enigmatic high priest.

“Bitcoin is a swarm of cyber hornets serving the goddess of wisdom, feeding on the fire of truth, exponentially growing ever smarter, faster, and stronger behind a wall of encrypted energy,” Saylor said in a social media post.

Saylor’s success has also spawned many imitators.

“It’s kind of shocking ... that it took someone four years after Michael Saylor started doing it to finally do it and pull the trigger and now it feels like everyone’s pulling the trigger,” said Eric Semler, the chairman of Semler Scientific, a healthcare company that started acquiring bitcoin last year.



Donald Trump speaks at the Bitcoin 2024 Conference on July 27, 2024, in Nashville, Tenn. (AP)

NEW YORK, June 10, (AP): World shares were mixed on Tuesday as investors kept a wary eye on China-U.S. trade talks that could have a huge impact on the global economy.

Germany’s DAX lost 0.7% to 24,006.38, while the CAC 40 in Paris shed 0.2% to 7,779.45. Britain’s FTSE 100 gained 0.3% to 8,858.01.

The future for the S&P 500 was down 0.1% while that for the Dow Jones Industrial Average fell 0.2%.

A second day of talks was planned after U.S. and Chinese officials met in London on Monday for negotiations over various issues.

The hope is that they can eventually reach a deal to reduce painfully high tariffs against each other. Most of the tariff hikes imposed since U.S. President Donald Trump escalated his trade war are paused to allow trade in everything from tiny tech gadgets to enormous machinery to continue.

In Asian trading, Tokyo’s Nikkei 225 gained 0.3% to 38,211.51, yielding most of its earlier gains, while the Kospi in South Korea rose 0.6% to 2,871.85.

Hong Kong’s Hang Seng reversed an early advance, slipping 0.1% to 24,162.87. The Shanghai Composite index dropped 0.4% to 3,384.82.



Trader Robert Charmak works on the floor of the New York Stock Exchange, Monday, June 9, 2025. (AP)

There was no fresh news on the talks, but investors appeared to grow more nervous as the day wore on.

“Chinese stocks did what they often do when geopolitics starts tightening the noose - they flinched. What began as a calm morning session flipped into a jittery sell-off as traders returned from lunch with a different mood,” Stephen Innes of SPI Asset Management said in a commentary.

In Taiwan, the Taiex surged 2.1%. Australia’s S&P/ASX 200 advanced 0.8% to 8,587.20. India’s Sensex was nearly unchanged.

On Monday, the S&P 500 edged up just 0.1% and was within 2.3% of its record set in February. The Dow gave up just 1 point, which is well below 0.1%.

The Nasdaq composite added 0.3%.

Apple unveils iOS 26 and a new ‘liquid glass’ design

CUPERTINO, Calif., June 10, (AP): After stumbling out of the starting gate in Big Tech’s pivotal race to capitalize on artificial intelligence, Apple tried to regain its footing Monday during an annual developers conference that focused mostly on incremental advances and cosmetic changes in its technology.

The presummer rite, which attracted thousands of developers from nearly 60 countries to Apple’s Silicon Valley headquarters, was subdued compared with the feverish anticipation that surrounded the event in the last two years.

Apple highlighted plans for more AI tools designed to simplify people’s lives and make its products even more intuitive. It also provided an early glimpse at



Attendees watch a presentation during an event on the Apple campus in Cupertino, Calif., Monday, June 9, 2025. (AP)

the biggest redesign of its iPhone software in a decade. In doing so, Apple executives refrained from issuing bold promises of breakthroughs that punctuated recent conferences, prompting CFRA analyst Angelo Zino to deride the event as a “dud” in a research note.

In 2023, Apple unveiled a mixed-reality headset that has been little more than a niche product, and last year WWDC trumpeted its first major foray into the AI craze with an array of new features highlighted by the promise of a smarter and more versatile version of its virtual assistant, Siri - a goal that has yet to be realized.

The showcase unfolded amid nagging questions about whether Apple has lost some of the mystique and innovative drive that has made it a tech trendsetter during its nearly 50-year history.

Instead of making a big splash as it did with the Vision Pro headset and its AI suite, Apple took a mostly low-key approach that emphasized its effort to spruce up the look of its software with a new design called “Liquid Glass” while also unveiling a new hub for its video games and new features like a “Workout Buddy” to help manage physical fitness.

Apple executives promised to make its software more compatible with the increasingly sophisticated computer chips that have been powering its products while also making it easier to toggle between the iPhone, iPad, and Mac.

IDC analyst Francisco Jeronimo said Apple seemed to be largely using Monday’s conference to demonstrate the company still has a blueprint for success in AI, even if it’s going to take longer to realize the vision that was presented a year ago.

Besides redesigning its software, Apple will switch to a method that automakers have used to telegraph their latest car models by linking them to the year after they first arrive at dealerships. That means the next version of the iPhone operating system due out this autumn will be known as iOS 26 instead of iOS 19 - as it would be under the previous naming approach that has been used since the device’s 2007 debut.

Stolen data sales hit \$17 million as hackers cash in on global breaches

Personal data becomes currency in cyber underworld



File photo shows attendees walk past an electronic display showing recent cyberattacks in China at the China Internet Security Conference in Beijing, on Sept. 12, 2017. (AP)

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

By Thomas Holt
Michigan State University

Every piece of personal data captured in a data breach - a passport number, Social Security number or login for a shopping service - has inherent value.

Every year, massive data breaches harm the public. The targets are email service providers, retailers and government agencies that store information about people. Each breach includes sensitive personal information such as credit and debit card numbers, home addresses and account usernames and passwords from hundreds of thousands - and sometimes millions - of people. When National Public Data, a company that does online background checks, was breached in 2024, criminals gained the names, addresses, dates of birth and national identification numbers such as Social Security numbers of 170 million people in the U.S., U.K. and Canada. The same year, hackers who targeted Ticketmaster stole the financial information and personal data of more than 560 million customers. As a criminologist who researches cybercrime, I study the ways that hackers and cybercriminals steal and use people's personal

information. Understanding the people involved helps us to better recognize the ways that hacking and data breaches are intertwined. In so-called stolen data markets, hackers sell personal information they illegally obtain to others, who then use the data to engage in fraud and theft for profit. Every piece of personal data captured in a data breach - a passport number, Social Security number or login for a shopping service - has inherent value. Offenders can use the information in different ways. They can assume someone else's identity, make a fraudulent purchase or steal services such as streaming media or music. The quantity of information, whether Social Security numbers or credit card details, that can be stolen through data breaches is more than any one group of criminals can efficiently process, validate or use in a reasonable amount of time. The same is true for the millions of email account usernames and passwords, or access to streaming services that data breaches can expose. This quantity problem has enabled the sale of information, including personal financial data, as part of the larger cybercrime online economy. eg: In headline of the following

chart, U.S. doesn't need periods. The sale of data, also known as carding, references the misuse of stolen credit card numbers or identity details. These illicit data markets began in the mid-1990s through the use of credit card number generators used by hackers. They shared programs that randomly generated credit card numbers and details and then checked to see whether the fake account details matched active cards that could then be used for fraudulent transactions. As more financial services were created and banks allowed customers to access their accounts through the internet, it became easier for hackers and cybercriminals to steal personal information through data breaches and phishing. Phishing involves sending convincing emails or SMS text messages to people to trick them into giving up sensitive information such as logins and passwords, often by clicking a false link that seems legitimate. One of the first phishing schemes targeted America Online users to get their account information to use their internet service at no charge. The large amount of information criminals were able to steal from such schemes led to more vendors offering stolen data to others through different online platforms. In the late 1990s and early 2000s,

offenders used Internet Relay Chat, or IRC channels, to sell data. IRC was effectively like modern instant messaging systems, letting people communicate in real time through specialized software. Criminals used these channels to sell data and hacking services in an efficient place. In the early 2000s, vendors transitioned to web forums where individuals advertised their services to other users. Forums quickly gained popularity and became successful businesses with vendors selling stolen credit cards, malware and related goods and services to misuse personal information and enable fraud. One of the more prominent forums from this time was Shadow-Crew, which formed in 2002 and operated until being taken down by a joint law enforcement operation in 2004. Their members trafficked over 1.7 million credit cards in less than three years. Forums continue to be popular, though vendors transitioned to running their own web-based shops on the open internet and dark web, which is an encrypted portion of the web that can be accessed only through specialized browsers like TOR, starting in the early 2010s. These shops have their own web addresses and distinct branding to attract customers, and they work in

the same way as other e-commerce stores. More recently, vendors of stolen data have also begun to operate on messaging platforms such as Telegram and Signal to quickly connect with customers. Many of the people who supply and operate the markets appear to be cybercriminals from Eastern Europe and Russia who steal data and then sell it to others. Markets have also been observed in Vietnam and other parts of the world, though they do not get the same visibility in the global cybersecurity landscape. The customers of stolen data markets may reside anywhere in the world, and their demands for specific data or services may drive data breaches and cybercrime to provide the supply. Stolen data is usually available in individual lots, such as a person's credit or debit card and all the information associated with the account. These pieces are individually priced, with costs differing depending on the type of card, the victim's location and the amount of data available related to the affected account. Vendors frequently offer discounts and promotions to buyers to attract customers and keep them loyal. This is often done with credit or debit cards that are about to expire. Some vendors also offer distinct products such as credit reports, Social Security numbers and login details for different paid services. The price for pieces of information varies. A recent analysis found credit card data sold for US\$50 on average, while Walmart logins sold for \$9. However, the pricing can vary widely across vendors and markets. Vendors typically accept payment through cryptocurrencies such as Bitcoin that are difficult for law enforcement to trace. Once payment is received, the vendor releases the data to the customer. Customers take on a great deal of the risk in this market because they cannot go to the police or a market regulator to complain about a fraudulent sale. Vendors may send customers dead accounts that are unable to be used or give no data at all. Such scams are common in a market where buyers can depend only on signals of vendor trust to increase the odds that the data they purchase will be delivered, and if it is, that it pays off. If the data they buy is functional, they can use it to make fraudulent purchases or financial transactions for profit. The rate of return can be exceptional. An offender who buys 100 cards for \$500 can recoup costs if only 20 of those cards are active and can be used to make an average purchase of \$30. The result is that data breaches are likely to continue as long as there is demand for illicit, profitable data. This article is part of a series on data privacy that explores who collects your data, what and how they collect, who sells and buys your data, what they all do with it, and what you can do about it. (AP)

Utilities cut secret deals, shifting data center costs to ratepayers

Big data centers drain the grid – and your wallet

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

By Ari Peskoe and Eliza Martin
Harvard University

If state regulators allow utilities to follow the standard approach of splitting the costs of new infrastructure among all consumers, the public will end up paying to supply data centers with all that power.

