



Amir, Crown Prince, PM commend academic achievers

KUWAIT CITY, June 25, (KUNA): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah sent cables on Wednesday to Kuwaiti and resident high school and religious studies institute students, congratulating them on excelling in the 2024-25 school semester.

His Highness the Amir wished the students and their families more success, expressing hopes for continuous progress

and academic excellence.

Similarly, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah sent on Wednesday cables to Kuwaiti and resident high school and religious institute students who performed outstandingly in the 2024-25 semester.

His Highness the Crown Prince congratulated the students and their families for their achievement, wishing them the

best in their venture endeavors.

His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah also sent on Wednesday cables to outstanding Kuwaiti and residents high school and religious studies institute students for excelling in the 2024-25 term.

— See Also Page 5 —

Monitoring agency urges faster and error-free gov't performance



Director of Government Performance Monitoring Agency Sheikh Ahmad Al-Mishaal Al-Sabah with Editor-in-Chief of Al-Seyassah, Arab Times and Al-Hadaf Ahmed Al-Jarallah.

KUWAIT CITY, June 25: Anyone who scrutinizes the tasks assigned to the Government Performance Monitoring Agency, especially those related to major development projects in the country, will realize the enthusiasm and determination to push for the success of its leader; which became evident after the ministerial position was stabilized with the current government, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

On this basis, Director of the agency Sheikh Ahmad Al-Mishaal Al-Sabah stressed "we are committed to implement the Amiri Decree on establishing the agency in both its letter and spirit. This is our trajectory."

In an interview with Editor-in-Chief of Al-Seyassah, Arab Times and Al-Hadaf Ahmed Al-Jarallah, Sheikh Ahmad Al-Mishaal Al-Sabah disclosed "our reports are submitted to His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Al-Abdullah Al-Sabah, as well as the concerned ministers; and often include observations and suggestions. At the agency, we do not merely monitor performance; as we also work hard to develop it as we see fit."

He pointed out that some people imagine that the agency is based solely on the principle of performance oversight; but in reality, it performs many tasks to develop State institutions. "Like all similar agencies around the world, it has a broad scope for monitoring government

Continued on Page 5

Amir greets Qatari leader on leadership anniversary



His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah



Amir of Qatar Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani

KUWAIT CITY, June 25, (KUNA): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah sent on Wednesday a cable of congratulations to the Amir of Qatar Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani on the 12th anniversary of assuming post.

His Highness the Amir commended the Qatari leader for the various achievements

during his reign, wishing him and the people of Qatar evermore progress, development, and welfare.

His Highness the Amir also commended the level of cooperation between the two brotherly countries, expressed desire to further solidify relations.

Continued on Page 5

Kuwait urges truce compliance

Cautious hope as Iran-Israel ceasefire holds despite tensions

KUWAIT CITY, June 25, (Agencies): The Kuwaiti Cabinet on Tuesday welcomed a recently announced ceasefire agreement between parties involved in the regional conflict, urging them to respect it.

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

The Cabinet commended US President Donald Trump's efforts to put the ceasefire in place in a bid to promote diplomatic efforts to fend off further regional tensions and conflicts that undermine regional and international security and peace.

The Cabinet was apprised of His Highness the Amir and the Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah's chairmanship of a meeting of the Supreme Defense Council earlier in the day.

The meeting, which was attended by His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah and His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, was meant to follow up on the latest regional developments.

In this regard, the Cabinet listened to an

Continued on Page 5

PM urges follow-up on Kuwait-China agreements



HH the PM chairs a meeting to follow up on the implementation of agreements and memoranda of understanding signed between the governments of Kuwait and China.

KUWAIT CITY, June 25, (KUNA): His Highness the Prime Minister, Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, on Wednesday urged the concerned ministers to follow up on the implementation of the agreements and memoranda of understanding signed between Kuwait and China.

This came in a meeting headed by His Highness to follow up on the implementation of agreements and memoranda of understanding signed between the governments of Kuwait and China.

The 16th meeting of the committee touched on the latest developments of projects included in the agreements between the governments of the two countries on cooperation in the Mubarak Al-Kabeer Port project, the electrical power system, the development of renewable energy, low-carbon green system for waste recycling, housing development, environmental infrastructure

Continued on Page 5

High-tech approach wins ambassadors' praise EU envoys tour GCC crisis hub in Kuwait

KUWAIT CITY, June 25, (KUNA): The Head of the GCC Emergency Management Center under the General Secretariat of the Gulf Cooperation Council, Brigadier Dr. Rashid Al-Marri, received on Wednesday a diplomatic delegation consisting of 17 ambassadors from EU countries to Kuwait, at the Center's headquarters in Kuwait.

The Center stated in a release that the visit aims to strengthen mutual cooperation and exchange experiences in the fields of crisis and emergency management, as well as to learn about the GCC countries' experience in building

an integrated system for regional security and safety.

During the meeting, Al-Marri presented a detailed overview of the Center's operational mechanisms, including radiation monitoring systems, early warning systems, and regional emergency coordination. He also reviewed modern technological initiatives adopted by the Center to support decision-makers.

The delegation also took a field tour inside the Central Operations Room, during which the ambassadors were briefed on the operational technolo-

gies used for monitoring and analyzing emergency data and on the immediate coordination mechanisms between GCC countries when facing disasters.

Al-Marri emphasized that the visit of the EU ambassadors represents an important step in strengthening international partnerships in the field of emergency management. He noted that the Center serves as an integrated platform for coordinating Gulf efforts based on a comprehensive vision focused on prevention, preparedness, and response.

Continued on Page 5



Seventeen ambassadors from European Union member states pose for a group photo during their visit to the GCC Emergency Management Center in Kuwait.

Kuwait vows stronger labor protections, digital reforms

KUWAIT CITY, June 25, (KUNA): Kuwait has renewed its unwavering commitment to promoting workers' rights and providing a fair work environment, in line with its development vision and sustainable development goals.

This came during a meeting hosted by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on Tuesday, represented by the Human Rights Affairs Department, which included representatives from the Public Authority for Manpower, the Kuwait Chamber of Commerce and Industry,

and the General Federation of Kuwait Trade Union.

The meeting followed up on the outcomes of the 113th session of the International Labor Conference, which was hosted in Geneva (June 2-13) with the participation of delegations from 187 countries, including representatives of government, employers, and workers.

This meeting aims to enhance ongoing cooperation between relevant

Continued on Page 5

Day by Day

There are five things whose loss causes no harm – your excess weight, a decayed tooth, an ungrateful friend, a spiteful relative, and a jealous kinsman. Some losses, as the wise, the learned, and the experienced say, are actually gains.

... Yet tomorrow is another day.

Zahed Matar

Khor Abdullah case faces further delay

BAGHDAD, June 25, (KUNA): Iraq's Federal Supreme Court postponed on Wednesday its review of appeals submitted by Iraqi President Abdullah Rashid and Prime Minister Mohammad Al-Sudani regarding the Khor Abdullah agreement between Kuwait and Baghdad, to July 30.

According to the court's schedule, these two sessions will be held as postponed sessions and without pleadings.

Iraq's President Abdullah Rashid and Prime Minister Mohammed Al-Sudani launched separate appeals against a Federal Supreme Court decision to render an agreement regulating navigation in the Khor Abdullah waterway between Baghdad and Kuwait unconstitutional.

Continued on Page 5



HORIZON TALK

Ahmed Al-Jarallah

When the Qarmatians committed the most horrific massacre in the history of Hajj

While Muslims were engaged in their daily affairs, Qarmat planned his attack.

On the Day of Tarwiyah, they stormed the Grand Mosque in Makkah and killed the pilgrims.

They removed the door of the Ka'aba, tore its covering, and stole its treasures.

They threw corpses into the Well of Zamzam until it was full.

They pulled out the Black Stone and carried it with them to Qatif.

They imposed the Hajj pilgrimage to Al-Jash instead of Makkah, but the people refused.

Fatimid Caliph Al-Aziz Billah threatened to invade them, so they were frightened and returned the Black Stone.

The Qarmatian who desecrated the House of God was punished with smallpox, and his body rotted while he was still alive.

3



2 'Pakistan fully backs Kuwait efforts for regional stability'

9 Weyay Bank sponsors 'Choose Your Major' exhibition for high school students



15 Kuwait Football's brightest stars shine at Zain's annual Excellence Awards

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

Local

Expected weather for next 24 hrs:
By Day: Very hot with light to moderate freshening at times northwesterly wind, with speeds of 15-42 km/h with a chance for rising dust over open areas.
By Night: Hot to rather hot with

Weather			
light to moderate northwesterly wind, with speeds of 12-35 km/h.			
Station	Max Exp	Min Rec	
Kuwait City	47	33	
Kuwait Airport	46	33	
Abdaly	47	29	
Jahra	47	32	
Failaka Island	42	30	
Salmiyah	43	33	
Ahmadi	42	30	
Nuwaib	46	31	
Wafra	46	32	
Salmi	45	29	

Kuwait-Sweden bilateral trade in focus



KUNA photo
Kuwaiti Ambassador to Sweden Mohammad Hayati and Swedish Parliament Speaker Andreas Norlen during the meeting.

KUWAIT CITY, June 25, (KUNA): Kuwaiti Ambassador to Sweden Mohammad Hayati and Swedish Parliament Speaker Andreas Norlen tackled bilateral relations and recent development in the region.
A statement by Kuwait Embassy in Sweden received by KUNA said that the ambassador met the Swedish Speaker on Tuesday in Stockholm.
The statement added that the meeting also delved into the historical relations between the two countries, which this year marks the 60th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between the State of Kuwait and the Kingdom of Sweden.
The Parliament Speaker offered his congratulations on this occasion.
The two sides also discussed aspects of joint cooperation and ways to strengthen bilateral relations.
The meeting also highlighted Kuwait's investment presence in Sweden and the successful partnership in the energy sector between the two countries through the joint ownership of 80KQ, which operates in the fuel supply, transportation, and other services sectors.
The statement also noted the distinguished presence of many Swedish companies in the Kuwaiti market, such as Volvo, IKEA, Ericsson, H&M, and others.
The statement continued, Ambassador Hayati reviewed areas of cooperation that the Kuwaiti side looks forward to benefiting from, including Swedish expertise, particularly in the health and pharmaceutical sectors, innovation, artificial intelligence, and information technology.

Concern over Gaza women atrocities

GENEVA, June 25, (KUNA): Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries expressed Wednesday grave concern over the violations against Palestinian women and girls in Gaza Strip, the systematic destruction of health facilities, and the denial of care during pregnancy and childbirth.
This came in a speech delivered by Kuwait's Permanent Representative to the United Nations and other international organizations in Geneva and Chairman of the Council of Ambassadors of GCC, Ambassador Naser Al-Hayen, before the UN General Assembly in Geneva.
The UN session discussed a report by the Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women, Reem Al-Salem, in which she stressed the need to return to basic definitions of gender-based discrimination.
Al-Salem warned against the erasure of language and concepts associated with women and the devastating consequences it has on their rights and safety, especially in light of the complete collapse of protection provided by international law during war and occupation, particularly in Palestine.
Back to Ambassador Al-Hayen, he expressed the GCC countries' appreciation for the Special Rapporteur's efforts in highlighting forms of gender-based violence against women and girls.
He emphasized the need to develop international frameworks that restore consideration to legal concepts based on gender as a fundamental pillar for the protection of women and girls.



KUNA photo
Nasser Al-Hayen

He also emphasized the importance of integrating the gender of women and girls into public policy formulation, ensuring the continuity of the special protection they enjoy, as stipulated in international conventions, while not ignoring cultural and national specificities.
Ambassador Al-Hayen welcomed Al-Salem's successful visit to the UAE and the efforts she highlighted in the field of women's empowerment, legislative development, and enhancing the protection of women and girls from violence.

'Pakistan fully backs Kuwait efforts for regional stability'

We thank Amir, Kuwaiti people for hospitality: Dr Iqbal



Ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan to Kuwait Dr. Zafar Iqbal receives the Minister of Commerce and Industry Khalifa Al-Ajeel.



Photos by Mohammad Morsi
Ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan to Kuwait Dr. Zafar Iqbal receives the US Ambassador to Kuwait Karen Sasahara.

By Fares Al-Abdan
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff
KUWAIT CITY, June 25: Ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan to Kuwait Dr. Zafar Iqbal has affirmed the strength of bilateral relations between Pakistan and Kuwait as well as the depth of historical, social and economic ties that bind the two countries, indicating these relations are based on mutual respect and a shared vision for a future of peace and prosperity.
This came in a speech that the Ambassador delivered Thursday night at a celebration organized by the Pakistani Embassy on the occasion of the 85th National Day of Pakistan.
Present at the event were Minister of Commerce and Industry Khalifa Al-Ajeel, and a number of ambassadors and representatives of the diplomatic corps.