In the race to develop artificial intelligence, large technology companies such as Google and Meta are trying to secure massive amounts of electricity to power new data centers. Electric utilities see the prospect of earning large profits by providing electricity to these power-hungry facilities and are competing for their business by offering discounts not available to average consumers. In our paper Extracting Profits from the Public, we explain how utilities are forcing regular ratepayers to pay for the discounts enjoyed by some of the nation's largest companies and identify ways policymakers can limit the costs to the public. In much of the U.S., utilities are monopolists. Within their service territories, they are the only companies allowed to deliver electricity to consumers. To fund their operations, utilities split the costs of maintaining and expanding their systems among all ratepayers - homeowners, businesses, warehouses, factories and anyone else who uses electricity. Historically, a utility expanded

its system to meet growing demand for electricity from new factories, businesses and homes. To pay for its expansion - new power plants, new transmission lines and other equipment - the utility would propose to raise electricity rates by different amounts for various types of consumers. Public utility commissions are state agencies charged with ensuring that the public gets a fair deal. These commissions monitor how much money the utility spends to provide electric service and how its costs are shared among various types of ratepayers, including residential, commercial and industrial consumers. Ultimately, the public utility commission is supposed to approve any rate increases based on its assessment of what's fair to consumers. Splitting the utility's costs among all consumers made perfect sense when population growth and economic development across the economy stimulated the need for new infrastructure. But today, in many utility service territories, most of the projected growth in electricity demand is due to new data centers. Here's the problem for consumers: To meet data center demand, utilities are building new power plants and power lines that are needed only because of data center growth. If state regulators allow utilities to follow the standard ap-

proach of splitting the costs of new infrastructure among all consumers, the public will end up paying to supply data centers with all that power. One particularly acute example is in Louisiana. A Meta data center under development in the northeastern corner of the state is projected to use, by our calculations, twice as much energy as the city of New Orleans. Entergy, the regional monopoly utility, is proposing to build more than US\$3 billion worth of new gas-fired power plants and delivery infrastructure to meet the data center's energy demand. Rather than billing Meta directly for these costs, Entergy is proposing to include the costs in rates paid by all customers. Entergy claims its contract with Meta will cover some portion of the \$3 billion price tag and that will mitigate any increases in consumers' bills. But Entergy has asked state regulators to keep key terms of the contract secret, and only a redacted version of its application is available online. The public has no idea how much it might pay if the commission approves the contract. And if the Meta data center ends up using much less power than the company anticipates, the public does not know whether it would be on the hook to pay higher electricity rates for longer periods to

guarantee Entergy a profit. Our research, reviewing nearly 50 public utility commission proceedings about data centers' power needs across 10 states, uncovered dozens of secretive contracts between utilities and data centers. Unlike Louisiana, most states require utilities to submit to the public utility commission their one-off deals with data centers, but they allow utilities to conceal the pricing terms from the public. In normal rate-review cases, numerous parties advocate for their interests in a public proceeding, including members of the public, industry groups and the utility itself. But as our paper finds, utility commission reviews of data center contracts are based on confidential utility filings that are inaccessible to the general public. Few, if any, outsiders participate, and as a result the commission often hears only the utility's version of the deal. Because the pricing terms are secret, it is impossible to know whether the deal that a utility is offering to a data center is too low to cover the utility's costs of providing power to the data center, which would mean that the public is subsidizing the deal. History shows, however, that utilities have a long history of exploiting their monopolies to shift costs to the public, including through secret contracts. Our paper also explores other

ways that the public pays for data center energy costs. For instance, many high-voltage interstate transmission projects, which connect large power plants to local delivery systems, are developed through regional planning processes run by numerous utilities. These alliances have complex rules for splitting the costs of new transmission lines and equipment among their utility members. Once a utility is charged its share, it spreads the costs of new transmission projects among its local ratepayers. Because some regions are building new transmission capacity to accommodate data centers, our analysis finds that the public has been forced to pay billions of dollars for data center growth. Data center energy costs can also be shifted when data centers connect directly to existing power plants. Under what are called "co-location" deals, the power plant stops selling energy to the wider public and just sells to the data center. With less supply in the overall market, prices go up and the public faces higher bills as a result. Many state legislatures are noticing these problems and working to figure out how to address them. Several recent bills would set new terms and conditions for future data center deals that could help protect the public from data center energy costs. (AP)

K-pop group looks to reunite this year

2 more BTS members finish their military service

CHUNCHEON, South Korea, June 10, (AP): K-pop superstars RM and V are the latest members of BTS to be discharged from South Korea's military after fulfilling their mandatory service. They each saluted upon their release Tuesday in Chuncheon City as about 200 fans, some of whom traveled from Mexico, Turkey and Brazil, cheered. Reina Lorena Quintero Sevilla spent nearly 18 hours on a plane from Mexico City. "I swear, it didn't feel that long because we're so excited to be here, to watch the boys get released, excited to be in South Korea, in the hometowns of our boys, who we love, who we adore," she said. RM and V began their service in December 2023, while three other BTS members - Jin, J-

Hope and Suga - were already months into their conscription. Jin, the oldest member of the K-pop supergroup, was discharged from the army in June 2024. J-Hope was discharged in October. Jimin and JungKook are scheduled to be discharged Wednesday. The seventh member, Suga, is fulfilling his duty as a social service agent, an alternative to military service. He is to be released later this month. The seven BTS members plan to reunite as a group sometime in 2025. In South Korea, all able-bodied men aged 18 to 28 are required by law to perform 18-21 months of military service under a conscription system meant to deter aggression from rival North Korea.

The law gives special exemptions to athletes, classical and traditional musicians, and ballet and other dancers if they have obtained top prizes in certain competitions and are assessed to have enhanced national prestige. K-pop stars and other entertainers aren't subject to such privileges. The BTS members were able to postpone their service, however, after the National Assembly revised the Military Service Act, allowing K-pop stars to delay their enlistment until age 30. There was heated public debate over whether to offer special exemptions for BTS members, until the group's management agency announced in 2022 that all seven members would fulfill their duties.



K-pop band BTS members RM, (left), and V salute after being discharged from a mandatory military service in Chuncheon, South Korea, Tuesday, June 10. (AP)



Snoop Dogg, (right), accepts the ultimate icon award during the BET Awards. (AP)



Mariah Carey accepts the ultimate icon award during the BET Awards. (AP)



Jamie Foxx accepts the ultimate icon award during the BET Awards. (AP)

Doechii, Foxx, Carey highlight awards' milestone

BET Awards shine with star power, tributes

Variety

LOS ANGELES: A judge on Monday dismissed the lawsuit filed by actor and director Justin Baldoni against his "It Ends With Us" costar **Blake Lively** after she sued him for sexual harassment and retaliation.

US District Court Judge Lewis Liman's decision is the latest development in the bitter legal battle surrounding the dark romantic drama that includes Lively suing Baldoni in late December.

Baldoni and production company Wayfarer Studios countersued in January for \$400 million, accusing Lively and her husband, "Deadpool" actor Ryan Reynolds, of defamation and extortion.

The New York judge ruled that Baldoni can't sue Lively for defamation over claims she made in her lawsuit, because allegations made in a lawsuit are exempt from libel claims. Liman also ruled that



Lively

Baldoni's claims that Lively stole creative control of the film didn't count as extortion under California law. While Lively was accused in the lawsuit of threatening to refuse to promote the film, Wayfarer does "not allege facts showing that Lively had an obligation to promote the film or to approve marketing materials," Liman wrote.

Baldoni's legal team can revise the lawsuit if they want to pursue different claims related to whether Lively breached a contract, the judge said.

"It Ends With Us," was released in August, exceeding box office expectations with a \$50 million debut. But the movie's release was shrouded by speculation over discord between Lively and Baldoni.

The judge also dismissed Baldoni's defamation lawsuit against The New York Times, which had reported on Lively's sexual harassment allegations. (AP)

NEW YORK: Jurors in Harvey Weinstein's sex crimes retrial appear to be moving past some interpersonal tensions and focusing on one of his three accusers as deliberations stretch into a fourth day Tuesday.

At the end of Monday's session, jurors requested to start off Tuesday with electronic copies of emails and other evidence pertaining to Jessica Mann - the accuser with arguably the most complex history with Weinstein.

During days of testimony, Mann said the Oscar-winning movie producer raped her in 2013 amid a consensual relationship that continued for years afterward. Weinstein's lawyers emphasized that she kept seeing him, accepting invitations and sending warm messages to him. Mann said she "compartmentalized" the pain he caused her. Weinstein, 73, has pleaded not guilty to all the charges in the case. In addition to the rape charge, he's accused of sexually assaulting two other women, Mimi Haley and Kaja Sokola.

Weinstein didn't testify during the current trial, but maintained through his attorneys that he had completely consensual encounters with his accusers, who wanted his help building show business careers.

The jury is made up of seven women and five men. Their closed-door discussions began Thursday and apparently have been fractious at times. (AP)

LOS ANGELES, June 10, (AP): The BET Awards delivered a night of major star power and poignant moments Monday night, marking the ceremony's 25th anniversary with a mix of comedy, emotion and calls for justice.

The night delivered a stirring mix of purpose and entertainment from Doechii's powerful speech, Jamie Foxx's emotional reflection and Kevin Hart's sharp comedic opener.

Doechii made her presence felt early during the five-hour ceremony, using her acceptance speech for best female hip-hop artist to draw attention to the immigration raids and protest crackdowns taking place just miles from the venue. Her message added urgency and depth to a ceremony meant to honor both Black excellence and social impact.

After being named best female hip-hop artist - her first-ever BET Award - Doechii acknowledged her fellow nominees, then shifted the spotlight to the issues unfolding outside the venue. "There are ruthless attacks that are creating fear and chaos in our communities in the name of law and order," said Doechii, who won a Grammy for best rap album, only the third woman to win in that category.

"Trump is using military forces to stop a protest," she said. "I want you all to consider what kind of government it appears to be when every time we exercise our democratic right to protest, the military is deployed against us. What type of government is that?"

Doechii's words drew applause from the audience at the Peacock Theater, where the awards aired live

Families

"People are being swept up and torn from their families," she continued. "I feel like it's my responsibility as an artist to use this moment to speak up for all oppressed people. ... We all deserve to live in hope and not fear. I hope we stand together."

Foxx, Mariah Carey, Snoop Dogg and Kirk Franklin received the Ultimate Icon Award. They were selected due to their impact on entertainment as well as their community impact and advocacy.

Foxx was the first to receive his award. He was visibly moved during a heartfelt moment at the awards, being brought to tears while accepting his trophy after surviving a life-threatening health scare in recent years.

The Oscar and Grammy winner reflected on watching the in memoriam tribute from his seat.

"When I saw the memoriam, I was like, 'Man, that could've been me,'" said Foxx, who was hospitalized in 2023 after suffering a stroke. In an interview with The Associated Press, he recalled the severity of the moment: "The thing was almost a wrap. Every prayer counted."

Foxx was presented the award by music legend Stevie Wonder, adding even more weight to the emotional moment. As he stood on stage, his voice cracked with gratitude.



Andra Day performs 'Killing Me Softly' during the BET Awards on Monday, June 9, at the Peacock Theater in Los Angeles. (AP)

"I don't know why I went through what I went through. But I know my second chance - I won't turn it down," Foxx said, as his two daughters and sister wiped away tears from the audience. "I have so much love to give. Just give me one more crack at this. Whatever reason you put this on me, I promise I'll do right. ... You can't go through something like that and not testify."

Carey said this was her first time collecting a trophy at the BET Awards. The singer said she became emotional after Busta Rhymes introduced her.

"It took me a while, but I finally realized that life is far too short to live for anyone else's approval, which is something I always did," said Carey, a five-time Grammy winner. "I decided

to own who I am." Dr. Dre presented the award to Snoop, who walked onstage with his wife Shante Taylor. In his speech, he paid homage to Carey, Franklin and Foxx before thanking the many others who helped him throughout his life.

Purpose

"Hip-hop gave me a voice. It gave me a purpose," he said. "It gave me a way out and a way into homes, hearts, cultures and countries I'd never thought I would even touch. Being an icon isn't about fame. It's about legacy. It's about what you build, what you leave behind and who you lift up along the way."

Franklin expressed gratitude for the honor, admitting he's far from the per-

sense," he said. "If you're listening to this, that's when you know it's God."

Hart kicked off the awards with a flurry of jokes, poking fun at everything from celebrity names to slippery afterparties.

"There won't be any afterparties tonight. Things could get slippery," he quipped, referencing baby oil that's been frequently mentioned in the criminal case against Diddy.

Hart set the tone for a night full of humor and on a night honoring the awards show's 25th anniversary.

The comedian also joked about the pronunciation of GloRilla and Snoop's real names, drawing laughs from the crowd before turning sincere.

Hart paid tribute to Foxx and teased



Doechii accepts the award for best female hip hop artist during the BET Awards. (AP)



Brittney Spencer performs during the BET Awards. (AP)

fect Christian, husband, father or artist. He joked, "I can't even sing."

"Which makes this award so amazing, because what I do really don't make

gospel star Franklin.

"When you get your award tonight, don't come up here front twerking," Hart said, as the crowd erupted in laughter.

The jab was a nod to Franklin's viral moment when he playfully twerked on gospel legend Jacky Clark Chisholm during a live performance.

"Don't come up here poppin'," Hart added, as cameras caught Franklin bowing his head and chuckling. "Don't try to blame it on the Lord. The Lord didn't ask for that. Put it away, Kirk."

Kendrick Lamar took home the award for his critically acclaimed project "GNX."

Lamar made waves with his Grammy triumph, winning song and record of the year for "Not Like Us." He followed up with a groundbreaking halftime show, becoming the first solo hip-hop performer to headline the coveted slot. The rap megastar is currently on the Grand National Tour with SZA.

Lil Wayne, GloRilla, Amerie, Jim Jones and Teyana Taylor were some of the performers who hit the stage. Other performers included Babyface, Ludacris, Tank, Jennifer Hudson, Teddy Riley, T-Pain, Doug E. Fresh, Craig Robinson, Playboi Carti and singer Leon Thomas.

The BET Awards offered tributes to former popular hosts and performances, including the network's once-flagship program "106 & Park."

The weekday show launched in 2000 and lasted for more than a decade. It thrived with a video countdown, interviews and performances.

The show reunited past hosts A.J. Calloway, Free, Julissa Bermudez, Keshia Chanté, Rocsi Diaz and Terrence J. The tribute will feature performers such as Bow Wow, Amerie, B2K, Jim Jones, Mya, T.I. and Mr. 106 & Park.



Kirk Franklin, center, performs during the BET Awards. (AP)



Ledisi performs 'BLKWMM' during the BET Awards. (AP)

Faster, sharper, prettier and same Mario magic

Nintendo’s Switch 2 boosts graphics, but where are the games?

WASHINGTON, June 10, (AP): I’m cruising around Bowser’s Castle with my old pal Toad. It’s not exactly relaxing, what with all the lava pits and banana peels and turtle shells littering the road. Add 23 other characters - is that a cow driving? - who are trying to get to the finish line first, and it’s chaos.

The hectic, high-speed insanity of any race in the new Mario Kart World would have caused the eight-year-old Switch console to wheeze a bit. And that’s why we’ve got the Switch 2 (\$449.99), the souped-up sequel to Nintendo’s popular home-and-portable hybrid.

It looks prettier, too. The 7.9-inch portable display (up from 6.2 inches) boosts the resolution to 1020p (from 720p), and while the LCD screen isn’t quite as sharp as an OLED screen might have been, it’s much cleaner than the original recipe Switch. It looks even better when connected to an HDTV since it now supports 4K and HDR.

Nintendo has always stood apart from the technological arms race that fans of Sony’s PlayStation and Mi-



Nintendo Switch 2 display is seen at a Best Buy, Thursday, June 5, 2025, in Nashville, Tenn. (AP)

crosoft’s Xbox obsess over, insisting that first-rate games don’t necessarily depend on high-powered computer

chips. But you could feel the strain in 2023’s The Legend of Zelda: Tears of the Kingdom, with its at-times blurry graphics and sluggish framerate. The Switch 2, with a faster framerate of 120 fps, corrects much of the fuzziness.

That’s not to say it comes close to matching the high-definition performance of the PlayStation 5 or the Xbox X/S. If you’re expecting the jaw-dropping graphics of, say, Ubisoft’s Assassin’s Creed Shadows ... well, no.

There is good news for those of us who have gotten weary of the old Switch’s dinky 32 gigabytes of internal storage. The Switch 2 multiplies that by eight, for 256 GB. Of course, flashier games take up more space, so if you want more room you’ll have to invest in a microSD Express card - which is a bit pricier than the standard memory card used in most portable devices.

The Switch 2’s Joy-Con controllers have undergone some tinkering. As before, you can attach them to the sides of the screen if you’re playing on the go. If you’re at home, you can attach them to a doohickey that feels more like a traditional joystick. Either way,

they’re now more firmly connected with magnets, which provide a satisfying snap.

Both the left and right Joy-Cons now include an optical mouse, which you can use by placing the controller on its edge and rolling it around on a table. (Nintendo says you can also use it on your pants, but I prefer using a clipboard on my lap.) It remains to be seen how many Switch 2 games will call for a mouse, but 2K’s port of Sid Meier’s Civilization VII seems like a good candidate.

And then there’s a new button labeled “C” on the right-hand Joy-Con. That calls up GameChat, which lets you start up a conversation with other players - provided you’ve all taken the time to register yourselves as friends. (Eventually, you’ll also need to subscribe to the Nintendo Switch Online service, but that requirement doesn’t kick in until March 31, 2026.) The microphone is built into the Switch 2, though if you want to upgrade to video chat, you’ll need to buy a separate Nintendo camera.

Finally, there’s GameShare, which

lets you play selected titles with other Switch users even if they don’t own the software.

Nintendo has been emphasizing the new social features in its marketing, though it feels like it’s catching up to the competition. The kids I know who play Fortnite or Minecraft on competing consoles seem to have figured out long ago how to chat with their pals. Welcome to the 2010s?

As with any console launch, the driving question is: Does it have the games?

There are just a couple of Switch 2 exclusives out now: Mario Kart World and Nintendo Switch 2 Welcome Tour, a \$10 demo package that really should have been free. There are some new-to-Nintendo ports of excellent titles like Split Fiction and Cyberpunk 2077. You can get upgrades of classics like the last two Legend of Zelda adventures. And the Switch 2 is fully backward-compatible, so you can play everything that came out for the Switch as well as a substantial library of older titles.

There’s no other machine that will

let you play future installments of beloved franchises like Zelda, Super Mario Bros., Super Smash Bros. and Animal Crossing. None of those have been announced yet, but some marquee names - Donkey Kong and Kirby - will star in Switch 2 exclusives later this year.

There’s plenty of competition out there, though, and not just in the TV-connected console market Switch shares with the PlayStation and the Xbox. Nintendo no longer has the portable market to itself, thanks to Valve’s SteamDeck. Some models of that device cost less than the Switch 2, and it already has a huge library of PC games. Meanwhile, Microsoft announced over the weekend that it’s teaming up with Asus on the ROG Xbox Ally, a handheld that will be out before Christmas.

Honestly, we’ll probably have a better idea of the Switch’s quality a few years down the line, after developers get a handle on what the new hardware can do. If you’re dying to get back behind the wheel with Mario, Luigi and Princess Peach right now, though, you know what you need to do.

Music

Psychology meets music in ‘The Attachment Theory’

For Van Etten, new album was soul therapy

LOS ANGELES, June 10, (AP): As she was putting together her seventh and most recent record, Sharon Van Etten came up with a tongue-in-cheek idea for its title. “Sharon Van Etten & The Attachment Theory,” she wanted to call it - a reference to both her interest in psychology and a play on the familial dynamics that often exist within a band.

Although most of Van Etten’s bandmates have been with her for several years, this was her first time writing songs with them, so playing with that relationship felt apt. But when the indie musician approached her collaborators with the idea for the title and band name, there was one stipulation: “They said, ‘I don’t mind you calling it ‘The Attachment Theory,’ as long as we don’t have to talk about our attachment styles,’” Van Etten laughed.

As they gear up for a fall tour, announced Monday, Van Etten spoke with The Associated Press about her stream-of-consciousness style of writing and how being a mom has made her more cognizant of how much time she spends on her phone. The interview has been edited for clarity and brevity.

AP: What prompted the change in how this record was made?

Van Etten: Writing as a band was a complete accident. We were rehearsing in 2022 for the “We’ve Been Going About This All Wrong” tour and figuring out how to take this album, which we recorded piecemeal during the pandemic because we couldn’t all be in the same room together. I thought the best way to reconnect after recording the album from afar was to rent a house and a studio in the desert and have it be more like a literal band camp, instead of doing one of those sterile rehearsals environments, just to have a way for us to reconnect as people as well as musicians.

As we got to the end of the week, we realized we had gone through the whole set that we were planning for that tour, and I asked the band if they would want to jam. I was so tired of



Sharon Van Etten poses for a portrait in Los Angeles, Monday, May 19, 2025. (AP)

hearing myself. I was very inspired by the sonic palette that we had created together, and I wanted to see what would happen. And in an hour or two, we wrote two songs without really trying. And we laughed it off, we packed our

bags and we left the next day. But my engineer recorded those jam sessions, and I remember playing them for my partner at home, saying, “I think creatively this is the next thing I want to do.” And so, after we did that first tour

for the previous record, I booked a writing session right away and we returned to that same studio and worked for a week with the intention of writing. And it was a very prolific week.

AP: Did you have the lyrics written beforehand?

Van Etten: All of the writing in the desert was from the ground up. I didn’t have anything going into it, which I’ve never done before either. My process from being solo is something that I brought into the session with the band, where I find the melodies first and I sing stream of consciousness.

AP: Singing stream of consciousness sounds very spiritual, almost like speaking in tongues.

Van Etten: It very much is. There’s something about it that, if I’m going through something emotionally that I don’t have the words to express yet and I can sit at an instrument and just sing, I get something out of me and release something in a way that I still don’t really know how to describe to people. Even if it’s something I end up writing about later, it’s more of like, I get the emotion out, but then I turn the song into something else that hopefully is more healing than the moment that I’m trying to get over.

AP: How did you come up with the album name?