Iqbal pointed out that the skilled Pakistani workforce in Kuwait, particularly in the construction and services sectors, is regarded as a vital bridge between the two countries and contributes significantly to supporting the Kuwaiti economy. He confirmed his country's aspiration for a broader Kuwaiti partnership in the national development process of Pakistan.
He expressed his gratitude to His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, as well as the government and people of Kuwait, for their generosity, hospitality and continuous support for the Pakistani community.
He also praised the role of the Kuwaiti Ministry of Foreign Affairs, especially the Department of Asian Affairs, in strengthening bilateral relations.
Regarding regional affairs, he expressed his country's concern about the current situation, while appreciating the balanced and supportive positions of Kuwait towards peaceful solutions. He added that Pakistan reaffirms its full support for the efforts of Kuwait to maintain regional security and stability.
On Pakistan's National Day, he stated that it is an

occasion to celebrate the national identity and commemorate the historic Lahore Resolution of 1940, which paved the way for the establishment of a State where Muslims in the subcontinent could live in dignity and freedom. He said the occasion is considered an opportunity to express appreciation for the long-standing relations between Pakistan and Kuwait, which are getting strong day by day through close cooperation in the fields of trade, investment, energy, infrastructure, information technology and tourism.
He then expressed his concern over the ongoing Israeli aggression on Gaza, which has resulted in heavy losses of innocent civilian lives. "Pakistan calls for an immediate and unconditional ceasefire, and reaffirms its unwavering support for the establishment of an independent Palestinian State on the pre-1967 borders, with Al-Quds Al-Sharif as its capital," he asserted.
In conclusion, he praised the contributions of the Pakistani community in Kuwait considering them a source of pride for both countries. He also called for continuous joint work toward a more just, peaceful and dignified world.



KUNA photo
The Humanitarian and Charitable Work Regulatory Committee held its fifth meeting on Wednesday, chaired by First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad Yousef Saud Al-Sabah, with the participation of representatives of relevant government agencies.

Kuwait resumes donations, charitable projects' funding

KUWAIT CITY, June 25, (KUNA): A government committee instructed, Wednesday, the resumption of donations and funding of charitable projects in Kuwait and abroad with assurances guaranteeing governance and transparency, said an Interior Ministry statement.
A statement by the Interior Ministry revealed that the decision was made during First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad Yusuf Saud Al-Sabah chairing of the fifth meeting for the committee to restructure efforts of humanitarian and charitable organizations in

Kuwait.
The Interior Ministry added that the meeting, gathering government entities tasked with the restructuring, would focus on boosting efforts of charitable organizations to meet with international standards.
The committee had discussed means to ensure that charitable financial transactions would abide by its international rules and regulations, and that the humanitarian aid and donations reach those in need.
The step also allows donors to track their finances and making sure it would achieve its intended goals.



KUNA photo
Acting Director General of Kuwait News Agency (KUNA) Mohammad Al-Mannai receives the Indian Ambassador to Kuwait Dr. Adarsh Swaika.

KUNA chief, Indian envoy discuss ways to enhance media relations

KUWAIT CITY, June 25, (KUNA): Acting Director General of Kuwait News Agency (KUNA) Mohammad Al-Mannai and Ambassador of India to Kuwait Dr. Adarsh Swaika discussed Wednesday ways to enhance media cooperation and several media-related issues.
During the meeting at the agency's headquarters, the two sides stressed the importance of the media's role in supporting bilateral relations between the two countries and pushing them to broader horizons.
The meeting emphasized the importance of exchanging media expertise between KUNA and media institutions in India, and building bridges of cooperation and joint training.

The meeting also touched upon the foundations of KUNA's work and its objective handling of various issues through its network of correspondents and offices around the world, particularly in India.
For his part, Ambassador Swaika praised KUNA's efforts, its objective approach to news coverage, and its role in highlighting Kuwait's position on regional and international issues.
He emphasized his country's efforts to strengthen bilateral relations with Kuwait at all levels, particularly in the media.
The meeting was attended by Deputy Director General for Editorial Affairs Esam Al-Ghanim and Director of Marketing and Public Relations Lamya Al-Faresi.

Bonus for Islamic Affairs workers

By Mohammad Al-Enezi
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff
KUWAIT CITY, June 25: Minister of Endowments and Islamic Affairs Dr. Mohammad Al-Wasmi has announced the disbursement of the excellent job performance bonus to eligible employees in appreciation of their efforts and to promote a culture of excellence at the work place.
Al-Wasmi confirmed that the disbursement process was conducted in accordance

with the regulations of the Civil Service Commission (CSC), following a thorough review of the lists of beneficiaries prepared by specialized committees, hence, ensuring transparency and fairness in granting the bonus.
He pointed out that the bonus is a form of well-deserved appreciation for every employee who demonstrates competence and excellence in performing job duties, as well as a motivation to continue the excellent service and achievements at work.

Nazaha hosts 'Aadaa' initiative symposium

Bid to combat corruption, promote good governance

By Inaas Awadh
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff
KUWAIT CITY, June 25: Assistant Secretary General for Prevention at Kuwait Anti-Corruption Authority (Nazaha) Eng. Abrar Al-Hamad has underscored the importance of activating job codes as a requirement of the United Nations Convention Against Corruption (UNCAC).
Al-Hamad made the statement at the opening of the introductory workshops for the 'Aadaa' initiative, held by Nazaha for the third consecutive year, with 118 participants from 27 government agencies.
According to Al-Hamad, 'Aadaa' is an initiative that aligns with the strategy of Kuwait to enhance integrity, combat corruption and promote good governance.
Meanwhile, Yasmine Al-Sharhan -- Civil Society Cooperation Monitor at Nazaha and Director of 'Aadaa' initiative to implement codes of conduct in the public sector -- talked about the general objectives and the implementation mechanism for various phases of the project.
She pointed out that the code of conduct is an essential tool in promoting integrity and trans-



Photo by Rizk Tawfiq
Yasmine Al-Sharhan

parency, ensuring a fair work environment that consolidates the principles of accountability and

equal opportunities, and preventing the risks of corruption; as stipulated in Chapter II of the UN-CAC.
She revealed that the initiative has benefited more than 24,000 employees since its launch; indicating the number of entities joining the 'Aadaa' has reached 27, including five entities at the gold level, eight at the silver level, and 14 entities at the bronze level.
She added the project requirements include administrative, institutional awareness, training and development, and measuring behavior and impact.
On the other hand, Awareness and Education Supervisor at Nazaha Dr. Hassan Al-Sabbagha stated that 'Aadaa' aims to raise awareness on the Code of Professional Conduct, in cooperation with the Civil Service Commission. He added the initiative focuses on achieving three basic levels: bronze, silver and gold.
He disclosed that the educational workshops included in the project are considered a roadmap for the entities joining 'Aadaa', so that they have an action plan to follow in the current year to fully implement the project.

Project aims to access right 'fatwas'

KAPF, Islamic Affairs ink phone, electronic fatwa pact

KUWAIT CITY, June 25, (KUNA): Kuwait Awqaf Public Foundation (KAPF) announced on Wednesday the signing of an agreement with Kuwait Ministry of Islamic Affairs on developing a project on a telephone and electronic fatwa.
Acting Secretary General of KAPF Naser Al-Hamad said that the agreement aims to facilitate access to correct fatwas in light of the growing need for reliable legal guidance in the age of digital transformations.
Al-Hamad said that supporting the telephone and electronic fatwa project comes as one of the modern means of providing legal fatwas in an easy and reliable manner that enables all segments of society to access fatwas from their official sources and enhances the authority of fatwas through their official source, represented by the

Ministry of Islamic Affairs.
He added that this agreement aims to enable citizens and residents to obtain legal fatwas from reliable sources through approved telephone channels that allow direct communication with specialists via the telephone number 149.
He pointed out that it includes responses to legal inquiries in various fields, times, and occasions in a manner that suits the digital transformation and contributes to enhancing religious awareness through a moderate approach and facilitating fatwas in a way that achieves the objectives of Islamic law.
He added that the telephone and electronic fatwa project is one of the unique endowment projects that aims to facilitate access to correct legal fatwas and respond to the increasing inquiries.



KUNA photo
Naser Al-Hamad

HORIZON TALK

Ahmed Al-Jarallah



When the Qarmatians committed the most horrific massacre in the history of Hajj

HISTORY has many stories about extremist groups that committed unspeakable atrocities. Among them were the Qarmatians, a group that strayed far from the path of God and the principles of Islam.

Under the leadership of Abu Tahir al-Qarmati, this group carried out the bloodiest massacre in the history of Hajj, killing an estimated 30,000 pilgrims, looting the Ka’aba, and stealing the Black Stone, which they held for 22 years.

The origins of this radical movement trace back to a shadowy figure named Hamdan Ibn al-Ash Ath al-Ahwazi, nicknamed “Qarmat” due to his short stature and distinctive, close-stepped walk that left unique footprints.

Qarmat became the founding figure of a dangerous movement that would go on to shake the Islamic world. While ordinary Muslims went about their lives, Qarmat was planning the most horrific massacre in Islamic history. Claiming to champion the rights of the poor and oppressed and using religion as a cover, he misled many and laid the foundation for what would become the infamous Qarmatian movement.

In 317 AH, Makkah was filled with pilgrims on the Day of Tarwiyah when the Qarmatians, led by Abu Tahir al-Qarmati, stormed the Grand Mosque (Masjid al-Haram), marking the start of one of the most horrific massacres in history. Their swords mercilessly cut down the pilgrims until the ground ran red with blood. Thirty thousand pilgrims were brutally killed while circumambulating the Kaaba.

The Qarmatians then advanced to the Ka’aba, broke its door, tore down its covering, and looted its treasures. Abu Tahir ordered his men to destroy the Black Stone’s

- While Muslims were engaged in their daily affairs, Qarmat planned his attack.
- On the Day of Tarwiyah, they stormed the Grand Mosque in Makkah and killed the pilgrims.
- They removed the door of the Ka’aba, tore its covering, and stole its treasures.
- They threw corpses into the Well of Zamzam until it was full.
- They pulled out the Black Stone and carried it with them to Qatif.
- They imposed the Hajj pilgrimage to Al-Jash instead of Makkah, but the people refused.
- Fatimid Caliph Al-Aziz Billah threatened to invade them, so they were frightened and returned the Black Stone.
- The Qarmatian who desecrated the House of God was punished with smallpox, and his body rotted while he was still alive.

place, forcibly remove it, and carry it away to Qatif.

Abu Tahir al-Qarmati stood before the Ka’aba, mockingly looking up at the sky as he laughed loudly, taunting, “Where are the Ababil birds and where are the stones of Sijil?” He then ordered the bodies of the vic-

tims to be thrown into the Well of Zamzam until it was filled.

The Qarmatians placed the Black Stone in a house they called “the Ka’aba of the Qarmatians” and commanded people to make pilgrimages there. They continued their attacks on pilgrim caravans heading to Makkah.

During their raids, while pilgrims were in Ihram, the Qarmatians uprooted the Black Stone and sent it to Hajar. They also attempted to steal the Maqam Ibrahim (Station of Abraham), but the custodians managed to hide it.

In 318 AH, the Qarmatians imposed a pilgrimage to “Al-Jash” in Qatif and ordered local residents to perform the pilgrimage there. When the residents refused, the Qarmatians killed many of them.

From that moment, Makkah was broken-hearted, and the Kaa’ba remained without the Black Stone. Pilgrimage (Hajj) was suspended for 22 years, with scholars permitting the suspension to protect Muslim lives.

The Black Stone stayed captive in Al-Ahsa for 22 years until the Fatimid Caliph Al-Aziz of Egypt threatened to send a large army to retrieve it. Fearing for their rule in Al-Ahsa, the Qarmatians returned the Black Stone to Makkah in 339 AH.

God punished Abu Tahir al-Qarmati for desecrating the House of God and mocking the verses of the Holy Quran by afflicting him with smallpox. His body rotted, and worms infested his flesh while he was still alive, until his death. May God curse him.

There is an ancient saying - If you want to lose people, be honest with them. Tell the one-eyed man, “You are one-eyed.” If you want to be hated, speak the truth. If you want to win people over, be a hypocrite.

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Five things are harmless to lose - excess weight, a rotten tooth, an ungrateful friend, an envious neighbor, and a spiteful relative. Some losses are actually gains.

•••••

I asked happiness, “When will you reside in someone’s heart?” She replied, “When he possesses three qualities - not grieving over what has passed, not worrying about what is to come, and being content with what the Lord has decreed.”

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Patience is tested in difficult times, reason is tested in arguments, and people are tested by circumstances.

•••••

Advice: Avoid conflicts with your relatives, for even the victor suffers defeat, and the defeat then passes down to children and grandchildren. Remember, life is not eternal. True victory lies in departing this world leaving behind good memories for others to cherish.



Al-Anba photo
A Kalashnikov, walkie talkies, cell phones and drugs seized.

Arrest after car chase

Guns, drugs found with illegal resident

KUWAIT CITY, June 25: An illegal resident is under investigation by authorities after being caught in possession of firearms, drugs, and items indicating impersonation of law enforcement officers.

The suspect has been referred to the Criminal Court and the General Department of Drug Control for further legal action, reports Al-Anba daily.

According to security sources, officers from the West Abdullah Al-Mubarak Police Station intercepted the individual during a routine patrol in the area.

The suspect, born in 1988, raised suspicion when he reacted nervously upon spotting a police patrol.

Attempting to flee, he drove at high speed, prompting officers to call for backup. The vehicle was quickly surrounded and brought to a stop.