Van Etten: The name The Attachment Theory at first was a bit tongue-in-cheek because I am interested in psychology and I am from a big family. I think being in a family and being in a band are very similar because you become a family, you become each other’s chosen family, and you go through a lot together. So from rehearsing to touring to making a record together, you create these dynamics with each other, and you also become each other’s support systems. And I know attachment theory is mostly about your connection with your parents but it’s also a little bit about how you connect as a unit.

AP: I’m sure your attachment styles came up in the desert.

Van Etten: Yes, and they will remain unnamed.

Obituaries



Sly Stone from the group Sly and the Family Stone performs at the 48th Annual Grammy Awards on Feb. 8, 2006, in Los Angeles. (AP)

Novelist Forsyth dies

Sly Stone, pioneer of funk rock, dies at 82

NEW YORK, June 10, (AP): Sly Stone, the revolutionary musician and dynamic showman whose Sly and the Family Stone transformed popular music in the 1960s and ’70s and beyond with such hits as “Everyday People,” “Stand!” and “Family Affair,” died Monday at age 82.

Stone, born Sylvester Stewart, had been in poor health in recent years. His publicist Carleen Donovan said Stone died in Los Angeles surrounded by family after contending with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease and other ailments.

Formed in 1966-67, Sly and the Family Stone was the first major group to include Black and white men and women, and well embodied a time when anything seemed possible - riots and assassinations, communes and love-ins. The singers screeched, chanted, crooned and hollered. The music was a blowout of frantic horns, rapid-fire guitar and locomotive rhythms, a melting pot of jazz, psychedelic rock, doo-wop, soul and the early grooves of funk.

self was beginning a descent from which he never recovered, driven by the pressures of fame and the added burden of Black fame. His record company was anxious for more hits, while the Black Panthers were pressing him to drop the white members from his group. After moving from the Bay Area to Los Angeles in 1970, he became increasingly hooked on cocaine and erratic in his behavior.

On “Thank You (Falettinme Be Mice Elf Agin),” Stone had warned: “Dying young is hard to take/selling out is harder.” Late in 1971, he released “There’s a Riot Going On,” one of the grimmest, most uncompromising records ever to top the album charts. The sound was dense and murky (Sly was among the first musicians to use drum machines), the mood reflective (“Family Affair”), fearful (“Runnin’ Away”) and despairing: “Time, they say, is the answer - but I don’t believe it,” Sly sings on “Time.” The fast, funky pace of the original “Thank You (Falettinme Be Mice Elf Agin)” was slowed, stretched and retitled “Thank You For Talkin’ to Me, Africa.”

By the end of the decade, Sly and the Family Stone had broken up and Sly was releasing solo records with such unmet promises as “Heard You Missed Me, Well I’m Back” and “Back On the Right Track.” Most of the news he made over the following decades was of drug busts, financial troubles and mishaps on stage. Sly and the Family Stone was inducted into the Rock & Roll of Fame in 1993 and honored in 2006 at the Grammy Awards, but Sly released just one album after the early ’80s, “I’m Back! Family & Friends,” much of it updated recordings of his old hits.

Also:

LONDON: Frederick Forsyth, the British author of “The Day of the Jackal” and other bestselling thrillers, has died after a brief illness, his literary agent said Monday. He was 86.

Jonathan Lloyd, his agent, said Forsyth died at home early Monday surrounded by his family.

“We mourn the passing of one of the world’s greatest thriller writers,” Lloyd said.

Born in Kent, in southern England, in 1938, Forsyth served as a Royal Air Force pilot before becoming a foreign correspondent. He covered the attempted assassination of French President **Charles de Gaulle** in 1962, which provided inspiration for “The Day of the Jackal,” his bestselling political thriller about a professional assassin.

Published in 1971, the book propelled him into global fame. It was made into a film in 1973 starring **Edward Fox** as the Jackal and more recently a television series starring **Eddie Redmayne** and **Lashana Lynch**.

Variety

NEW YORK: For her next book club pick, **Oprah Winfrey** is highlighting an author she has praised even before she had a book club.

Winfrey announced Tuesday that she has chosen Wally Lamb’s new novel, “The River Is Waiting,” the story of a father torn by grief and guilt. It’s the third time she’s selected a Lamb book and continues a bond predating 1996, when she launched her club.

“I’ve had four phone conversations with Ms. Winfrey,” Lamb said in a statement, remembering how she called to praise his debut novel, “She’s Come Undone” upon its release, in 1992. Five years later, she phoned with the news that “She’s Come Undone” was her latest book club pick. In 1998, Winfrey picked Lamb’s “I Know This Much Is True,” his second novel. (AP)



Winfrey

NEW YORK: The union for Hollywood’s video game performers has reached a tentative contract with several video game companies that may bring an end to an almost year-long strike tied to the use of artificial intelligence.

Members of the Screen Actors Guild-American Federation of Television and Radio Artists went on strike in July 2024 after negotiations with game industry giants came to a halt over artificial intelligence protections.

SAG-AFTRA said the unregulated use of AI posed “an equal or even greater threat” to performers in the video game industry than it does in film and television because the

capacity to cheaply and easily create convincing digital replicas of performers’ voices is widely available.

The performers were worried that unchecked use of AI could provide game makers with a means to displace them - by training an AI to replicate an actor’s voice, or to create a digital replica of their likeness without consent. (AP)

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NASHVILLE, Tenn.: A fire broke out in a parking structure of Nashville’s main public library early Tuesday, sending a large plume of smoke into the air downtown and forcing evacuations from a nearby hotel. A witness heard explosions from the structure but there were no immediate reports of injuries.

“The fire went all the way across the fourth floor” of the garage, Nashville District Fire Chief Martin Hampton told WKRN-TV. He said vehicles inside were on fire, including ones used by the city for cleaning and maintenance.

Eli Gilmore, a Nashville musician who lives in the apartment building next door, said he heard loud explosions begin around 1:15 a.m. (AP)

□ □ □

NEW YORK: Sean “Diddy” Combs forced his ex-girlfriend to have an “unwanted” encounter with a male worker last year after chasing her around her California home, putting her in a chokehold, punching her in the face and kicking down doors, the woman testified Monday.

Testifying for a third day under the pseudonym “Jane,” the woman said Combs erupted after she accused him of cheating on her. After beating her, Jane said, Combs invited a male worker over, gave her an ecstasy pill and told her: “You’re not going to ruin my night like this.”

Jane, whose injuries included a black eye and welts on her forehead, said she’d planned June 18, 2024, as a romantic night with Combs, but now remembers it as a very terrible day.” (AP)



Actress Kim Novak presents the Grand Prix award at the 66th international film festival, in Cannes, southern France, on May 26, 2013. (AP)

Lifetime achievement

Venice fest to honor Novak

LOS ANGELES, June 10, (AP): Kim Novak, the glamorous and fiercely independent star of one of the greatest films ever made, Alfred Hitchcock’s “Vertigo,” will be honored with a lifetime achievement award at the Venice Film Festival this fall.

Festival organizers said Monday that they will also host the world premiere of Alexandre Philippe’s documentary “Kim Novak’s Vertigo,” which was made in collaboration with the actor.

Alberto Barbera, the festival’s artistic director, said that the award, “celebrates a star who was emancipated, a rebel at the heart of Hollywood who illuminated the dreams of movie lovers before retiring to her ranch in Oregon to dedicate herself to painting and to her horses.”

Novak, who is 92, left her Hollywood career behind long ago. But in recent years she has occasionally granted interviews around significant film anniversaries and made public appearances. After presenting

at the 2014 Oscars many online, including Donald Trump, insulted her appearance. She responded with an open letter writing, “I will no longer hold myself back from speaking out against bullies.”

Earlier this year actor Sydney Sweeney paid homage to Novak on the Met Gala red carpet. She’s portraying Novak in a new film directed by Colman Domingo about her relationship with Rat Packer Sammy Davis Jr.

Of this latest honor, Novak said she is “deeply touched” to receive the award.

“To be recognized for my body of work at this time in my life is a dream come true,” Novak said. “I will treasure every moment I spend in Venice. It will fill my heart with joy.”

The Venice Film Festival runs from Aug. 27 through Sept. 6, but the full slate of films selected won’t be announced until late July. “The Holdovers” filmmaker Alexander Payne will preside over the main competition jury.

Soaring temperatures trigger health alerts

North India sizzles as heatwave disrupts normal lives

NEW DELHI, June 10, (AP): A blistering heat wave is sweeping across northern India with temperatures soaring above the normal, disrupting daily life and raising health concerns.

The mercury shot up to 47.3 C (117 F) in Sri Ganganagar, a desert city in the northwestern state of Rajasthan on Monday, according to the Indian Meteorological Department.

The record for the country is 51 C (124 F), set in May 2016 in Rajasthan's city of Phalodi.

The searing heat is not just a seasonal discomfort but underscores a growing challenge for the country's overwhelmed health infrastructure. A prolonged exposure to extreme temperatures often causes heat strokes, mainly impacting the poor, outdoor workers, children, and the elderly.

Last year, a monthslong heatwave across swathes of India killed more than 100 people and led to over 40,000 suspected cases of heat stroke, according to data from the health ministry.

The Indian capital, New Delhi, saw its first heatwave of the season with temperatures soaring past 45 C (113 F) in one of its neighborhoods on Monday.

The swelter wasn't just numerical as the real-feel tem-



A passenger traveling in a vehicle stops for a free roadside drink on a hot summer day in Prayagraj in the northern state of Uttar Pradesh, India, Tuesday, June 10. (AP)

perature, the heat index factoring in relative humidity, was a couple of notches higher.

For autorickshaw driver Pradeep Kumar, the scorching heat was taking a toll on his health and impacting

household income as people avoided daytime commuting.

"This heat makes us very tired. We drink water to keep up. But many times our health gets affected," Kumar said. "I feel troubled."

The weather department has issued heatwave warnings for the next couple of days in northern India that include the states of Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Haryana and the New Delhi national capital region. Some parts of those areas may witness light showers from Thursday, bringing relief.

India declares a heat wave whenever temperatures are above 40 C (104 F) in the plains and 30 C (86 F) or more in its hilly regions.

Heatwaves are usually reported from March to June and in some cases in July. The peak month is May, but it was relatively cooler this season due to weather aberrations amid multiple westerly disturbances, said G.P. Sharma, president at private weather forecaster Skymet.

Ryan Rodriguez, a 22-year-old tourist from the U.S. was seen sipping a lemonade to keep himself cool in Delhi.

"It's pretty hot here. I just came from a trip of the Mid-

dle East, so I am sort of adjusting to it. But (this is) much hotter than Virginia. I haven't seen any worse heat than this in India so far," said Rodriguez.

In Uttar Pradesh, the country's most populous state, a punishing heatwave made people's lives difficult as power grids struggled to keep pace with the soaring electricity demand.

"There is no light for hours in the afternoon, just when the heat is unbearable," said Shabnam Khan, a homemaker in Lucknow, the state's capital city. "The fan stops, the cooler doesn't work, and we are left sitting on the floor, drenched in sweat."