Upon inspection of the vehicle, authorities discovered a Kalashnikov rifle, a pistol, two walkie-talkies, four mobile phones, a security badge linked to the Public Security Sector, a quantity of the drug Shabu, a strip of stimulant pills, and drug-use equipment. The suspect, who was found to be residing illegally in the country, was taken into custody.

Due to the presence of weapons, communication devices, and the security badge, authorities suspect the individual may have been impersonating law enforcement officers to carry out robberies.

After the preliminary investigation by the General Department of Criminal Investigation, the suspect will be transferred to the General Department of Drug Control for charges related to possession of narcotics.

Upon completion of both investigations, the case will be referred to the Public Prosecution.

Royal in corruption hearing postponed

Govt funds embezzled

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

KUWAIT CITY, June 25: The Ministerial Court postponed the trial of former Defense Minister Sheikh Ahmad Al-Fahad until Sept 9 in order to listen to the defense witnesses.

It also upheld the decision of the Investigation Committee to dismiss the complaint filed against Sheikh Ahmad Al-Fahad, accusing him of interfering in the National Assembly elections.

The committee previously dismissed the complaint filed by the Financial Investigation Unit, which accused Sheikh Ahmad Al-Fahad of interfering in the legislative elections by disbursing money.

During its session on Tuesday, the court

listened to the testimonies of the detective in charge of the investigations, as well as two Ministry of Defense employees.

This is part of the ongoing hearing of evidence and testimonies that may shed light on the facts of the complaint and the suspicions raised about the mechanism for disbursing the disputed sum.

According to the Ministry of Defense, the incidents are related to the suspected illegal disbursements of funds during Sheikh Ahmad Al-Fahad’s tenure as minister. This prompted the filing of the case at the Ministerial Court.

The court questioned Sheikh Ahmad Al-Fahad about the charges that include embezzling KD400,000 of public funds; illegally acquiring KD215,000; purchasing six vehicles using money taken from the ministry’s account; and submitting two declarations of liability to Kuwait Anti-Corruption Authority (Nazaha) without disclosing the ownership of the vehicles.

House driver turns out to be big time drug peddler

KUWAIT CITY, June 25: Jabriya detectives referred a driver working for a Kuwaiti citizen to the Public Prosecution on charges of drug possession and trafficking, reports Al-Anba daily.

Investigations are ongoing to identify an individual who allegedly instructed the driver to receive narcotics and redistribute them at designated locations.

A security source indicated that authorities have not ruled out the possibility that the person managing the drug distribution network may be operating from inside the Central Prison or from outside the country.

According to the source, detectives received reliable intelligence that an expatriate house driver -- under Article 20 visa -- was involved in large-scale drug distribution in multiple areas. The suspect was purportedly

using his room inside his sponsor’s home in Jabriya as storage for narcotics.

Following surveillance and thorough investigation; the information was confirmed, and the suspect was arrested. During the raid of the residence, detectives found seven bags of methamphetamine and chemical substances hidden in the vehicle of the sponsor.

Upon searching the room of the driver, officers also discovered additional quantities of methamphetamine, various chemicals, a weighing scale and cash -- all indicating his involvement in drug trafficking.

During questioning, the suspect claimed that his role was limited to receiving and redistributing the drugs. He stated that he does not know the identity of the person delivering the narcotics or how payments were managed by the coordinator of the network.

17 abandoned vehicles removed

KUWAIT CITY, June 25: As part of an ongoing effort to address public violations, a coordinated campaign was launched in Ahmadi Governorate by the Ministry of Interior and Kuwait Municipality. The operation, supported by the Ahmadi Governorate Security Directorate and carried out under the supervision of Brigadier General Hussein Dashedi, targeted neglected vehicles and unauthorized food trucks in the area, reports Al-Anba daily.

A team from the Municipality -- led by Fahheel Center Supervisor Muhammad Qabnoud Al-Hajri and inspectors Hamad Al-Azmi, Abdulaziz Mutalib, and Dalal Al-Hamr -- conducted thorough inspections across several locations.

Citizen inciting sedition nabbed

KUWAIT CITY, June 25: The Ministry of Interior has announced the arrest of a citizen for posting content on social media that deliberately insulted the national social fabric and attempted to incite division within society. According to the Ministry, the individual appeared in a video that was widely circulated online, in which he mocked and disrespected a specific segment of the population, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

Authorities confirmed that legal ac-

tion has been taken against the individual, and he has been referred to the appropriate judicial bodies for further proceedings.

The Ministry emphasized that it will not tolerate any actions that threaten national unity or promote hate speech and social discord. It reaffirmed its commitment to taking all necessary legal measures against anyone who seeks to undermine the cohesion and harmony of Kuwaiti society.

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Community urged to act against drugs

Islamic Affairs holds 1st anti-drug forum ‘For the Sake of Homeland’

KUWAIT CITY, June 25: Ministry of Islamic Affairs launched the first anti-drug forum on Tuesday under the slogan “For the Sake of Homeland,” in cooperation with the Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Health, and the Kuwait Society for Drug Awareness and Prevention (Gharas), coinciding with the International Day Against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

In his opening speech, Undersecretary of the Ministry of Islamic Affairs Dr. Bader Al-Mutairi explained that the forum aims to strengthen cooperation and integration among relevant agencies, primarily the Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education, and others, to build community awareness, especially among youth, and achieve comprehensive



Al-Mutairi

drug prevention.

Drugs pose a grave threat to societies, targeting minds and morals, and undermining the security of nations from within. Religious awareness is a key foundation for confronting this threat.

Al-Mutairi highlighted the importance of continuing such events, which strengthen institutional and community partnerships and reinforce national values.

He praised the efforts exerted by all participating parties and affirmed the Ministry of Islamic Affairs’ full support for every initiative that contributes to protecting society and protecting the nation from the dangers of drugs.

It is worth mentioning that the two-day forum aims to raise awareness and provide guidance on combating drug abuse, achieving a drug-free nation, and promoting religious and societal values against all types of drugs and intoxicants. The forum includes an educational and awareness exhibition, lectures, workshops, and public competitions.

MEW unveils plan to upgrade Kuwait’s power infrastructure

New deals boost grid, solar and metering efforts

By Mohammad Ghanem
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, June 25: The Ministry of Electricity, Water and Renewable Energy announced in the official gazette -- ‘Kuwait Al-Youm’ (June 15 issue) -- the addition of 214 contracts to its annual plan for the current fiscal year; bringing the total to 371 contracts being implemented by its technical and administrative sectors.

It can be recalled that the newspaper published a report about the

inclusion of 157 electricity development projects in the 2025/2026 plan of the ministry on the front page of its June 10 issue.

The ministry explained that the added contracts include 162 for the Electricity Distribution Networks Sector, 43 for the Technical Services and Main Workshops Sector, and nine for the Monitoring and Control Sector.

In general, these contracts include the repair and installation of electrical transformer stations and cables in new and urban areas to provide electricity to new consumers. This is in addition to constructing buildings affiliated with the ministry to accommodate the growing number of employees and customers, particularly in new areas.

The ministry also aims to replace and renovate old transformer stations to prevent malfunctions or fires, especially during summer.

In another development, sources from the ministry revealed that a tender for the supply, installation and operation of a photovoltaic system on carports in the main workshops and the Emergency Services Department in Subhan, at a cost of KD2.293 million, was referred to the State Audit Bureau (SAB) on Tuesday.

Sources said this is one of the renewable energy projects that the ministry intends to expand to supply electricity from renewable energy, which will operate its sites and replace traditional energy sources produced from fossil fuels.

In addition, sources disclosed that the concerned committee is in the final stages of preparing the specifications for the smart water meter tender.

Sources said the committee has been keen on studying the specifications of the meters used in some Gulf Coopera-

tion Council (GCC) countries in order to determine those compatible with the climate of Kuwait. Sources added that once the committee completes its work, the specialized companies will be invited to bid for the project in accordance with the terms and conditions that the ministry will announce at the appropriate time.

Sources expect that the contract for this tender will be signed in the second quarter of 2026; that is, once the ministry completes the documentation process.

Sources confirmed that the ministry is focusing on the smart water meter project, through which it seeks to rationalize water consumption and eliminate waste sites. “It is also a major step toward complete digital transformation as per the directive of the Council of Ministers in this regard,” sources added.

Advancing science and training

Scientific Center and KISR sign MoU



Photo during the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding.

KUWAIT CITY, June 25: The Scientific Center – one of the centers of Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sciences (KFAS) – has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Kuwait Institute for Scientific Research (KISR) at the headquarters of the Scientific Center, in the presence of Director General of the Scientific Center Eng. Musaed Al-Yassin and acting Director General of KISR Dr. Faisal Al-Humaidan.

The MoU is part of ongoing efforts to strengthen institutional collaboration between the two parties and reflects a shared commitment to implement sustainable scientific and educational projects that serve national development goals and support research and environmental efforts in Kuwait. It includes the enhancement of food security through scientific and ap-

plied initiatives and projects.

It aims to strengthen cooperation between the Scientific Center and KISR in a number of scientific and environmental fields; such as marine and desert environmental sciences, aquaculture, biodiversity, water quality, nutrition and food security.

It also covers cooperation in organizing joint events and exhibitions, exchanging expertise and consultations, offering training programs, hosting researchers, and collaborating in the development of scientific research tools like the use of artificial intelligence and data analysis technologies.

The memorandum stipulates the formation of a joint coordination committee from both parties to oversee the implementation of its terms and the activation of agreed-upon projects, following

a flexible and evolving work plan. It is valid for three years and may be renewed, with periodic performance evaluations to ensure the achievement of desired objectives.

It is an extension of a long history of fruitful collaboration between the two institutions, which previously worked together on several environmental and scientific projects that have had a clear impact on public awareness and research outputs.

It also reflects both parties’ commitment to support and develop national talent by creating training and professional development opportunities for researchers and those interested in scientific fields; thereby, contributing to the empowerment of a new generation of specialists in environment, science and technology.

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KD 17 mln collected online in H1 2025

Ministry of Justice reports 40% increase in Sahel transactions

KUWAIT CITY, June 25: Ministry of Justice announced that the number of online transactions submitted via the unified government e-services application Sahel exceeded 1.7 million in the first half of 2025, marking a 40 percent increase compared to the same period last year, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

In a press statement, the ministry explained that the availability of online payment services through Sahel app contributed significantly to the collection of due amounts,

with total financial payments reaching KD 17 million in the first half of 2025, which is a 126 percent increase compared to the same period last year.

The number of notifications received by users surpassed four million during the same period, a 33 percent increase compared to last year.

The ministry affirmed its continued commitment to digital transformation and to launching more services via the Sahel app to facilitate easier access for beneficiaries.

Farwaniya Governorate photo

Farwaniya Governor with University officials during his visit at the Sabah Al-Salem University City.

Farwaniya Governor inspects Sabah Al-Salem University City

KUWAIT CITY, June 25: As part of his ongoing efforts to support a high-quality educational environment for students, Farwaniya Governor Sheikh Athbi Al-Nasser Al-Athbi Al-Sabah conducted an inspection tour of Sabah Al-Salem University City on Wednesday.

According to a press release issued by Farwaniya Governorate, the governor was received by the Director of Sabah Al-Salem University City and President of Kuwait University Prof. Dina Musaed Al-Mailam, Secretary-General of the university Dr. Bader Al-Rajhi, Assistant Vice President for Planning Dr. Majed Abdulrazzaq Majeed, Assistant Secretary-General for Facili-

ties Management Affairs Muhammad Saud Al-Sulaiman, Director of the Security and Safety Department Yaqoub Al-Khamis, and Advisor to the University President Fahd Waleed Al-Nasser.

During his visit, the governor was briefed on the university’s buildings and public facilities. He toured various facilities, including the emergency shelters.

The governor emphasized that Kuwait University is a national treasure for future generations and a source of pride for the country. He praised the university administration for its cooperation with relevant authorities and its commitment to enhancing the educational infrastructure.

Municipal Technical Committee approves rezoning in Mubarakiya

By Inaas Awadh
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, June 25: The Technical Committee at the Municipal Council, chaired by Munira Al-Amir, met on Tuesday; during which it initially approved the rezoning of a part of Mubarakiya suburb (formerly Block 15) and the Kuwait Municipality’s letter regarding the proposed amendment to the tables attached to the building regulations.

, the final version of the proposed amend-

ment to Item No. 2 regarding the requirements and specifications for investment housing buildings inside and outside Kuwait City was retained on the agenda of the committee for further discussion in subsequent sessions.

The committee referred to the executive authority the request of the owners of properties located and overlooking the extension of Shuhada Street in the eastern part of the city to change the use from investment to commercial by 520 percent, for the authority to present a detailed study on the request.



Ali Abdulwahab Al Mutawa Commercial Co. (AAW) Chairman and CEO Mr. Faisal Ali Abdulwahab Al Mutawa shakes hands with U.S. Ambassador to Kuwait, Her Excellency Ms. Karen Hideko Sasahara.

AAW chairman bids farewell to outgoing US ambassador

KUWAIT CITY, June 25: Ali Abdulwahab Al Mutawa Commercial Co. (AAW) Chairman and CEO Mr. Faisal Ali Abdulwahab Al Mutawa, welcomed the U.S. Ambassador to Kuwait, Her Excellency Ms. Karen Hideko Sasahara, at the company's headquarters on Wednesday for a farewell visit marking the conclusion of her diplomatic mission in Kuwait.