The state recorded its highest-ever electricity demand of 30,161 megawatts late Sunday as millions of homes and businesses ran cooling systems to beat the heat. Officials expect demand to surpass 32,000 megawatts in the coming weeks.

Atul Kumar Singh, a senior scientist at the Regional Meteorological Centre in Lucknow, said the battle against this brutal summer heat was far from over as seasonal monsoon rains were still weeks away.

"We are seeing the worst of both heat and humidity. This is no longer just a matter of discomfort. It is becoming a public health emergency," said Singh.

School nurses can help

One in 4 children suffers from chronic pain: study

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

Joint pain, headaches, stomachaches, fibromyalgia - the list sounds like an inventory of ailments that might plague people as they age. Yet these are chronic, painful conditions that frequently affect children.

People often imagine childhood as a time when the body functions at its best, but about 25% of children experience chronic pain. I was one of them: Starting in elementary school, migraines incapacitated me for hours at a stretch with excruciating pain that made it impossible to go to school, much less talk to friends or have fun.

As a licensed pediatric pain psychologist, I develop and test psychological care strategies for children who experience chronic pain. Effective treatments exist, but they are often not accessible, particularly for families that don't live near major medical centers or have adequate health insurance. My colleagues and I are working to change that by training school nurses and other community health providers to deliver such care.

Widespread

Chronic pain in children is not only widespread but also persistent. Many continue to experience symptoms for years on end. For example, one-third of children with abdominal pain experience symptoms that last into adulthood. Children with chronic pain are also more likely to come from families that have less income, have greater health care barriers, report more safety concerns about their environment and experience greater exposure to violence than those without chronic pain.

These conditions interfere with daily life. Children with chronic pain miss about 1 in 5 days of school. Consequently, their academics suffer and they are less likely to graduate from high school. Mental health conditions such as anxiety and depression are common.

Experiencing chronic pain in childhood also puts people at an

increased risk for opioid use in adulthood, signaling a major public health concern.

Many adults think nothing of taking medicines such as ibuprofen or acetaminophen for minor aches and pains, but there's little evidence that pharmacologic treatments work best for children's chronic pain. Research suggests that such medicines are insufficient for helping children get back to their routines and activities, such as school, sports and hanging out with friends.

Cognitive

The most studied and perhaps most effective approach for treating chronic pain in children is cognitive behavioral therapy. This modality involves teaching children how pain works in the brain, and also training them on problem solving, relaxation methods such as deep breathing, challenging negative thoughts about pain, and pacing activities to avoid pain flares. Unlike pain medications, which wear off after a few hours, research suggests that cognitive behavioral therapy can have a lasting effect. Kids can get back to doing things they need and want to do, and they often feel better too over the long term.

My colleagues and I - along with other researchers - have developed and tested cognitive behavioral approaches for children with chronic painful conditions such as functional abdominal pain and childhood-onset lupus. These interventions not only get kids back to their daily lives but also reduce symptoms of anxiety and depression that often accompany children's pain syndromes.

To be sure, providing interventions in the form of web-based tools or apps can improve access for children who can't see a provider. However, we have found that children and their families are more likely to complete the course of treatment with a provider, and that automated self-management tools can complement but not replace care delivered by a provider. In fact, when cognitive behavioral therapy for children's chronic pain is delivered exclusively through an online tool, only a third of children complete treatment. (AP)

UN chief urges final push for ocean pact

High Seas Treaty gains momentum as 18 new countries pledge support

NICE, France, June 10, (AP): Eighteen countries ratified the High Seas Treaty on Monday, bringing the total to 49 - just 11 short of the 60 needed for the ocean agreement to enter into force. The surge in support, occurring during the UN Ocean Conference in Nice, France, adds momentum to what could become a historic shift in how the world governs the open ocean.

"The entry into force is within our sight, and I call on all remaining nations to join swiftly," UN Secretary-General António Guterres told reporters Tuesday. "We do not have a moment to lose." Here's what the treaty is, why it matters and what happens next.

Formally known as the Agreement on Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdiction, the High Seas Treaty is the first legally binding agreement focused on protecting marine biodiversity in international waters. These waters, which are beyond the jurisdiction of any single country, make up nearly two-thirds of the ocean and almost half the surface of the planet.

Until now, there has been no comprehensive legal framework to create marine protected areas or enforce conservation on the high seas.

Despite their remoteness, the high seas are under growing pressure from overfishing, climate change and the threat of deep-sea mining. Environmental advocates warn that without proper protections, marine ecosystems in international waters face irreversible harm.

"Until now, it has been the wild west on the high seas," said Megan Randles, global political lead for oceans at Greenpeace. "Now we have a chance to properly put protections in place."

The treaty is also essential to achieving the global "30x30" target - an international pledge to protect 30% of



Diplomat Leena Al-Hadid, of Jordan, signs the High Seas Treaty during the UN Ocean Conference, Monday, June 9, in Nice, France. (AP)

the planet's land and sea by 2030.

The treaty creates a legal process for countries to establish marine protected areas in the high seas, including rules for destructive activities like deep-sea mining and geo-engineering. It also establishes a framework for technology-sharing, funding mechanisms and scientific collaboration among countries.

Crucially, decisions under the treaty will be made multilaterally through conferences of parties (COPs) rather than by individual countries acting alone.

Once 60 countries ratify the treaty, a 120-day countdown begins before it officially enters into force. That would unlock the ability to begin designating protected areas in the high seas and put oversight mechanisms into motion.

As of Monday evening, 49 countries and the EU had ratified, meaning 11 more are needed to trigger that count-

down.

Guterres called the pace of progress "a record," noting that the U.N. Convention on the Law of the Sea took 12 years to reach entry into force, while the BBNJ treaty appears poised to do so in just over two. "I see a momentum and an enthusiasm that was difficult to find in the past," he said.

The first Conference of the Parties (COP1) must take place within one year of the treaty's entry into force. That meeting will lay the groundwork for implementation, including decisions on governance, financing and the creation of key bodies to evaluate marine protection proposals.

Environmental groups are pushing to surpass the required 60 ratifications, and to do so quickly - the more countries that ratify, the stronger and more representative the treaty's implementation will be.

RFK Jr. action

CDC vaccine advisers fired

WASHINGTON, June 10, (AP): Health Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr. on Monday removed every member of a scientific committee that advises the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention on how to use vaccines and pledged to replace them with his own picks.

Major physicians and public health groups criticized the move to oust all 17 members of the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices.

Kennedy, who was one of the nation's leading anti-vaccine activists before becoming the nation's top health official, has not said who he would appoint to the panel, but said it would convene in just two weeks in Atlanta.

Although it's typically not viewed as a partisan board, the entire current roster of committee members were Biden appointees.

"Without removing the current members, the current Trump administration would not have been able to appoint a majority of new members until 2028," Kennedy wrote in a Wall Street Journal opinion piece. "A clean sweep is needed to re-establish public confidence in vaccine science."

Declined

When reached by phone, the panel's now-former chair - Dr. Helen Keipp Talbot of Vanderbilt University - declined to comment. But another panel member, Noel Brewer at the University of North Carolina, said he and other committee members received an email late Monday afternoon that said their services on the committee had been terminated but gave no reason.

"I'd assumed I'd continue serving on the committee for my full term," said Brewer, who joined the panel last summer.

Brewer is a behavioral scientist whose research examines why people get vaccinated and ways to improve vaccination coverage. Whether people get vaccinated is largely influenced by what their doctors recommend, and doctors have been following ACIP guidance.

"Up until today, ACIP recommendations were the gold standard for what insurers should pay for, what providers should recommend, and what the public should look to," he said.

But Kennedy already took the unusual step of changing COVID-19 recommendations without first consulting the committee - a move criticized by doctors' groups and public health advocates.

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SA ready to ‘rewrite’ history in WTC final against Aussies

Conrad confident Proteas can finally break its ICC curse

LONDON, June 10, (AP): South Africa is at the business end of another world cricket championship and is haunted by the ghosts of losses past.

An infamous failure to win any cricket World Cup, often in heart-breaking fashion, weighs on the Proteas, who are preparing for the World Test Championship final against title holder Australia on Wednesday at Lord’s.

South Africa’s only global title was the Champions Trophy 27 years ago. It has never reached the ODI World Cup final, falling in the semifinals five times. When it got to the climax of the 2024 T20 World Cup in Bridgetown - its first world final since 1998 - it needed 30 runs off 30 balls with six wickets in hand against India. And lost by seven runs.

Five of those 11 are in the WTC squad. “It doesn’t weigh heavily on us,” South Africa coach Shukri Conrad said on Monday before practice.

“It’s unfair to burden this group with anything that’s gone before. But you can’t



Australia’s Steve Smith speaks during a press conference at Lord’s, London. (AP)

wish things away. We want to, and we need to win another ICC event. But whatever tags come along, we don’t wear that.

“It’s another occasion to set the record straight, to get that first title. And you can only win it if you play in the finals, and the more finals you play in, the more you obviously improve your chances of winning. So we’ve got another chance. We had a chance not so

long ago in the West Indies, in the T20 World Cup. Hopefully, this time, we break that duck.”

Conrad brought up the choker tag to the team last December in the dressing room at Centurion, where South Africa could clinch a spot in the WTC final with a win against Pakistan. In a chase of 148 to win, South Africa was 27-3 at stumps on day three.

“I thought it was the opportune time to lay down the challenge,” Conrad said. “If it didn’t go our way, we had another chance in Cape Town. It didn’t go down ... kindly, but at some stage that conversation needs to be had. It’s all about choosing when to have that. So we had it the evening before, and the result worked out okay.

“We touched on it briefly the other day. Around, what were the learnings from that? What sort of response can we expect, and what are we looking for?”

South Africa starts against Australia as the underdog. A lot is riding on seamers Kagiso Rabada and Marco Jansen restricting the Australian batters. On the batting side, the entire Proteas squad has totaled 22 centuries. Australia star Steve Smith has 36. Conrad was unfazed.



South Africa’s Senuran Muthusamy attends a nets session at Lord’s, London. (AP)

Barcelona stays on the calendar for final year of its contract

Madrid’s new street circuit to debut in 2026, replacing Imola on F1 schedule

LONDON, June 10, (AP): A new street circuit in Madrid will make its debut on the Formula 1 schedule in September of next year, replacing the Emilia-Romagna Grand Prix at Imola.

F1 announced its 2026 calendar on Tuesday, setting the first grand prix at the new Madrid track in the Spanish capital for Sept. 13.

Spain gets two races in 2026 as Barcelona stays on the calendar for the final year of its contract. It faces an uncertain future after that.

F1 has previously said Madrid’s race will be known as the Spanish Grand Prix. The new schedule doesn’t specify a new name for Barcelona’s race, which has been known as the Spanish Grand Prix since 1991.

Spain’s second race means Italy drops back to having one grand

prix as Imola leaves the schedule. The historic track, a favorite with drivers, returned to the schedule in 2020 as a late addition amid the COVID-19 pandemic and has hosted five races since. Its contract was up this year.

The Australian Grand Prix on March 8 starts the season for the second year running because the races in Bahrain and Saudi Arabia again move to April to avoid clashing with the Muslim holy month of Ramadan.