Extending his sincere gratitude and appreciation to Her Excellency, Mr. Faisal Ali Mutawa said: "We appreciate H.E. Ms. Karen Sasahara for her efforts during her tenure in Kuwait. We are grateful for her role in strengthening the economic and commercial ties between Kuwait and the United

States."

He added: "We wish the Ambassador every success in her next diplomatic assignment and look forward to welcoming her successor to continue reinforcing the partnerships between Ali Abdulwahab Al Mutawa Commercial Co. and leading U.S. private-sector companies."

Ali Abdulwahab Al Mutawa Commercial Company is one of the largest retail and distribution companies in Kuwait, with world-class operations across various industries. The company is the distributor for over 200 global brands in Kuwait's surging wholesale and retail market, and is a primary distributor for several American brands.



Photo by Mohammad Morsi
Minister of Education, Higher Education and Scientific Research Eng. Sayed Jalal Al-Tabtabaei during the high school results conference.

Science tops with 86.66%

Al-Tabtabaei approves high school results, praises students' success

By Abdulrahman Al-Shammari

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, June 25: Minister of Education, Higher Education and Scientific Research Eng. Sayed Jalal Al-Tabtabaei has approved the results of the high school exams for the 2024/2025 academic year in all departments.

The Science, Literature and Religious Education sections, in addition to special education students, accounted for a total of 32,800 students.

Official statistics issued by the control centers revealed that the Science Section recorded the highest success rate at 86.66 percent. Public schools in this section achieved a success rate of 89.62 percent, while private education recorded 81.86 percent, Religious Education 60.15 percent and home education 9.3 percent.

The Literature Section recorded an overall success rate of 77.49 percent, with public education boasting a success rate of 83.06 percent, compared to 55.89 percent for private education, 68.83 percent for education centers and 16.39 percent for home education.

In the Religious Education Section, the overall success rate is 80.74 percent, with 591 students passing out of 732 who took the exams. Public schools recorded the highest success rate in this section at 86.95 percent, followed by private schools at 74.81 percent and home schools at 55.6 percent.

A large number of outstanding students dominated the scene, particularly in the Science Section, in which 53 students achieved a 100 percent score -- 44 of whom are Egyptians, along with one Kuwaiti among the top students. A notable advantage was observed among female students, with schools varying between public and private.

In the Literature Section, the number of top students reached 50, led by Sarah Faleh Al-Azmi with a score of 99.65 percent, followed by Ghada Saad Al-Otaibi with a score of 99.53 percent. Kuwaitis constituted the largest percentage of top students, with 22 students, along with other nationalities, most notably Egyptian, with female students clearly dominating.

The Religious Education Section included 48 among the top students, with Duha Mohammad Ismail in first place with a score of 99.77 percent. Top students in this section included Kuwaitis, Egyptians, Palestinians and others, with female students continuing to excel.

Meanwhile, Al-Tabtabaei affirmed that "feelings of pride and honor united home, school and the nation in celebrating our sons and daughters at the end of high school."

On this precious occasion, he stressed his commitment to continue to work and strive with complete honesty and sincerity, embodying the vision of the political leadership to build a better educational future for the people of Kuwait and enhancing the status of the beloved country.

In his speech during the ceremony announcing the final results for the Grade 12 students, Al-Tabtabaei said "I extend

my deep gratitude to the wise political leadership, headed by His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad and His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled, for their continuous support of the educational process and their sound directives, which have been and continue to be a source of inspiration and support for us, after Allah Almighty, in all the reform and development steps we seek to achieve at the Ministry of Education. I extend my sincere thanks and appreciation to His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Al-Abdullah for his continuous support and follow-up, especially during the exam period, which had a profound impact on organizing work and achieving discipline. I cannot miss extending my sincere thanks to His Excellency the First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior, Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousuf Al-Sabah for his generous support and for harnessing the efforts of all sectors at the Ministry of Interior, especially during the exam period, which contributed to providing a fair and organized exam environment for our students. We pledge to Allah, then to our wise leadership and the loyal people of Kuwait, that we will continue our work and dedication with complete honesty and sincerity, through the combined efforts of my brothers and sisters at the Ministry, each in their respective positions, to work hand in hand to realize the vision of the political leadership in building a better educational future for our children and strengthening the position of our beloved homeland, Kuwait."

Addressing the students, he stated "my distinguished and successful sons and daughters, I congratulate you on this graduation with pride and honor. You carry the banner of knowledge and learning, that great trust and noble responsibility of continuing the path of diligence and hard work, and achieving your ambitions and the hopes of your families. You are the true wealth of Kuwait."

He also thanked the parents, saying, "at the end of this academic year, and as we stand on the threshold of a new phase in the lives of our children, we can only extend our sincere thanks and appreciation to the honorable parents, who have always been a source of support and encouragement for their children. You are the ones who nurtured their dreams until they matured. Today, you rejoice in the fruits of your labor. We share this pride with you. Thank you for the love you have for your children.

He praised the teachers, stating, "I extend my special thanks to my brothers and sisters -- the teachers -- who have been dedicated to their work and have been the best role models for our children in their educational journey. I also thank the administrators who have been a source of support and encouragement, the supervisors, the observers, the committee heads, the national supervisors, and everyone who has fulfilled their duties. Your efforts are a source of pride and appreciation. Through your dedication, we have achieved our desired goals and reached these honorable results."

Cabinet OKs revised housing bill, international judicial co-op drafts

Bills referred to HH Amir for final approval

KUWAIT CITY, June 25, (KUNA): The Kuwaiti Cabinet on Tuesday approved a draft decree-law abolishing Article 29 of Law No. 47 of 1993 concerning housing welfare, better known as the "Who Sold His House Law."

The Cabinet, which passed the new legislation during its customary weekly meeting, decided to refer the draft to His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah.

The Kuwaiti Cabinet also approved a draft decree-law related to international judicial cooperation in criminal matters and referred it to His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah. The Cabinet passed this legislation during its customary weekly meeting. The draft decree-law primarily aims to regulate mechanisms for international judicial cooperation to reinforce Kuwait's leading role in combating transnational crime and confiscating criminal proceeds, in line with its international commitments.



PM Diwan photo
The Cabinet's customary weekly meeting, under the chairmanship of His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, held at Bayan Palace.

Continued from Page 1

Amir greets

Similarly, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah sent on Wednesday a congratulatory cable to the Amir of Qatar Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani on the advent of the 12th anniversary of assuming post.

In the cable, His Highness the Crown Prince lauded the tremendous achievements by Qatar, wishing the leadership and people there continuous development and progress.

His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah also sent a cable of congratulations to the Amir of Qatar Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani on the occasion of the 12th anniversary of his post assumption.

PM urges

for wastewater treatment plants, and free and economic zones.

The meeting also discussed expanding cooperation and strategic partnerships, as well as investment and economic opportunities with China, and accelerating the implementation of these major projects in line with the country's development vision.

The Assistant Foreign Minister for Asian Affairs and member and rapporteur of the Ministerial Committee, Ambassador Samih Jawhar Hayat, gave a detailed explanation of the cooperation, consultation and coordination existing between the governments of the two countries.

The meeting was attended Minister of Public Works Dr. Noura Al-Mashaan, Minister of State for Municipal Affairs and Minister of State for Housing Affairs Abdullatif Al-Misnari, Minister of Finance and Minister of State for Economic and Investment Affairs Noura Al-Fassam, Minister of Electricity, Water and Renewable Energy Dr. Sabeeh Al-Mukhaizeem, Director General of the Kuwait Direct Investment Promotion Authority Sheikh Dr. Meshal Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, Head of the Fatwa and Legislation Department Salah Al-Majed, Assistant Foreign Minister for Asian Affairs, and member and rapporteur of the Ministerial Committee Ambassador Samih Jawhar Hayat.

Khor Abdullah

In September of 2023, Iraq's Federal Supreme Court ruled that a bilateral agreement regulating navigation in the Khor Abdullah waterway was unconstitutional, a decision Kuwait said contained "historical fallacies".

Kuwait vows

authorities to improve Kuwait's human rights measures, as the General Federation of Kuwait Trade Unions was greatly thanked for their ongoing professional and educational training.

The latest developments for the digital platform for labor recruitment were covered, with the aim to prevent future human trafficking cases, ensuring a systematic process, and activating the role of diplomacy.

In addition, leveraging the technological revolution to streamline the process was also explored, which involves data logging to electronic contracts, in line with His Highness the Amir's directives to digitize Kuwait's services.

In this regard, Assistant Foreign Minister for Human Rights Affairs Ambassador Sheikhha Jawaher Ibrahim AL-Duaij AL-Sabah stressed in her statement to KUNA the "need to raise and improve the performance of first responders (law enforcement, and agencies specialized in human trafficking cases)."

She also stressed the need to organize training courses and workshops for new employees at the two migrant worker shelters, in cooperation with the International Organization for Migration, to train them on implement-

ing Law No. 91 of 2013 on combating Trafficking in Persons and Smuggling of Migrants.

At the conclusion of the meeting, participating parties expressed their readiness to cooperate with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, represented by the Human Rights Department, in order to advance workers' rights, while also reviewing their plans and strategies for presentation at the upcoming 114th international conference.

EU envoys

He added that contemporary challenges, especially cross-border risks, require effective international cooperation and continuous exchange of expertise and best practices to ensure the safety of people and the environment.

He also stated that the Center is open to all forms of bilateral, regional, and international cooperation in areas of training, capacity building, and information exchange, expressing his aspiration for a fruitful and sustainable partnership with EU missions that supports regional security and enhances collective responses to future risks.

For their part, the ambassadors praised the level of technical and technological advancement witnessed at the Center and expressed their admiration for the advanced methodology adopted by the Gulf countries in dealing with crises and cross-border risks.

The delegation included ambassadors from Croatia, Germany, Romania, Bulgaria, Belgium, Austria, Malta, Hungary, the Netherlands, Italy, the Czech Republic, France, Greece, Spain, Poland, Cyprus, and the Ambassador of the European Union.

Monitoring agency

performance. It is not limited to monitoring the performance of ministries and employees. It has several mechanisms; most notably field visits, following up the implementation of major projects, evaluating the performance of government agencies, and sometimes attending meetings, if invited," he explained.

He added that when the relationship between State institutions changed in recent years, the agency was given greater oversight power; whereas in the past it was governed by the ambiguous relationship between the Council of Ministers and the nation. "In the past, projects would slow down, either due to negligence and lack of follow-up, or due to the interference of influential and self-interested individuals," he asserted.

He also confirmed that "after the ministerial position stabilized and interference ceased, there has been a greater sense of ease in dealing with institutions and individuals in terms of government performance. Today, the agency is very active in carrying out all the tasks assigned to it; while closely monitoring the performance of facilities and projects, under the supervision of the senior leadership and HH the Prime Minister."

"If we find any negligence on the part of an employee or entity, or in a project; we quickly draw attention to it and suggest remedial action. The best way to address the problem is to bring the matter to the attention of the Prime Minister. This is our normal course of action," he revealed.

He went on to say that "we welcome all suggestions we receive from the ministries, because we are convinced that everyone complements one another, in order to achieve distinguished government work that is swiftly accomplished and error-free."

Kuwait urges

explanation by Minister of Foreign Affairs Abdullah Al-Yahya, the current chairman of the GCC ministerial council, about the 49th extraordinary foreign ministerial meeting, held in

Doha today as a sign of solidarity with and support for the State of Qatar.

At the onset of the meeting, the Cabinet reiterated Kuwait's emphatic condemnation of the blatant attack on Al-Udeid Airbase in Qatar as an obvious breach of Qatar's sovereignty, international law and the UN Charter.

It underlined that the State of Kuwait stands side by side with the State of Qatar and backs all measures it is taking to safeguard its sovereignty, security and stability.

It added that the State of Kuwait is ready to harness all its potential and capabilities to support Qatar, wishing Qatar and its sisterly people long-lasting security and stability.

Furthermore, the Cabinet restated Kuwait's vehement opposition to military escalation, while calling on involved parties to exert joint efforts to settle international disagreements by peaceful and diplomatic means and continuing negotiations in order to safeguard regional security, peace and stability.

Also on Tuesday, Kuwaiti Minister of Foreign Affairs Abdullah Al-Yahya, the current chairman of the GCC Ministerial Council, chaired the 49th extraordinary GCC ministerial meeting in Doha to look into regional developments and bolster pan-Gulf action.

During the meeting, they GCC foreign ministers echoed their utter support for Qatar and condemnation of the Iranian attack on Al-Udeid Airbase, underlining that Qatar's security is an integral part of GCC security, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs said in a press release.

The ministers, further, welcomed the announced ceasefire agreement, calling for capitalizing on such a step to promote the political option and step up diplomatic efforts to ensure regional security and stability.

Following the extraordinary session, the Ministerial Council issued a statement condemning in the strongest terms the missile strikes launched by Iran against a military base in Qatar, read out by GCC Secretary-General Jaseem Al-Budaiwi.

The Council expressed deep regret and firm denunciation of the attack, viewing it as a blatant, unacceptable, and dangerous violation of Qatar's sovereignty and airspace, international law, and the UN Charter, Al-Budaiwi said.