The season stays at 24 races and concludes with the Abu Dhabi Grand Prix from Dec. 4-6.

As part of a push to limit intercontinental travel, the Canadian Grand Prix moves forward from June to May 24 so that it follows the Miami Grand Prix. That sets up a potential clash with the Indianapolis 500.

Last month’s Monaco Grand Prix was also run on the same day as the Indy 500, but the difference in time zones meant it was easier to avoid a clash. The Monaco race started nearly four hours earlier and finished well before the Indy 500 began.

This week’s race in Canada is sandwiched between events in Spain and Austria. Moving Canada in 2026 will mean that all of F1’s European races are scheduled together from June through September.

“With 24 grands prix across five continents, the season truly reflects the global nature of our community, while the improved geographical flow of the calendar shows our joint commitment to making the championship more efficient and sustainable,” FIA President Mohammed Ben Sulayem said in a statement.

‘I thank President Gravina for the opportunity’

Ranieri rejects offer to coach Italy on a quest to get back to the World Cup

ROME, June 10, (AP): Claudio Ranieri did not even want to try where Roberto Mancini and Gian Piero Ventura failed - to take four-time champion Italy back to the World Cup.

One of the most beloved coaches in Italian soccer, Ranieri said on Tuesday he declined to lead Italy’s already troubled bid to qualify for its first World Cup since 2014.

“I thank President (Gabriele) Gravina for the opportunity,” Ranieri told Italian agency ANSA on Tuesday about the offer to coach the Azzurri from the national soccer federation leader.

The job is vacant just five days after Italy began its qualifying campaign with a woeful 3-0 loss at group leader Norway.

Luciano Spalletti paid for that defeat with his job but was allowed to stay on for a 2-0 win late Monday over minnow Moldova.

The 73-year-old Ranieri seemed available after more impressive work coaching Roma - reviving



In this file photo, Roma’s head coach Claudio Ranieri stands by the bench before the Europa League playoff first leg soccer match between FC Porto and AS Roma at the Dragao stadium in Porto, Portugal. (AP)

the club since being hired midseason - by taking a front-office advisory role for Texas-based owners the Friedkin family.

“The Friedkins gave me their full support and support for any

decision I made about the national team, but the decision is only mine,” Ranieri told ANSA.

Ranieri’s farewell from Roma fans was an emotional salute for a second straight season, having previously restored the fortunes of Cagliari, who he then guided to stay in Serie A.

Describing the Italy offer as “a great honor,” Ranieri said on Tuesday he “reflected and decided to remain at Roma’s disposal” with total commitment.

Ranieri’s four-decade career in coaching includes just four games as a national coach. His spell at Greece in 2014 lasted just a few months and was a rare failure.

His next job lifted his reputation even higher: Taking Leicester to an astonishing English Premier League title in 2016 with a team widely predicted to struggle against relegation.

By the time Ranieri was fired by Leicester in 2017, Italy had begun a 2018 World Cup qualifying cam-

paign under Ventura that would end in a playoffs elimination by Sweden. Italy had earlier been runner-up to Spain in a qualifying group.

Back-to-back failures to qualify were sealed in March 2022, coached by Mancini. Then-European champion Italy had been group runner-up behind Switzerland then was stunningly beaten at home by North Macedonia in a playoffs semifinal.

Italy has less than three months to find a coach before hosting Estonia on Sept. 5 in five-team Group I.

Norway has won four straight games, with Erling Haaland scoring in each. Italy is nine points behind in third place two games extra to play. Israel is currently second.

Italy hosts Norway in the final round on Nov. 16. Only the group winner advances direct to the 2026 tournament co-hosted by the United States, Canada and Mexico. The runner-up enters playoff brackets next March.

Arsenal to use 60,000-seat stadium for all league home games

LONDON, June 10, (AP): Women’s Champions League winner Arsenal pledged on Tuesday to use the club’s 60,000-seat main stadium for all home games in the domestic league next season.

Arsenal played nine of 11 home games in the Women’s Super League at Emirates Stadium this season, with almost 57,000 fans

watching a 5-0 win over Tottenham. The other two games were at nearby Borehamwood which can hold about 4,000 fans.

“Found a place where we belong,” Arsenal said in a social media post.

The two extra domestic league games at the Emirates will be balanced by fewer games there in the opening stages of the Champions

League, which have attracted fewer than 10,000 fans.

Arsenal finished runner-up to Chelsea in the English league before beating heavily favored Barcelona to become champion of Europe.

The home game against Chelsea drew more than 45,000 fans, and more than 46,000 came to the season-ending game against Man-

chester United.

Arsenal said in a statement it will use Borehamwood in the opening phase of the Champions League, which switches to an 18-team single standings league next season, then return to north London for the knockout rounds. Domestic cup games also will stay at the smaller venue.

Best of the Rest

Man City hires two key coaches: Two coaches who have been key to Liverpool’s success in recent years joined Pep Guardiola’s backroom staff at Manchester City on Tuesday.

Pepijn Lijnders, who was the long-time No. 2 to Jurgen Klopp at Liverpool, will take over as City’s assistant manager. The Dutchman left Liverpool and spent the first half of last season as head coach at Salzburg before getting fired.

James French comes directly from Liverpool to City as its new set-piece coach, ending his 13-year stay at Anfield during which time he worked as the opposition analyst.

“Pepijn and James have each amassed huge experience working in their individual roles over the past few years,” said Hugo Viana, City’s new director of football.

“Their talent, application, work ethic and all-round commitment are totally aligned with the values that underpin how Pep wants football to be played.”

Lijnders and French will join City ahead of the Club World Cup starting on Saturday. (AP)

Man City signs Ait-Nouri: Manchester City signed Algeria left back Rayan Ait-Nouri from Wolverhampton for a reported fee of 37 million

euros (\$42 million) on Monday.

City has been deploying center backs Nathan Ake and, more recently, Josko Gvardiol at left back in recent seasons but now has a specialist option in Ait-Nouri, who is a very attacking full back.

The 24-year-old Ait-Nouri joined Wolves from French team Angers in 2020.

“City are one of the biggest clubs in the world,” he said, “and the chance to play for the club is a dream come true.”

His contract at City runs to 2030 and he will be available for the new-look, 32-team Club World Cup, which starts on Saturday.

City is in the same group as Juventus, Al Ain and Wydad Casablanca and its first match is on June 18. (AP)

Congré rushed to hospital: Former Montpellier player Daniel Congré was found unconscious with a serious stab wound at his home in southern France and hospitalized, local media reported on Tuesday.

Congré, who works as sports coordinator at Ligue 1 club Lyon, was found with a wound near his heart at his home in the town of Pérols, close to Montpellier, according to L’Equipe sports daily and regional newspaper Midi Libre.

A police investigation is ongoing.

Midi Libre reported Congré’s wife called emergency services after the former defender injured himself on Monday evening. It was not clear whether the injury was an accident.

Congré was rushed to the university hospital of Montpellier. Midi Libre, quoting an unnamed source, said his condition has stabilized.

Congré played for nine seasons for Montpellier, playing 325 matches. (AP)

Garland has surgery: Cavaliers guard Darius Garland had surgery Monday on the injured left big toe that hampered him during Cleveland’s exit from the playoffs.

The Cavaliers said the procedure was performed by Dr. Nicholas Strasser at Vanderbilt University Medical Center in Nashville, Tennessee, in consultation with team physician Dr. James Rosneck and Dr. Bob Anderson.

The All-Star guard missed the final two games of the regular season and four games during the playoffs with the injury, which was described as a sprain.

“Definitely wasn’t myself. It was pretty uncomfortable but trying to do everything to win the game. It was frustrating because I wasn’t 100 percent,” Garland said after the Cavaliers lost to the Indiana Pacers in five games in the Eastern Conference semifinals. (AP)

‘We’re planning within uncertainty’

Immigration crackdown may impact next year’s World Cup

NEW YORK, June 10, (AP): Philadelphia’s host city executive for the 2026 World Cup says organizers accept that an immigration crackdown by President Donald Trump’s administration may be among the outside events that impact next year’s tournament.

“There are certainly things that are happening at the national level, the international level, there are going to be geopolitical issues that we don’t even know right now that are going to affect the tournament next year, so we recognize that we’re planning within uncertainty,” Meg Kane said Monday at a gathering of the 11 U.S. host city leaders, one year and two days ahead of the tournament opener.

The World Cup will be played at 16 stadiums in the U.S., Mexico and Canada from June 11 to July 19 next year, a tournament expanded to 48 nations and 104 games. All matches from the quarterfinals on will be in the U.S., with the final at MetLife Stadium in East Rutherford, New Jersey.

“Whether it’s the Olympics, whether it’s a World Cup, whether it’s a Super Bowl, you name it, anytime you’ve got a major international sporting event, geopolitics is going to have a role,” said Alex Vasry, CEO of the New York/New Jersey host committee.

Kane said the host committees must adapt to decisions made by others. “One of the things that I think we all recognize is that we have to be really good at operating within that uncertainty,” Kane said. “I think for each of our cities, we want to be prepared to make any person that is coming and makes the decision to come to the United States or come to this World Cup feel that they are welcome. We do not play a role necessarily in what is happening in terms of the decisions that are made.”

Trump’s travel ban on citizens from 12 countries exempted athletes, coaches, staff and relatives while not mentioning fans.

“We allow for FIFA to continue having constructive conversations with the administrations around visas, around workforce, around tourism,” Kane said.

FIFA is running the World Cup for the first time without a local organizing committee in the host nation. Asked in late April whether FIFA president Gianni Infantino was available to discuss the tournament, FIFA director of media relations Bryan Swanson forwarded the request to a member of the media relations staff, who did not make Infantino available.

Legislation approved by the House of Representatives and awaiting action in the Senate would appropriate \$625 million to the Federal Emergency Management Agency “for security, planning, and other costs related to the 2026 FIFA World Cup.”

The 11 U.S. host committees have been consulting with each other on issues such as transportation for teams and VIPs, and for arranging fan fests.

At the last major soccer tournament in the U.S., the 2024 Copa America final at Hard Rock Stadium in Miami Gardens, Florida, started 82 minutes late after fans breached security gates.

“Certainly we were not involved in the planning or the logistics for that particular match,” said Alina Hudak, CEO of the Miami World Cup host committee. She said local police “have done an extensive review of the after-action reports related to that in collaboration with the stadium and so all of the things that happened are in fact being reviewed and addressed and I can assure you that everything is being done within our power to make sure that the appropriate measures are being placed, the appropriate perimeters.”



In this file photo, United States Soccer Federation president Carlos Cordeiro, left, and FIFA president Gianni Infantino present US President Donald Trump with soccer jerseys during a meeting in the Oval Office of the White House in Washington. (AP)

Italy sends off Spalletti with win; De Bruyne the hero for Belgium



Czech Republic's Michal Sadilek, left, jumps for the ball with Croatia's Luka Modric during a World Cup 2026 group L qualifying soccer match between Croatia and Czech Republic at the Opus Arena in Osijek, Croatia. (AP)

Croatia routs Czech Republic 5-1

MILAN, June 10, (AP): With a parting gift for Luciano Spalletti, Italy beat Moldova 2-0 on Monday for its first points in the beleaguered national team's attempt to reach the World Cup for the first time since 2014.