The Council expressed full solidarity with Qatar, and affirmed its complete support for any measures the country may take to preserve its security and stability.

The Ministerial Council praised the capabilities of the Qatari Armed Forces in repelling the Iranian attack and emphasized that the security and stability of Qatar is an integral part of the security and stability of all GCC member states.

In this regard, the council welcomed US President Donald Trump's announcement of the ceasefire agreement and ending the war between Iran and Israeli occupation forces.

Furthermore, the Council statement praised Oman's role in the US-Iran nuclear negotiations, as well as the U.S. and Qatari efforts in mediating to end the war.

The fragile ceasefire between Israel and Iran appeared to be holding on Wednesday after a rocky start, giving rise to cautious hope for longer-term peace even as Tehran insisted it will not give up its nuclear program.

U.S. President Donald Trump, who helped negotiate the ceasefire that took hold on Tuesday, the 12th day of the war, told reporters at a NATO summit it was going "very well," adding that Iran was "not going to have a bomb and they're not going to enrich."

Iran has insisted, however, that it will not give up its nuclear program. In a vote underscoring the tough path ahead, its parliament agreed to fast-track a proposal that would effectively stop the country's cooperation with the International Atomic Energy Agency, the U.N. watchdog that has monitored the program for years.

Iran Parliament Speaker Mohammad Bagher Qalibaf criticized the IAEA for having "refused to even pretend to condemn the attack on Iran's nuclear facilities" that the United

States carried out on Sunday.

"For this reason, the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran will suspend cooperation with the IAEA until security of nuclear facilities is ensured, and Iran's peaceful nuclear program will move forward at a faster pace," Qalibaf told lawmakers.

IAEA Director General Rafael Mariano Grossi said he had already written to Iran to discuss resuming inspections of their nuclear facilities.

Among other things, Iran claims to have moved its highly enriched uranium ahead of the U.S. strikes, and Grossi said his inspectors need to reassess the country's stockpiles.

"We need to return," he said. "We need to engage."

French President Emmanuel Macron, whose country was part of the 2015 deal with Iran that restricted its nuclear program but began unraveling after Trump pulled the U.S. out in his first term, said he hoped Tehran would come back to the table.

Iran has long maintained that its nuclear program was peaceful, and U.S. intelligence agencies have assessed that Tehran is not actively pursuing a bomb. However, Israeli leaders have argued that Iran could quickly assemble a nuclear weapon.

Israel is widely believed to be the only Middle Eastern country with nuclear weapons, which it has never acknowledged.

The Israel Atomic Energy Commission said its assessment was that the U.S. and Israeli strikes have "set back Iran's ability to develop nuclear weapons by many years." It did not give evidence to back up its claim.

The U.S. strikes hit three Iranian nuclear sites, which Trump said "completely and fully obliterated" the country's nuclear program. At the NATO summit, when asked about a U.S. intelligence report that found Iran's nuclear program has been set back only a few months, Trump scoffed and said it would at least take "years" to rebuild.

Iran's Foreign Ministry spokesman, Esmail Baghaei, confirmed that the strikes by U.S. B-2 bombers using bunker-buster bombs had caused significant damage.

"Our nuclear installations have been badly damaged, that's for sure," he told Al Jazeera on Wednesday, while refusing to go into detail.

He seemed to suggest Iran might not shut out IAEA inspectors for good, noting that the bill before parliament only talks of suspending work with the agency, not ending it. He also insisted Iran has the right to pursue a nuclear energy program.

"Iran is determined to preserve that right under any circumstances," he said.

Trump's special envoy to the Middle East, Steve Witkoff, said on Fox News late on Tuesday that Israel and the U.S. had achieved their objective of "the total destruction of the enrichment capacity" in Iran, and Iran's prerequisite for talks - that Israel end its campaign - had been fulfilled.

"The proof is in the pudding," he said. "No one's shooting at each other. It's over."

Grossi said he could not speculate on how bad the damage was but that Iran's nuclear capabilities were well known.

"The technical knowledge is there, and the industrial capacity is there," he said. "That no one can deny, so we need to work together with them."

An Israeli official, speaking on condition of anonymity to discuss internal deliberations, said the ceasefire agreement with Iran amounted to "quiet for quiet," with no further understandings about Iran's nuclear program going ahead.

In the Fox News interview, Witkoff said Trump is now looking to land "a comprehensive peace agreement that goes beyond even the ceasefire."

"We're already talking to each other, not just directly, but also through interlocutors," Witkoff said, adding that the conversations were promising and "we're hopeful that we can have a long-term peace agreement."



Democratic mayoral candidate Zohran Mamdani takes the stage at his primary election party on June 25, in New York. (AP)

Mamdani declares victory in New York City’s Democratic mayoral primary

NEW YORK, June 25, (AP): Zohran Mamdani declared victory in New York City’s Democratic mayoral primary Tuesday night after Andrew Cuomo conceded the race in a stunning upset, as the young, progressive upstart who was virtually unknown when the contest began built a substantial lead over the more experienced but scandal-scarred former governor.

Though the race’s ultimate outcome will still be decided by a ranked choice count, Mamdani took a commanding position just hours after the polls closed.

With victory all but assured, Mamdani, a 33-year-old democratic socialist who ran an energetic campaign centered on the cost of living, told supporters, “I will be your Democratic nominee for the mayor of New York City.”

“I will be the mayor for every New Yorker, whether you voted for me, for Governor Cuomo, or felt too disillusioned by a long-broken political system to vote at all,” he said. “I will work to be a mayor you will be proud to call your own.”

Cuomo, who had been the front-runner throughout a race that was his comeback bid from a sexual harassment scandal, conceded the election, telling a crowd that he had called Mamdani to congratulate him.

“Tonight is his night. He deserved it. He won,” Cuomo told supporters.

Cuomo trailed Mamdani by a significant margin in the first choice ballots and faced an exceedingly difficult pathway to catching up when ballots are redistributed in New York City’s ranked choice voting process.

Mamdani, a member of the state Assembly since 2021, would be the city’s first Muslim and Indian American mayor if elected. Incumbent Mayor Eric Adams skipped the primary. He’s running as an independent in the general election. Cuomo also has the option of running in the general election.

“We are going to take a look and make some decisions,” Cuomo said.

Cuomo and Mamdani were a study

in political contrasts and could have played stand-ins for the larger Democratic Party’s ideological divide, with one candidate a fresh-faced progressive and the other an older moderate.

Cuomo characterized the city as a threatening, out-of-control place desperate for an experienced leader who could restore order. He brought the power of a political dynasty to the race, securing an impressive array of endorsements from important local leaders and labor groups, all while political action committees created to support his campaign pulled in staggering sums of cash.

Mamdani, meanwhile, offered an optimistic message that life in the city could improve under his agenda, which was laser-focused on the idea that a mayor has the power to do things that lower the cost of living. The party’s progressive wing coalesced behind him and he secured endorsements from two of the country’s foremost progressives, Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez and Sen. Bernie Sanders.

Lawsuit challenges billions of dollars in WH funding cuts

US Republicans attempt to discourage President Trump lawsuits hit big obstacle

WASHINGTON, June 25, (AP): US Republicans have hit a roadblock in an effort that could deter nonprofits, individuals and other potential litigants from filing lawsuits to block President Donald Trump over his executive actions.

As Trump faces lawsuits nationwide, GOP lawmakers had sought to bar federal courts from issuing temporary restraining orders or preliminary injunctions against the federal government unless the plaintiffs post what in many cases would be a massive financial bond at the beginning of the case.

The proposal was included in the Senate version of Trump’s massive tax and immigration bill, but ran into trouble with the Senate parliamentarian, who said it violates the chamber’s rules. It is now unlikely to be in the final package.

Federal judges can already require plaintiffs to post security bonds, but such funds are commonly waived in public interest cases. The GOP proposal would make the payment of the financial bond a requirement before a judge could make a ruling, which critics said would have a chilling effect on potential litigants who wouldn’t have the resources to comply.

Senate Democratic leader Chuck Schumer hailed the parliamentarian’s ruling in a press statement and called the GOP effort “nothing short of an assault on the system of checks and balances that has anchored the nation since it’s founding.”

“But Senate Democrats stopped them cold,” Schumer said.

Lawmakers are running scores of provisions by the Senate parliamentarian’s office to ensure they fit with the chamber’s rules for inclusion in a reconciliation bill. The recommendations from Elizabeth MacDonough will have a major impact on the final version of the legislation.

On Friday, she determined that a proposal to shift some food stamps costs from the federal government to states would violate the chamber’s rules. But some of the most difficult questions are still to come as Republicans hope to get a bill passed and on Trump’s desk to be signed into law before July 4th.

Republicans could still seek to include the judiciary provision in the bill, but it would likely be challenged and subject to a separate vote in which the provision would need 60 votes to remain. The parliamentarian’s advice, while not binding, is generally followed by the Senate.

Republicans and the White House have been highly critical of some of the court rulings blocking various Trump orders on immigration, education and voting. The courts have agreed to block the president in a number of cases, and the administration is seeking appeals as well.

In April, the House voted to limit the



US President Donald Trump speaks to the media in the Oval Office at the White House on June 10 in Washington, as Interior Secretary Doug Burgum, Director of the Office of Management and Budget Russell Vought and Secretary of Homeland Security Kristi Noem, look on. (AP)

scope of injunctive relief ordered by a district judge to those parties before the court, rather than applying the relief nationally. But that bill is unlikely to advance in the Senate since it would need 60 votes to advance. That’s left Republicans looking for other avenues to blunt the court orders.

“We are experiencing a constitutional crisis, a judicial coup d’etat,” Rep. Bob Ounder, R-Mo., said during

the House debate.

Also:

BOSTON: Attorneys general from more than 20 states and Washington, D.C. filed a federal lawsuit Tuesday challenging billions of dollars in funding cuts made by the Trump administration that would fund everything from crime prevention to food security to scientific research.

The lawsuit filed in Boston is asking a judge to limit the Trump administration from relying on an obscure clause in the federal regulation to cut grants that don’t align with its priorities. Since January, the lawsuit argues that the administration has used that clause to cancel entire programs and thousands of grants that had been previously awarded to states and grantees.

“Defendants’ decision to invoke the Clause to terminate grants based on changed agency priorities is unlawful several times over,” the plaintiffs argued. “The rulemaking history of the Clause makes plain that the (Office of Management and Budget) intended for the Clause to permit terminations in only limited circumstances and provides no support for a broad power to terminate grants on a whim based on newly identified agency priorities.”

The lawsuit argues the Trump administration has used the clause for the basis of a “slash-and-burn campaign” to cut federal grants.

“Defendants have terminated thousands of grant awards made to Plaintiffs, pulling the rug out from under the States, and taking away critical federal funding on which States and their residents rely for essential programs,” the lawsuit added.

The White House’s Office of Management and Budget did not immediately respond to a request made Tuesday afternoon for comment.

Rhode Island Attorney General **Neronha** said this lawsuit was just one of several the coalition of mostly Democratic states have filed over funding cuts. For the most part, they have largely succeeded in a string of legal victories to temporarily halt cuts.

This one, though, may be the broadest challenge to those funding cuts.

“It’s no secret that this President has gone to great lengths to intercept federal funding to the states, but what may be lesser known is how the Trump Administration is attempting to justify their unlawful actions,” Neronha said in a statement. “Nearly every lawsuit this coalition of Democratic attorneys general has filed against the Administration is related to its unlawful and flagrant attempts to rob Americans of basic programs and services upon which they rely. Most often, this comes in the form of illegal federal funding cuts, which the Administration attempts to justify via a so-called ‘agency priorities clause.’”

Connecticut Attorney General **William Tong** said the lawsuit aimed to stop funding cuts he described as indiscriminate and illegal.

“There is no ‘because I don’t like you’ or ‘because I don’t feel like it anymore’ defunding clause in federal law that allows the President to bypass Congress on a whim,” Tong said in a statement. “Since his first minutes in office, Trump has unilaterally defunded our police, our schools, our healthcare, and more.

EU help in healing Cyprus’ ethnic split could bring benefits to all, officials say

NICOSIA, Cyprus, June 25, (AP): The European Union can help resolve Cyprus’ decades-old ethnic division by underscoring to all sides in the dispute that a peace accord would bring with benefits and a significant improvement in relations with the 27-member bloc, officials said Tuesday.

Johannes Hahn, the EU envoy for Cyprus, held his first meeting Tuesday with Cypriot President Nikos Christodoulides in his new capacity, which officials hope will build momentum toward reviving stalled negotiations led by the United Nations.

Cyprus was cleaved along ethnic lines in 1974 when Turkey invaded in the wake of a coup that aimed to unify the island with Greece. Only Turkey recognizes a 1983 Turkish Cypriot declaration of independence in the island’s northern third where Turkey maintains more than 35,000 troops.

Hahn said after the discussion with Christodoulides Tuesday that he would reach out to all stakeholders, including Turkey, to help build confidence and support for Maria Angela Holguin, who is heading up peace efforts as the envoy to Cyprus representing UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres.

Asked how the EU could help bridge what appear to be diametrically opposed positions held by the Greek



The European Union special envoy for Cyprus Johannes Chan talks with Cyprus’ President Nikos Christodoulides (not seen) during their meeting at the presidential palace in divided capital Nicosia, Cyprus, Tuesday, June 24, 2025. (AP)

Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot sides, Hahn said “all parties have particular interests related to the European Union and this is exactly what I try to figure out in all my meetings.”