There was also a significant victory in World Cup qualifying for Belgium, with Kevin De Bruyne demonstrating his enduring class by scoring in the 88th minute to snatch a 4-3 win against Wales after his team squandered a 3-0 lead after 27 minutes.

Spalletti was informed ahead of the game in Reggio Emilia that he would be losing his job as Italy coach in the wake of the team's 3-0 loss in Norway last week, which marked a dreadful way to begin its qualifying campaign for the 2026 World Cup.

Goals by Giacomo Raspadori and Andrea Cambiaso meant Spalletti at least departed with a victory. Yet the Azzurri remained in a perilous position in Group I, with Norway beating Estonia 1-0 - thanks to Erling Haaland's 62nd-minute goal - to make it four wins from four halfway through qualifying.

Italy stayed nine points behind Norway - albeit having played two fewer matches - and might have



Italy's Mateo Reteguian and Moldova's Sergiu Platic, right, in action during the World Cup 2026 qualifiers soccer match between Italy and Moldova at the Mapei Stadium, Reggio Emilia, Italy. (AP)

missed a good chance to rack up some goals to boost its goal difference.

"We certainly are not leaving my successor a sense of enthusiasm, despite the positive response from the fans," said Spalletti, who was in charge for less than two years. "The coach has to make the difference, the players have to make the difference, and unfortunately I did not make the difference."

Only the top team from each of the 12 groups qualifies automatically for next year's expanded 48-team tournament in North America. The runners-up go into the playoffs - the stage where Italy was eliminated by Sweden and North Macedonia to miss out on

the 2018 and 2022 World Cups, respectively, in a humiliation for one of Europe's traditional powers.

"We are the first to know it wasn't a great game, we wanted to give the coach a better send-off," Cambiaso said of the Moldova game.

"We are professionals, unfortunately these things happen in sport. Spalletti is a great coach, has such passion for the sport, and every time a coach is fired, it hurts the players. We feel really sad."

Belgium was heading for a second straight draw to open World Cup qualifying until De Bruyne struck late at King Baudouin Stadium to consign rejuvenated Wales to a first defeat under Craig Bel-

lamy in his 10 matches in charge.

Four days after being held by North Macedonia 1-1, Belgium sped ahead 3-0 inside the first half hour through goals by Romelu Lukaku, Youri Tielemans and Jeremy Doku.

Wales mounted a stirring recovery to draw level by the 69th, only for De Bruyne to meet a deep cross with a left-footed volley inside the near post. The playmaker is preparing to leave Manchester City after 10 years, with Napoli a possible destination according to reports in Britain.

North Macedonia won at Kazakhstan 1-0 and led Group J on eight points - one above Wales and four above Belgium, which has two games in hand.

"I don't like the defeat and I don't feel, 'Oh, unlucky Wales,'" Bellamy said. "We need to win these games. But after being 3-0 down, where it could've gone the other way, for them to believe in themselves, that will give us so much going forward."

Croatia beat the Czech Republic 5-1, with 39-year-old Luka Modric among its scorers, and trimmed the gap to its opponent to three points in Group L.

Croatia has played only two games - winning both - whereas the Czechs have played four and won three of them.

In the group's other game, Gibraltar was heading for its first ever point in qualifying for the World Cup or European Championship but conceded in the 86th minute to lose at the Faroe Islands 2-1.

PSG's Kolo Muani staying

Juve keeps faith in Tudor as coach for Club World Cup

TURIN, Italy, June 10, (AP): Juventus coach Igor Tudor is to stay in charge next season and French forward Randal Kolo Muani will play at the Club World Cup, the club's new general manager Damien Comolli said on Tuesday.

Comolli, who took over at Juventus only this month, said talks with Tudor reached a positive conclusion after the Croatian coach previously voiced his displeasure with his status.

Tudor guided Juventus to fourth place and the final Champions League spot after five wins in nine games in Serie A, but he was clearly unhappy with reports suggesting he would remain in charge only for the Club World Cup.

"Tudor will be our coach for the next season and not only for the Club World Cup," said Comolli in his first press conference on Tuesday.

Comolli, who is French, said he was very impressed by the intensity of Tudor's team when he first saw him in charge of Marseille in the 2022-23 season. Tudor, who played for Juventus from 1998-2007 also coached Udinese, Hellas Verona, and Lazio before taking over at Juventus from the unpopular Thiago Motta in March.

"What impressed me most was the resilience of his team, the physical and mental endurance of those players," Comolli said of Tudor.

Comolli said he reached an agreement for Kolo Muani's loan from Paris Saint-Germain to be extended for the Club World Cup while negotiations continue to extend the loan beyond the month-long competition starting in Miami on Saturday.

Comolli said Kolo Muani, who scored eight goals in 18 games after joining Juventus in January, "expressed his desire to continue his adventure in black and white."

Comolli was appointed on June 1, when Juventus also announced former club favorite Giorgio Chiellini was returning for a management position.

"He will have a strategic role. It will not only be a role focused on the field. He will also act outside," Comolli said of Chiellini. "He will be a key figure in the commercial field as well."

Comolli also said the club was looking for a new sporting director to take over from Cristiano Giuntoli and a new technical director.

"We want to take the time to choose the right people for these two key positions," Comolli said. "Having two distinct figures becomes very important because modern football is becoming increasingly global and the demands are increasing."

The 53-year-old Comolli has a wealth of experience after stints at Monaco, Arsenal, Saint-Etienne, Tottenham Hotspur, Liverpool, Fenerbahce, and Toulouse.

Juventus begins its Club World Cup against Al Ain of the United Arab Emirates, then faces Moroccan team Wydad Casablanca and Manchester City in Group G.

Dortmund signs Jobe Bellingham

DORTMUND, Germany, June 10, (AP): The Bellingham name is back at Borussia Dortmund.

Jobe Bellingham signed a five-year-deal on Tuesday with the German club where his older brother developed into one of the world's best midfielders before joining Real Madrid in 2023.

The younger Bellingham, 19, leaves Sunderland just over two weeks after helping it to win promotion back to the Premier League through the playoff final. He reportedly turned down an offer from Eintracht Frankfurt.

Bellingham is eligible for Dortmund's opening group-stage games this month at the Club World Cup in the United States. He will wear No. 77 at the tournament, Dortmund said.

Dortmund starts against Brazil's Fluminense on June 17 followed by Mamelodi Sundowns of South Africa on June 21 and South

Korea's Ulsan HD four days after that.

Just like Jude, Jobe Bellingham is a central midfielder who likes to get forward and support attacks.

Jobe has followed in his brother's footsteps by coming through the Birmingham City academy and making his senior debut at the age of 16 in 2022. He's also played for England Under-21s.

There are a couple of differences between the Bellinghams, too.

Jobe is two years older than Jude was when he signed for Dortmund in 2020, and he also has experience of playing a center-forward role in a handful of games for Sunderland.

His performances for Sunderland in the second-division Championship this season saw Bellingham named the league's young player of the year in April and named in its team of the season.

Bellingham joins a Dortmund team which narrowly secured Champions League qualification for next season by rising to fourth place on the final day of the Bundesliga.



Bellingham

Tennis is in good hands

Alcaraz, Sinner now take their rivalry to Wimbledon

PARIS, June 10, (AP): The take-aways from Carlos Alcaraz's fifth-set tiebreaker victory over Jannik Sinner in the riveting and record-breaking French Open men's final were multiple and significant.

Let's start with this: Anyone worried about how men's tennis would survive in the post-Big Three era can rest easy. Alcaraz and Sinner produced 5 1/2 hours of evidence Sunday that the game is in good hands - and that their rivalry will be, and perhaps already is, a transcendent one.

Take it from no less an authority than Roger Federer. The retired owner of 20 Grand Slam titles, and rival of Rafael Nadal (22 majors) and Novak Djokovic (24), began a post on social media by declaring, "3 winners in Paris today," then listed Alcaraz, Sinner and "the beautiful fame of tennis. What a match!"

This was the 12th Alcaraz-Sinner meeting, the first in a major final. "Hopefully not the last time," Alcaraz said. "Every time that we face ... each other, we raise our level to the top."

It would be shocking if there weren't many more of these to come - perhaps as soon as at Wimbledon, where play begins on June 30 and No. 2-ranked Alcaraz is the two-time defending champion.

His comeback against No. 1 Sinner from two sets down, then three championship points down, to win 4-6, 6-7 (4), 6-4, 7-6 (3), 7-6 (10-2) was unprecedented at Roland-Garros. It was

unforgettable. Alcaraz's coach, Juan Carlos Ferrero, described his guy's best trait this way: "His strength is (to) keep believing all the time, until the last ball is gone."

Alcaraz's five Grand Slam titles at 22 - that's the age at which Nadal, Bjorn Borg and Pete Sampras also got to five; no one's done it younger - show how special he is. So does the Spaniard's 5-0 record in major finals, a career start surpassed among men only by Federer's 7-0.

Sinner is pretty good, too. Tuesday marks a full year that he has been ranked No. 1. He has reached the finals of his last eight tournaments, a run last accomplished by Djokovic a decade ago. He has won

three majors. He has won 47 of his last 50 matches.

Notably, all three of those losses came against - yes, you guessed it - Alcaraz. That hearkens back to the days when Federer would beat everyone other than Nadal.

Sinner had claimed 31 Slam sets in a row right up until the moment he was up 2-0 against Alcaraz.

What was unmistakable to anyone watching in-person at Court Philippe-Chatrier or following along from afar on TV is that Alcaraz vs. Sinner is a must-see.

"The level," Alcaraz said, "was insane."

Sinner's take?

"I'm happy to be part of this," the

23-year-old Italian said. "Would be even more happy if I would have ... the big trophy."

As with any great rivalry - think Evert vs. Navratilova or Borg vs. McEnroe or Federer vs. Nadal, no first names needed - Alcaraz vs. Sinner provides a clash of excellence and a study in contrasts.

Alcaraz displays emotion, pumping his fists, pointing to an ear to ask for more noise, yelling "Vamos!" Sinner is rather contained. Sinner's long limbs get him to nearly every ball. Alcaraz's motor reaches speeds no one can equal. Sinner's ball-striking is pure. Alcaraz's drop shots are legendary. Both hammer groundstrokes that leave opponents exasperated and spectators gasping.

Both can improve. Sinner has never won a match that lasted four hours. Alcaraz loses focus on occasion.

Both are eager to improve. When Sinner returned from a three-month doping ban last month, he introduced a new, angled return stance. Alcaraz tweaked his serve and backhand technique.

Who knows what heights each can reach? They split the past six Slam trophies, and eight of the past 11.

Federer saw this coming.

During an interview with The Associated Press in December 2019, Federer predicted someone would win major after major the way he, Nadal and Djokovic did. Just didn't know there would be a Big Two doing it.