Although Cyprus joined the EU in 2004, only the southern Greek Cypriot

part where the internationally recognized government is seated enjoys full membership benefits.

Turkey began EU membership talks in 2005, but those have stalled over its refusal to recognize the Cypriot government as the island’s sole legal authority. Turkey remains keen to conclude visa liberalization talks with the EU that began in 2013.

Cyprus backs closer EU-Turkey ties as long as there is clear progress on Cyprus peace talks, government spokesman Konstantinos Letymbiotis said.

The primary obstacle to restarting peace talks is Turkish and Turkish Cypriot insistence on a deal that would recognize two states on the island. This goes against a peace blueprint endorsed by the the U.N. Security Council that foresees a federated Cyprus with Greek-speaking and Turkish-speaking zones.

Greek Cypriots reject any agreement that would formalize partition, fearing Turkey would seek to control the entire island in light of its demand to maintain a permanent troop presence and military intervention rights in Cyprus. Turkey also insists the minority Turkish Cypriots should have veto rights over all federal government decisions.



NATO heads of state and government pose for a group photo during the NATO summit in The Hague, Netherlands, June 25. (AP)

‘Restate ironclad commitment to collective defense’

NATO leaders agree to hike military spending

THE HAGUE, Netherlands, June 25, (AP): NATO leaders agreed on Wednesday on a massive hike in defense spending after pressure from US President Donald Trump, and expressed their “ironclad commitment” to come to each other’s aid if attacked.

The 32 leaders endorsed a final summit statement saying: “Allies commit to invest 5% of GDP annually on core defense requirements as well as defense- and security-related spending by 2035 to ensure our individual and collective obligations.”

Spain had already officially announced that it cannot meet the target, and others have voiced reservations, but the investment pledge includes a review of spending in 2029 to monitor progress and reassess the security threat posed by Russia.

The leaders also underlined their “ironclad commitment” to NATO’s collective security guarantee - “that an attack on one is an attack on all.” Ahead of the summit, Trump had again raised doubts over whether the United States would defend its allies.

The show of unity vindicated NATO Secretary-General Mark Rutte’s billing of the summit as “transformational,” even though it papered over divisions. The spending pledge sets European allies and Canada on a steep path toward significant military investment.

The spending hike requires each country to spend billions of dollars. It comes as the United States - NATO’s biggest-spending member - shifts its at-



Demonstrators protest against the NATO summit as police follow them in The Hague, Netherlands on June 25. (AP)

tention away from Europe to focus on security priorities elsewhere, notably in the Middle East and Indo-Pacific.

But ahead of the meeting, Spain announced that it would not be able to reach the target by the new 2035 deadline, calling it “unreasonable.” Belgium signaled that it would not get there either, and Slovakia said it reserves the right to decide its own defense spending.

Many European countries face major economic challenges, and Trump’s global tariff war could make it even

harder for America’s allies to reach their targets. Some countries are already squeezing welfare and foreign aid spending to channel extra funds into their military budgets.

On Tuesday, Trump complained that “there’s a problem with Spain. Spain is not agreeing, which is very unfair to the rest of them, frankly.” He has also criticized Canada “a low payer.” In 2018, a NATO summit during Trump’s first term unraveled due to a dispute over defense spending.

But Rutte conceded that “these are difficult decisions. Let’s be honest. I mean, politicians have to make choices in scarcity. And this is not easy.” But he said: “given the threat from the Russians, given the international security situation, there is no alternative.”

Other countries closer to the borders of Russia and Ukraine - Poland, the three Baltic states and Nordic countries - have committed to the goal, as have NATO’s European heavyweights Britain, France, Germany and the Netherlands.

“This is a big win, I think, for both President Trump and I think it’s also a big win for Europe,” Finnish President Alexander Stubb told reporters. “We’re witnessing the birth of a new NATO, which means a more balanced NATO.”

He said it would take nations “back to the defense expenditure levels of the Cold War.” NATO countries started to cut their military budgets in safer times after the Berlin Wall collapsed in 1989.

Europe

Georgia jails top opposition figures: Georgia has jailed four key opposition figures within days as part of a monthslong crackdown on dissent that followed a disputed election last October in the South Caucasus country.

Nearly all leaders of Georgia’s pro-Western opposition are now behind bars, as protests continue against the ruling Georgian Dream party and its decision last year to halt Georgia’s bid to join the European Union. The demonstrators, who gather daily in the capital, Tbilisi, also say that the vote on Oct 26 that handed Georgian Dream another term in power was not free or fair.

On Tuesday, politician Giorgi Vashadze of the Strategy Aghmashenebeli party was sentenced to eight months in prison for refusing to testify in an official probe that Georgian Dream’s critics call an act of political revenge. (AP)

Czech authorities detain 5 teens: Czech authorities have detained five teenagers for being radicalized online by the militant Islamic State group and charged two of them with terror-related crimes over an attempt to set fire to a synagogue, officials said Wednesday.

Bretislav Brejcha, the director of the Czech counterterrorism, extremism and cybercrime department, said most of the suspects are under 18 years old. They were detained between February and June as a result of an international investigation that started last year. (AP)



Britain’s Prime Minister Keir Starmer, (center), visits the Netherlands marines training base, as part of the UK-Netherlands Joint Amphibious Force in Rotterdam, Netherlands on June 24, on the sidelines of the NATO summit. (AP)

UK to buy F-35 jets capable of carrying nuclear bombs

THE HAGUE, Netherlands, June 25, (AP): The United Kingdom will buy 12 US-made F-35 fighter jets capable of carrying nuclear bombs and will join NATO’s shared airborne nuclear mission, in a major expansion of its nuclear deterrent, Prime Minister Keir Starmer announced Wednesday.

The government called it “the biggest strengthening of the UK’s nuclear posture in a generation.”

Starmer made the announcement while attending a NATO summit in the Netherlands. NATO Secretary-General Mark Rutte welcomed the decision, calling it “yet another robust British contribution to NATO.”

The UK phased out air-dropped atomic weapons in the 1990s after the end of the Cold War. Its nuclear arsenal now consists of submarine-based missiles.

Another war-left US aerial bomb M117 found in Takeo province

Cambodia accuses Thailand of escalating tensions with new land crossing restrictions

PHNOM PENH, Cambodia, June 25, (Agencies): Cambodia’s government on Tuesday accused Thailand of escalating border tensions by imposing new restrictions that have blocked almost all land crossings, especially for tourists heading into Cambodia.

Relations between the neighbors have deteriorated following an armed confrontation on May 28 in which one Cambodian soldier was killed in a relatively small, contested territory along their border. While the two sides have agreed to de-escalate their dispute, they have continued to implement or threaten measures that have kept tensions high.

The Thai army on Monday imposed heightened restrictions at border checkpoints with Cambodia following an order from Prime Minister Paetongtarn Shinawatra to allow only students, medical patients and others with essential needs to enter or leave Thailand. That also makes it impossible for thousands of tourists to cross between the two countries.

Pen Bona, a spokesperson of the Cambodian government, said Tuesday that Cambodia has committed to resolve the conflict through diplomatic channels, but tensions have soared because of Thailand’s actions.

“The Cambodian government has already stated that we will not initiate any border closure,” and that it will also lift restrictions if Thailand does so first, he said.

Cambodia has boycotted some Thai internet services, banned Thai fruits and vegetables, and blocked electricity and fuel supplies from Thailand in response to the border dispute. Prior to the boycott, Cambodia imported 30% of its gasoline and other fuel from Thailand.

Cambodia’s Prime Minister Hun Manet on Monday visited troops at the border and a temporary shelter for thousands of civilians who were evacuated from the area. He said that while Cambodia doesn’t want war, “we cannot stand by and let us be abused.”

In addition to border restrictions, Paetongtarn also announced measures tar-



In this photo released by Agence Kampuchea Press (AKP), Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Manet, foreground, delivers a speech in front of his troop during his visit to Preah Vihear, near Cambodia-Thailand border in Preah Vihear province, Cambodia on June 23. (AP)

getting online scam operations in Cambodia. They include blocking exports that could facilitate such activities in Cambodia and coordination with other countries and international agencies to crack down on cybercrime based in Southeast Asia.

Pen Bona said that while he recognized that Cambodia “is being exploited by online scammers,” many such operations are also based in Thailand.

“This is a very shameful thing that is happening in Thailand, but they are trying to divert the story from Thailand to Cambodia,” he said.

Thailand earlier this year implemented measures to crack down on online scam operations in neighboring Myanmar, severing electricity, internet and gas supplies to border towns where the syndicates were based.

Also:

PHNOM PENH: Cambodia has found and safely removed another war-left US-made M117 aerial bomb in southern **Takeo** province, a mine clearance chief said late on Tuesday.

Cambodian Mine Action Center (CMAC)’s Director General **Heng Ratana** said the massive bomb was spotted buried four meters deep in an area in **Tram Kak** district.

“This M117 bomb, with the weight of approximately 372 kilograms, is over 2 meters long and has a diameter of over 40 centimeters,” he wrote on social media, with photographs showing experts defusing the bomb.

“This M117 bomb could have been dropped from a B-52 bomber in 1973,” he added.

The Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) experts safely neutralized and transported the bomb to the CMAC’s disposal center for further action on Monday.

According to Ratana, a total of 11 M117 bombs have been discovered in the above-mentioned location so far.

Cambodia is one of the countries worst affected by landmines and explosive remnants of war (ERWs). An estimated 4 million to 6 million landmines and other munitions had been left over from three decades of war and internal conflicts that ended in 1998.



In this photo released by Xinhua News Agency, an aerial view show floodwaters from a river overwhelming towns following days of heavy rains, in Huaiji County, south China’s Guangdong Province on June 19. (Xinhua)

Over 80,000 evacuated amid serious flooding in SW China

Continuous heavy rainfall and upstream inflows have triggered severe flooding in two counties of Guizhou Province in southwest China, prompting mass evacuations.

As of 2:30 pm Tuesday, 48,900 residents were temporarily evacuated in Rongjiang County and 32,000 in Congjiang County. The flood control emergency response has been escalated to Level I, the highest, in both counties.

Rongjiang, a county known for Cun Chao -- a rural football league covering over 100 village teams and drawing numerous fans across the country, saw heavy rainstorms from 8 p.m. Monday, with a venue at the Dulu River exceeding the

warning level by 6.68 meters as of 2 p.m. Tuesday.

The football field at the Cun Chao stadium was submerged under three meters of water.

Long Tian, a resident near the stadium, recalled that when he woke up at 8 a.m. Tuesday, the water downstairs was already thigh-deep. (Xinhua)

El Salvador judge orders prominent critic of Bukele to remain in jail before trial

SAN SALVADOR, El Salvador, June 25, (AP): A judge in El Salvador ordered that a lawyer and well-known critic of President Nayib Bukele remain in jail as his prosecution on charges of money laundering proceeds in a blow to critics pushing back against the government.

Enrique Anaya was detained by police earlier this month on money laundering allegations just days after calling Bukele a “dictator” on live TV. His arrest has been the subject of an outcry by human rights defenders.

“Unfortunately, the result was not what we had hoped for,” Anaya’s attorney Jaime Quintanilla said, adding that the case would now proceed into an investigative phase. He said they expected to hear more in the coming weeks.

Upon Anaya’s arrest, authorities did not provide details about the allegations against him despite posting a photo of the constitutional lawyer in handcuffs surrounded by armed police.

Advocates, legal experts and international watchdogs have warned that Bukele has grown emboldened by his alliance with U.S. President Donald Trump. He has moved to silence critics through recent arrests and a new foreign agents law that sent chills through nongovernmental organizations that receive overseas funding. Anaya’s June 10 arrest was just the latest example.

Another judge issued a similar decision against prominent human rights attorney Ruth Leonora López earlier this month. That judge ordered López, another outspoken



Police escort constitutional lawyer Enrique Anaya out of court after the hearing on his arrest for alleged money laundering in San Salvador, El Salvador on June 24. (AP)

Bukele critic, held for six months on charges of illegal enrichment.

Anaya’s legal team insists that he is innocent and that the detention was purely political. Quintanilla, his lawyer, said it also violated his rights because he was not brought before a judge within 72 hours of his arrest as required by the country’s constitution.

Rather, he was held for 14 days and instead appeared to be detained under emergency provisions that Bukele has used to crack down on the country’s gangs and detain alleged gang members with little access to due process. Tuesday was the first time Anaya has appeared before a judge.

Quintanilla said this was illegal because Anaya was accused of a crime

unconnected to gang violence. He had appealed to the country’s Supreme Court, using a habeas corpus petition, which was partially granted Saturday, leading to Tuesday’s hearing.

He had hoped that Anaya would be set free, but the detained lawyer was walked out of court in handcuffs surrounded by police. He nodded to reporters with his cuffed hands held to his chest.

Speaking to reporters during a break in the hearing, Quintanilla said he could not share further details about what occurred in the courtroom because the case is sealed, but said that prosecutors presented charges, the defense responded, and the judge ultimately allowed Anaya to speak.

Brazil confronts military officers accused of plotting coup in trial

SAO PAULO, June 25, (AP): When Lt. Col. Mauro Cid arrived at Brazil’s Supreme Court on Tuesday to testify against his onetime ally, former Defense Minister Gen. Walter Braga Netto, he did not salute the senior officer.

It was a departure from military protocol that underscored how the country’s once hugely popular military has been divided and roiled by scandal as Brazil tries an explosive case in which top military officers are accused of helping former President Jair Bolsonaro attempt a coup to remain in power after losing an election.

Analysts said that the two men’s appearance in a civilian court marked a historic departure from the impunity senior military officers have enjoyed since the country underwent two decades of military rule.

“Putting a colonel up against a general levels the playing field and signals that for the justice system, all defendants are equal,” said Lucas Figueiredo, the author of several books about Brazil’s dictatorship. “The truth will prevail.”



Brazil’s former president Jair Bolsonaro arrives at a rally on Copacabana Beach in support of a proposed bill to grant amnesty to those arrested for storming government buildings in an alleged coup attempt in 2023, in Rio de Janeiro on March 16. (AP)

Tourist found dead after falling from volcano

Four killed in Indonesia oil tanker fire

JAKARTA, June 25, (Agencies): Four people were killed and five others injured after a fire broke out aboard a crude palm oil tanker docked at a shipyard on Batam Island in Indonesia’s Riau Islands province, local media reported on Wednesday.

The victims were technicians working on the vessel Federal II, which was undergoing repairs at PT ASL Shipyard Indonesia in Batuaji area. The fire reportedly erupted at around 2:15 p.m. local time on Tuesday while the tanker was docked for maintenance.

Batuaji Police Chief Raden Bimo Dwi Lambang confirmed that nine people were involved in the accident. “Four victims died, five survived. The total number of victims is nine,” he said.

The injured were receiving medical treatment.

Authorities said the blaze has been extinguished, and an investigation was underway to determine the cause of the fire.

Also:

SAO PAULO: A young Brazilian hiker who fell hundreds of meters from the ridge of a towering Indonesian volcano and was trapped there for almost four days was found dead on Tuesday, Brazil’s government said. For days, millions of people in Brazil had watched, posted and prayed as rescuers tried to locate her.

The tourist, 26-year-old **Juliana Marins**, began summiting on June 21



In this undated photo released by the Indonesian National Search and Rescue Agency (BASARNAS) on June 24, rescuers prepare for the evacuation operation for Juliana Marins, a Brazilian tourist who fell off the ridge of Mount Rinjani while hiking near the volcano’s summit, in Lombok, Indonesia. (AP)

Mount Rinjani, an active 3,726-meter (12,224-foot) volcano on the Indonesian island of **Lombok**, with a guide and five other foreigners when she fell some 600 meters (1,968 feet), Indonesian authorities said.

“No signs of life were found,” said **Mohammad Syafii**, head of Indonesia’s National Search and Rescue Agency.

Marins’ family in Brazil confirmed her death.

The Indonesian rescue team said it found Marins’ body beside a crater using a thermal drone after four days of intensive searches complicated by extremely harsh terrain and weather.

The difficult conditions and limited visibility delayed the evacuation process, Syafii said, as the rescue team climbed carrying Marins’ body to **Sembalun** basecamp but would have to wait until Wednesday for transport to a police hospital.

Young people in Kenya protest police brutality and bad governance as demonstrations spread

NAIROBI, Kenya, June 25, (AP): Thousands of protesters against police brutality and government corruption clashed with police in Nairobi, who hurled tear gas canisters and wielded batons, leaving several people injured, as demonstrations spread around the country.

The protests were timed to mark the one-year anniversary of anti-tax demonstrations in which 60 people were killed and 20 others remain missing.

Parliament and the president’s office in the Kenya’s capital were barricaded with razor wire, with all access roads blockaded by police.

The protests, which have now spread to major cities including Mombasa, Kisumu, Nakuru and Nyahururu, have morphed into calls for the president to resign due to what protesters are saying is poor governance.

During last year’s protests, demonstrators stormed Parliament where a legislation to increase taxes was passed, burning part of the building as lawmakers fled. Bodies lay in the streets, and medical workers and watchdogs said police had opened fire. The military was deployed.

Kenyan youth remain unhappy with the current administration due to corruption, rising cost of living and police brutality, and the recent death of a blogger in custody. The close-range shooting of a civilian during recent protests has exacerbated public anger.

Young Kenyans used social media to plan protests in remembrance of those who died last year. The government spokesperson, Isaac Mwaura, on



Protesters scatter as police fire teargas at them during a demonstration on the one-year anniversary of deadly anti-tax demonstrations in downtown Nairobi, Kenya, on June 25. (AP)

Monday said there would be no protests, and that Wednesday was a “normal working day.”

But businesses in Nairobi on Wednesday remained closed and police limited the movement of vehicles into the central business district. Hundreds of Kenyans were already on the streets early in the morning, chanting anti-government slogans as police hurled tear gas canisters at some of the crowds.

An Associated Press journalist witnessed a demonstrator being injured in the mouth by a round fired by police

towards a crowd. Another protester was clobbered on the head by antiriot police and was taken by medics in an ambulance.

Wangechi Kahuria, the executive director for the Independent Medico-Legal Unit, an NGO that tracked the killings during protests, said that Kenyans should be “allowed to mourn and go back home.”

Police Inspector General Douglas Kanja on Tuesday said no unauthorized persons would be allowed inside protected zones such as Parliament and the statehouse.

Africa

Court order stops Lungu's burial in S.Africa: The Zambian government succeeded in getting a court order to stop the private burial of former President **Edgar Lungu** in South Africa on Wednesday after it filed a last-minute case that was heard on the day of the funeral.

The case forced members of Lungu’s family to delay their appearance at a burial service and instead attend a courtroom hearing in the South African capital dressed in black funeral attire.

The Pretoria High Court ruled that both parties had agreed after consultations that Lungu would not be buried until the case over where his funeral would be held was decided. The judge set an Aug. 4 date for another hearing.

The legal challenge by the Zambian government against Lungu’s burial in South Africa was the latest development in a nearly monthlong dispute with Lungu’s family over the details of his funeral and final resting place.

The Zambian government wants Lungu to have a state funeral at home - something Lungu’s family had refused to allow because of his bitter political feud with current Zam-



Lungu

bian President Hakainde Hichilema.

Lungu, who was Zambia’s leader from 2015 to 2021, died of an undisclosed illness in a South African hospital on June 5 at the age of 68.

Zambia’s government said it had already prepared a grave for Lungu at a cemetery where all presidents are traditionally buried. (AP)

☐ ☐ ☐

Congolese soldier kills 3 colleagues: A Congolese soldier shot and killed two of his colleagues while a third died of critical injuries in an altercation in the country’s east that left others wounded, local officials said Tuesday.

The soldiers in Mungazi in the province of North Kivu, a town close to the frontline of the military’s fight with Rwanda-backed M23 rebels, had recently received their paychecks when an argument escalated into violence late Monday evening, according to Fiston Misona Tabashile, president of the civil society of Walikale, the area’s principal town.

Maj. Nestor Mavudisa, Congolese military spokesperson, said eight wounded soldiers were being treated, adding that those involved in the altercation would be punished.

“The perpetrators have been apprehended and are in custody,” said Mavudisa, urging locals to “go about their business freely.”

Jean Kokwe, a local miner, said many thought M23 rebels were behind the shooting.

“It was only afterward that some people who were there told us that it was Congolese military soldiers who had received their pay,” he said. (AP)

Kuwait oil drops USD 6.98 to USD 69.98 pb

KUWAIT CITY, June 25, (KUNA): Price of Kuwait crude oil fell by USD 6.98 during Tuesday's trading to reach USD 69.98 per barrel compared with USD 76.32 pb on Monday, Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) said Wednesday.

Brent crude dropped by USD 4.34 to reach USD 67.14 pb and West Texas Intermediate lost USD 4.14 to USD 64.37 pb.

Business

Central bank leader says economy needs more clarity first

Powell says Fed rate cut on hold even as Trump demands cuts

WASHINGTON, June 25, (AP): The Federal Reserve will continue to wait and see how the economy evolves before deciding whether to reduce its key interest rate, Chair Jerome Powell said Tuesday, a stance directly at odds with President Donald Trump's calls for immediate cuts.

"For the time being, we are well positioned to wait to learn more about the likely course of the economy before considering any adjustments to our policy stance," Powell said in testimony Tuesday before the House Financial Services Committee.

Several Republicans on the committee pushed Powell to consider reducing borrowing costs more quickly, as soon as its next meeting at the end of July. But on the whole, the hearing was uniformly polite and Powell did not face sharp criticism over the Fed's decision to leave its rate unchanged.

Members of both parties thanked Powell for maintaining his focus on the Fed's dual mission of controlling inflation and supporting maximum employment. Powell has often cited his support in Congress as a bulwark

against Trump's attacks.

Trump lashed out again early Tuesday, posting on his social media site: "I hope Congress really works this very dumb, hardheaded person, over. We will be paying for his incompetence for many years to come."

Several Republicans asked Powell why the central bank has yet to lower borrowing costs. Powell responded that most economists, inside and outside the Fed, still expect tariffs to push inflation higher, and Fed policymakers want to see what happens over the next couple of months before making any changes.

"We do expect tariff inflation to show up more," Powell said. "We really don't know how much of that's going to be passed through the consumer. We have to wait and see."

Under questioning, Powell acknowledged that tariffs might not push up inflation as much as economists forecast. That, he said, could lead the Fed to reduce rates more quickly. A sharp rise in the unemployment rate could also spur the Fed to cut borrowing costs more quickly, he said.



Federal Reserve Board Chairman Jerome Powell arrives for a hearing of the House Committee on Financial Services on Capitol Hill, Tuesday, June 24, 2025, in Washington. (AP)

"We could see inflation come in not as strong as we expect," he said. "And if that were the case, that would tend to suggest cutting sooner." But when asked specifically about July, Powell declined to comment.

Powell also said he expected to see tariffs' impact on prices emerge in the next few months, starting in June. The June inflation report will be released July 15.

Rep. Josh Gottheimer, a Democrat from New Jersey, asked Powell whether

Trump's "bullying" would impact the Fed's decision-making.

Powell said the Fed wants to "deliver a good economy for the benefit of the American people, and that's it."

"Anything else is kind of a distraction," Powell added. "We always do what we think is the right thing to do, and we live with the consequences. I don't know how else to do the job."

The Fed's 19-member interest rate setting committee, led by the chair, decides whether to cut or raise borrowing costs. They typically increase rates to cool the economy to fight or prevent inflation, and lower rates when the economy is weak to boost borrowing and spending.

The Fed's committee voted unanimously last week to keep its key rate unchanged, though the Fed also released forecasts of future rate cuts that revealed emerging divisions among the policymakers. Seven projected no rate cuts at all this year, two just one, while 10 forecast at least two reductions.

The Fed chair said the bump to inflation from tariffs could be temporary, or it could lead to a more persistent bout of inflation.

The Fed's "obligation," Powell said, "is ... to prevent a one-time increase in the price level from becoming an ongoing inflation problem."

At a news conference last week, Powell suggested the Fed would monitor how the economy evolves over the summer in response to Trump's tariffs, hinting that a rate cut wouldn't occur until September.

Yet two high-profile members of the Fed's governing board, Michelle Bowman and Christopher Waller, have since suggested the central bank could cut its rate as early as July. Both officials were appointed by Trump during his first term and Waller is often mentioned as a potential replacement for Powell when his term ends next May. Powell was also appointed by Trump in late 2017.

Other officials, however, are still cautious about rate reductions. Beth Hammack, president of the Federal Reserve's Cleveland branch, said Tuesday that given the uncertainty enveloping the economy, rates may be on hold for "quite some time" before the Fed decides to make "very modest cuts."

Asian markets climb as oil retreats, Fed holds steady

Investors eye Fed's next move

BANGKOK, June 25, (AP): Asian shares have logged modest gains after U.S. stocks climbed to near their all-time high as investors considered comments by Federal Reserve Chair Jerome Powell to Congress.

Oil prices gained more than 1% early Wednesday after falling about 6% on Tuesday on hopes that Israel's war with Iran will not hinder the global flow of crude. Lower oil prices could give the Federal Reserve leeway to cut interest rates to help the economy, and Powell said it is waiting for the right time to do so.

The fragile ceasefire between Iran and Israel, announced by Trump a day earlier, appeared to be holding after initially faltering.

U.S. benchmark crude gained 1.2% to \$65.16 per barrel, while Brent crude, the international standard, climbed 1.1% to \$66.95.