Spain's Carlos Alcaraz returns to Italy's Jannik Sinner during the final match of the French Tennis Open at the Roland-Garros in Paris. (AP)

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NEWS



Kuwait goalkeeper directs his defenders during Kuwait and South Korea World Cup qualifying match in Seoul.

Sports

Kuwait ends Cup qualifying campaign with loss

Japan and South Korea earn big home wins

By Khaled Al-Enezi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff and Agencies

SEOUL, June 10: Kuwait returned from Seoul after suffering a 4-0 defeat against South Korea at the World Cup Stadium in the South Korean capital. The match was the tenth and final round of Group B in the 2026 World Cup qualifiers.

South Korea finished top of the group with 22 points, while our team remained in sixth and last place with five points. Over the course of the qualifiers, the national team played 10 matches, drawing five and losing five.

Argentina's coach Juan Pizzi started the game with a lineup including Suleiman Abdul Ghafoor, Mishari Ghannam, Mohammed Al-Nassar, Fahad Al-Hajri, Abdulwahab Al-Awadhi, Reda Hani, Ahmed Al-Dhafiri, Jassim Al-Matar, Talal Al-Qaisi, Ahmed Al-Zanki, and Youssef Majed.

From the opening minutes, the South Korean team dominated possession and controlled the game, thanks to strong organization and skillful midfield play, launching multiple attacks on Abdul Ghafoor's goal.

Kuwait however, retreated too much into midfield despite the match being a formality—South Korea had already secured the top spot and World Cup qualification, while our team was out of the running for direct qualification and the Asian playoffs.

The Koreans varied their attacks well, utilizing both central and wide areas, repeatedly threatening Suleiman's goal. Suleiman's alert goalkeeping kept the scoreline respectable in the early stages.

In the 18th minute, Jo Bae nearly scored with a powerful shot from outside the box, which Suleiman deflected for a corner. Korea broke the deadlock in the 30th minute when Jo Won-gyeon scored from a corner, the ball deflecting off Fahad Al-Hajri before crossing the line. Our team's best chance in the first half came in the 38th minute when Ahmed Al-Zanki surged into the penalty area but mishandled a pass intended for Talal Al-Qaisi.

The second half saw continued Korean dominance, with two quick goals: Kang Lee scored in the 51st minute, followed by Oh Se-hyun in the 54th minute. Oh also nearly added a fourth goal two minutes later when his shot hit the post after Abdul Ghafoor's save.

In an effort to change the game, coach Pizzi made three substitutions, bringing on Fawaz Ayed, Moaz Al-Asima, and Hussein Ashkanani for Reda Hani, Jassim Al-Matar, and Youssef Majed, but the team's performance did not improve.



South Korea's Oh Hyeong-gyu, left, fights for the ball against Kuwait's Talal Alqaisi during the Asian qualifier group B match for 2026 World Cup between South Korea and Kuwait at Seoul World Cup Stadium in Seoul, South Korea. (AP)

Kuwait earned a corner in the 69th minute, but Fahad Al-Hajri mishandled the delivery, missing the opportunity. Substitute Jeon Lee sealed the victory for South Korea with a fourth goal from inside the penalty area in the 72nd minute.

In Osaka, Daichi Kamada scored after 15 minutes to set Japan, preparing for an eighth consecutive World Cup, on its way to a 6-0 victory.

Takefusa Kubo added a second five minutes later and Kamada extended the lead

just before the break. Soon after the restart, Ryoya Morishita and Shuto Machino piled on and Mao Hosoya made it six.

In Asia's third round of qualification, the top two from each of the three groups of six progress automatically to the World Cup. Jordan, Uzbekistan, Iran, Japan and South Korea have qualified for the expanded 48-team tournament in the United States, Canada and Mexico.

Governing body has not revealed plans for this year's draw

One year from World Cup opener, FIFA leaves questions unanswered on tickets and security

NEW YORK, June 10, (AP): A year from the largest World Cup ever, there has been no announcement on general ticket sales, prices for most seats, location of a draw or security arrangements as FIFA has mostly avoided disclosing details of an event set for 16 stadiums across the United States, Mexico and Canada.

There is uncertainty about whether fans from some nations will be welcome - 11 of the venues are located in the U.S., where all matches will be played from the quarterfinals on.

Security is a concern, too. At the last major soccer tournament in the U.S., the 2024 Copa America final at Miami Gardens, Florida, started 82 minutes late after spectators breached security gates.

"That was certainly a reminder and a wake-up call if anybody needed it that those types of things are going to be used in terms of the ultimate assessment of whether this World Cup is successful," said former U.S. defender Alexi Lalas, now Fox's lead soccer analyst.

U.S. President Donald Trump's travel ban on citizens from 12 nations exempted athletes, coaches, staff and relatives while not mentioning fans. Vice President JD Vance made what could be interpreted as a warning on May 6.

"Of course everybody is welcome to come and see this incredible event. I know we'll have visitors probably from close to 100 countries. We want them to come. We want them to celebrate. We want them to watch the game," he said. "But when the time is up they'll have to go home. Otherwise they'll have to talk to Secretary Noem," he added, speaking alongside Secretary of Homeland Security Kristi Noem.

The 1994 World Cup sparked the launch of Major League Soccer with 12 teams in 1996, and \$50 million in World Cup profits seeded the U.S.



In this file photo, the World Cup trophy is displayed before the UEFA Preliminary Draw for the 2026 FIFA World Cup soccer tournament at FIFA headquarters in Zurich, Switzerland. (AP)

Soccer Foundation, tasked with developing the sport's growth. MLS now has 30 teams, plays in 22 soccer specific stadiums and has club academies to grow the sport and improve talent.

Next year's tournament will include 104 games, up from 64 from 1998 through 2022, and the 11 U.S. stadiums are all NFL homes with lucrative luxury suites and club seating. It also will be the first World Cup run by FIFA without a local organizing committee.

"The legacy initiative of 2026 is around how we ensure that soccer is everywhere in this county," U.S. Soccer Federation CEO JT Batson said. "How do we ensure that every American can walk, ride their bike or take public transit to a safe place to play soccer? How do we make it to where every school in America has soccer accessible to their students? And how do

we make it to wherever every American can truly see themselves in the game?"

Interest in soccer has vastly increased in the U.S., with England's Premier League averaging 510,000 viewers per match window on NBC's networks last season and the European Champions League final drawing more than 2 million viewers in each of the past five years on CBS. However, CBS broadcast just 26 of 189 Champions League matches on TV in 2024-25 and streamed the rest.

MLS drew about 12.2 million fans last year, second to 14.7 million in 2023-24 for the Premier League's 20 teams, but MLS has largely disappeared from broadcast TV since starting a 10-year contract with Apple TV+ in 2023. Apple spokesman Sam Citron said the company does not release viewer figures.

In a fractured television landscape, different deals were negotiated by FIFA, UEFA, MLS, the NWSL, the USSF and the five major European leagues.

"You basically have over 2,800 game windows per season aired in the United States and so that requires distribution largely on streaming platforms like Paramount+ or ESPN+, but it's difficult for new fan adoption and it makes reach kind of challenging," said Gerry Cardinale, managing partner of RedBird Capital Partners, which holds controlling interests in AC Milan and Toulouse and owns a non-controlling stake of Fenway Sports Group, parent of Liverpool. "Kids today are getting weaned on Premier League football and Serie A football, and when you watch that as a product, it's hard for MLS to compete."

The 1994 World Cup, a 24-nation tournament, drew a record 3.58 million fans for 52 matches. Ticket prices ranged from \$25-\$75 for most first round games and \$180-\$475 for the final at the Rose Bowl in Pasadena, California.

FIFA, which has about 800 people working at an office in Coral Gables, Florida, says it will announce information on general tickets in the third quarter. It wouldn't say whether prices will be fixed or variable.

Hospitality packages are available on FIFA's website through On Location. For the eight matches at MetLife Stadium in East Rutherford, New Jersey, including the final on July 19, prices range from \$25,800 to \$73,200 per person.

FIFA appears to be using variable pricing for this year's Club World Cup, played at 12 U.S. stadiums from June 14 to July 13, and some prices repeatedly have been slashed. Marriot Bonvoy, a U.S. Soccer Federation partner, has been offering free tickets to some of its elite members.

Al-Arabi to fight in play-off

Kuwait Club gets Challenge League group stage berth



A file photo of players challenging for the ball.

By Hassan Mosa

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, June 10: The Asian Football Confederation (AFC) has confirmed that Kuwait Club will gain direct entry into the 2025-26 AFC Challenge League, taking part in the group stage from October 25 through November 1. Meanwhile, Al-Arabi has been granted a play-off spot to vie for a place in the same group stage. Its decisive fixture is slated for one of three possible dates - July 29, August 5, or August 12.

Last season, Kuwait Club competed in the AFC Champions League 2 but finished bottom of its group and failed to progress, while Al-Arabi reached the semi-finals of the AFC Challenge League before being eliminated.

Pooran retires from internationals

ST. JOHN'S, Antigua, June 10, (AP): Nicholas Pooran, West Indies' Twenty20 record-holder for runs and appearances, retired from international cricket.

Pooran, 29, made the announcement on Instagram.

"Wearing that maroon, standing for the anthem, and giving everything I had each time I stepped on the field ... it's hard to put into words what that truly means to me," he wrote. "To have led the team as captain is a privilege I will always hold close to my heart."

Pooran was suspended briefly in late 2019 after admitting to ball-tampering against Afghanistan, and overcame that to be named West Indies T20 vice captain about 18 months later for a tour by Australia. But he became captain when Kieron Pollard couldn't play, and led the team to a 4-1 series win.

In 2022, he was named the permanent white-ball captain and took the team to that year's T20 World Cup in Australia, but in fallout from a first-round elimination he resigned.

He starred when the West Indies hosted the T20 World Cup last year, overtaking Chris Gayle as the team's all-time leading scorer, and hitting his highest T20 score, 98 against Afghanistan.

Pooran played 106 T20s for 2,275 runs at an average of 26.14. He also played 61 one-day internationals, including three centuries and one World Cup.

Cricketer West Indies praised Pooran as a game-changer, and with "sincere gratitude and appreciation ... for his outstanding contributions. His performances on the field and influence within the team have made a lasting impact on West Indies cricket."

Best of the Rest

Valkyries beat Sparks: Janelle Salaun had 21 points and eight rebounds, Kayla Thornton made a 3-pointer with 37.9 seconds left in overtime, and the Golden State Valkyries beat the Los Angeles Sparks 89-81.

Veronica Burton made her first field goal of the game in overtime and Thornton added a basket on Golden State's next possession for an 82-79 lead. Salaun scored on the Valkyries' third straight possession, following an offensive rebound, to make it 84-81 with 2:03 left.

Golden State dominated the rebounding 49-34, including 17-6 on the offensive end.

Los Angeles missed 8 of 9 field goals in overtime. Thornton finished with 18 points and 11 rebounds and Temi Fagbenle added 14 points, 13 rebounds, four steals and four blocks for Golden State (4-5). Carla Leite scored 15 points and Monique Billings added 10. The Valkyries went 20 for 23 at the free-throw line. (AP)