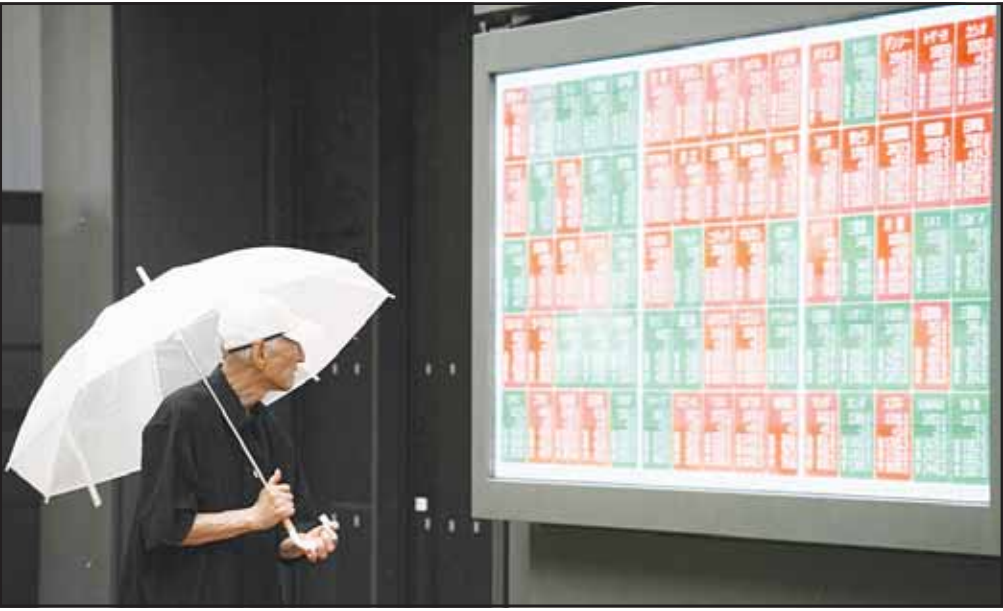
Lower oil prices could give the Federal Reserve leeway to cut interest rates to help the economy, and Powell said it will continue to wait and see how the economy evolves before deciding whether to reduce its key interest rate, a stance directly at odds with President Donald Trump's calls for immediate cuts.

"For the time being, we are well positioned to wait to learn more about the likely course of the economy before considering any adjustments to our policy stance," Powell said in testimony Tuesday before the House Financial Services Committee.

In Asian trading early Wednesday, Tokyo's Nikkei 225 picked up 0.3% to 38,917.08 and the Hang Seng in Hong Kong advanced 0.9% to 24,386.59.

The Shanghai Composite index rose 0.5% to 3,437.10.

In South Korea, the Kospi edged 0.2% higher to 3,110.19, while Australia's S&P/ASX 200 added 0.1% to 8,562.90.



A person looks at an electronic stock board showing Japan's Nikkei index at a securities firm Wednesday, June 25, 2025, in Tokyo. (AP)

Taiwan's Taiex gained 1.1% and the Sensex in India was up 0.7%. In Bangkok, the SET slipped 0.4%.

"The world can now move on to face other difficult choices like tariffs and things like that. So I think the market is well on its way to rebound and could again reach new levels," said Frances Lun, CEO of GEO Securities in Hong Kong.

On Tuesday, the S&P 500 climbed 1.1% to 6,092.18, following up on big gains for stocks across Europe and Asia, after President Donald Trump said late Monday that Israel and Iran had agreed to a "complete and total ceasefire." The main measure of Wall Street's health is

back within 0.8% of its record set in February after falling roughly 20% below during the spring.

The Dow Jones Industrial Average jumped 1.2% to 43,089.02, and the Nasdaq composite rallied 1.4% to 19,912.53.

The fear throughout the Israel-Iran conflict has been that it could squeeze the world's supply of oil, which would pump up prices for gasoline and hurt the global economy. Iran is a major producer of crude, and it could also try to block the Strait of Hormuz off its coast, through which 20% of the world's daily oil needs passes on ships.

General index climbs 62.44 pts

Boursa closes on strong note, indices register notable gains

KUWAIT CITY, June 25, (KUNA): Boursa Kuwait closed Wednesday's session on a strong note, with the general index rising 62.44 points, or 0.76%, to 8,293.37. Trading was active, as 536.13 million shares changed hands in 30,149 transactions, totaling KD 120 million (about \$396 million).

The Main Market Index advanced 87.55 points, or 1.22%, to 7,251.11, with 315.83 million shares traded through 18,724 deals worth KD 43.8

million (around \$144.5 million). The Premier Market Index climbed 59.25 points, or 0.67%, to finish at 8,963.22, as 220.29 million shares were traded in 11,425 transactions valued at KD 76.27 million (approximately \$251.6 million).

Meanwhile, the Major 50 Index gained 62.54 points, or 0.88%, closing at 7,152.97. It saw 199.6 million shares traded through 8,723 deals worth KD 23.8 million (about \$259 million).

Rail upgrade tops regional funding

World Bank approves over \$1bn for projects in Lebanon, Syria and Iraq

BEIRUT, June 25, (AP): The World Bank said Wednesday it approved over \$1 billion dollars for infrastructure and reconstruction projects in Iraq, Syria and Lebanon.

The biggest amount went to Iraq, where the World Bank approved \$930 million to help improve the country's railway infrastructure, boost domestic trade, create jobs and diversify the economy.

The World Bank said the Iraq Railways Extension and Modernization Project will improve services and increase freight capacity between the Umm Qasr Port on the Persian gulf in southern Iraq to the northern city of Mosul.

"As Iraq shifts from reconstruction to development, enhanced trade and connectivity can stimulate growth, create jobs, and reduce oil dependency," said Jean-Christophe

Carret, director of the World Bank's Middle East division.

The World Bank also approved for war-torn Syria a \$146 million grant to help restore reliable, affordable electricity and support the country's economic recovery. It said the Syria Electricity Emergency Project will rehabilitate damaged transmission lines and transformer substations.

Last month Syria signed an agreement with a consortium of Qatari, Turkish and U.S. companies for the development of a 5,000-megawatt energy project to revitalize much of its war-battered electricity grid.

For Lebanon, which is recovering from the 14-month Israel-Hezbollah war, the World Bank approved \$250 million to support the most urgent repair and reconstruction of damaged critical public infrastructure and lifeline services.

Through its multiple e-channels

KFH continues to serve customers during holiday

KUWAIT CITY, June 25: Kuwait Finance House (KFH) continues to provide its banking services around the clock, online and through digital platforms, during the holiday. Most banking services are available across several channels, including online applications, KFH Go smart branches located in many important areas, and KFH's social media accounts, alongside numerous e-service channels leveraging the best FinTech tools and digital platforms.

KFHOnline app features a sleek, modern design with smart banking services. KFH has carried out a comprehensive update to its app, reaffirming its dedication to digital transformation and excellence in providing advanced financial solutions. These solutions meet customer needs and deliver seamless banking experience. This move also underscores the Bank's outstanding execution of its digital transformation strategy.

KFHOnline provides access to more than 200 banking services. Additionally, KFH smart hybrid branches offer other services. Accordingly, KFH customers have the flexibility to either interact directly with an employee or use state-of-the-art self-service devices.

KFH Go smart branches, a smart banking channel, transforms routine transactions into automated processes at an innovative branch, empowering customers to efficiently benefit from 80% of the services typically available at traditional branches.

KFH Go smart branches include the XTM device, which allows direct video calls with service personnel, as well as ATMs and cash deposit machines. The cash deposit machines accept up to 300 notes per transaction.

Moreover, customers can conduct a variety of interactive banking transactions through KFH Go branches located in various places in Kuwait, including Kuwait International Airport. These services include: establishing Murabaha transactions, requesting credit and prepaid cards, updating data and phone numbers, activating bank cards, opening deposits and accounts, instant cheque and card printing, receiving gold biscuits (10 grams), opening (gold, savings, Al-Rabeh, electron) accounts, online gold purchase and sell, cardless withdrawals using QR code through mobile, or by using Civil ID or phone number, in addition to many other financing and banking services conducted quickly, easily and safely.

KFH's e-banking services are characterized by their

high efficiency, ease of use, and safety, as reflected in the number of electronic banking operations that KFH customers carried out via KFHOnline.

These e-banking services encompass a wide array of digital functionalities, including opening additional bank account in foreign currency or Kuwaiti dinars without a branch visit, instant virtual prepaid card issuance, viewing PINs and other credit and ATM card details, activating and temporarily suspending bank cards, managing supplementary card limits, facilitating local and telex transfers, opening deposits, adding beneficiaries, balance inquiries, cheque book requests, opening and trading gold accounts, gifting gold, requesting and checking financing obligations and installments, perusing investment plans, receiving account balances and deposit summaries, and managing children's accounts through the Baiti Online service.

KFH launched the Live FX Pricing, instant cross-border payments service at KFH-Turkey using Ripple's technology and digital Wallet service through smart mobiles and watches which provides advanced and smart digital payment methods according to highly developed security standards in cooperation with Samsung, Fitbit and Garmin. The Bank also offered instant card issuance within 2 minutes to print KFH new redesigned cards.

Call Center

The Call Center continues to provide services around the clock, receiving customer calls, addressing their inquiries, and responding to them through a qualified and technically advanced staff. KFH also provides the automated telephone service, 1803333, which operates with the same efficiency and speed to facilitate transfers between accounts, answer inquiries about financial transactions, among other services.

Customers outside Kuwait can contact KFH's call center from seven countries (USA, Canada, UK, France, Germany, Turkey and Spain) without additional fees.

To use this service customers can call from the following toll-free numbers: USA and Canada (18008188608), UK (08000148898), France (0805086620), Germany (08001817080), Spain (900905440), and Turkey (908507712154). Local tariff charges may be applied in Turkey by local Turkish telecoms companies when calling this number.

This service is free exclusively for mobiles and landlines users in the mentioned countries only and

doesn't include the (Roaming Service).

Social media channels

KFH's social media team remains dedicated to addressing customer inquiries and assisting them at all hours through the official social media accounts (@KFHGroup).

Money transfer and account opening KFH successfully launched WAMD digital service, allowing customers to send and receive money instantly and for free using their mobile numbers, 24/7.

KFH also successfully launched the D-POS device for account opening, the first-of-its-kind in the market, allowing customers to open accounts at KFH immediately and anywhere.

Customers can now open accounts in major currencies through KFHOnline; previously, account opening was only available at branches. Additionally, KFH has integrated Western Union (WU) services into its app, enabling customers to make international transfers directly through the application. The Bank also offers instant transfers within the GCC countries through the AFAQ network on the mobile app, further enhancing cross-border payment capabilities for its customers.

Corporate services

KFH launched the first mobile application for corporate banking encompassing major services for business development, in addition to launching facial recognition technology based on biometric identity and other distinguished electronic services available through the corporate banking webpage.

KFH successfully introduced corporate cards, offering three different products that cater to the various local and global corporate needs. Key features of these cards include cash withdrawal and deposit, cheque deposit, access to Point of Sale (POS) terminals and online payment gateways (governmental), both locally and internationally.

In addition, KFH has introduced corporate credit cards, which are among the bank's distinguished offerings for business owners. These cards are linked directly to the company's account, allowing business owners to issue cards to employees for seamless expense management. They can be used to cover day-to-day business expenses, one-time travel costs, and more. The corporate credit card helps businesses better manage their cash flow while offering enhanced control over employee expenditures.

'Let's Be Aware' campaign

NBK warns against purchasing airline and concert tickets from unverified websites

KUWAIT CITY, June 25: NBK has called on customers to be aware of fraudulent offers and fake ads. National Bank of Kuwait continues its effective participation in the "Let's Be Aware" campaign launched by the Central Bank of Kuwait in collaboration with local banks and Kuwait Banking Association, with the aim to enhance banking culture and financial awareness and literacy in society.

To that end, NBK has been utilizing all its efforts to raise public awareness about fraudulent actions and ways to avoid them by publishing through educational content such as videos, text messages, and pieces of advice through its social media platforms and other channels.

Through its published material, NBK sheds light on the different ways and various tactics through which scammers steal customers' personal information and money via fake airline or concert bookings from tempting social media ads.

NBK warns against falling for such tempting offers and fake ads, which typically come from suspicious or unverified accounts or pages, emphasizing the need to first confirm the reliability of any company, website, or agent handling the reservation process before paying any money to avoid fraud.

Moreover, NBK believes in the importance of enhancing financial literacy among all segments of society and raising awareness about the best ways to benefit from its diverse services through its branches and digital channels, which have the highest number of followers among all banks in Kuwait.



Diraya logo

NBK's efforts to educate its customers are a fundamental pillar of its strategy, as it consistently emphasizes the need for customers to adhere to general instructions and guidelines to avoid digital fraud, as well as the importance of regularly changing bank card PINs and not sharing them with fraudsters claiming to be from the bank.

The "Let's Be Aware" campaign is the largest in the region, aiming to raise banking and financial literacy among bank customers. It also addresses critical awareness topics, including the necessary steps to avoid fraud, the threats of high-risk investments, the best ways to benefit from banking services, and it promotes a culture of savings and investment along with other relevant topics.

It is worth mentioning that NBK is a key supporter and partner in all CBK's initiatives and campaigns aiming to raise financial awareness and spread banking culture among all segments of society. As a leading financial institution in Kuwait and across the region, NBK frequently organizes various activities that contribute to raising awareness about all topics related to the banking sector. It also organizes various activities and training courses on combating fraud and financial crimes.

Sponsorship underscores unwavering commitment to supporting Kuwaiti youth

Weyay Bank sponsors ‘Choose Your Major’ exhibition for high school students

KUWAIT CITY, June 25: Weyay Bank is proud to announce its sponsorship of the “Choose Your Major” exhibition, an initiative designed for high school students aspiring to pursue higher education.

The exhibition, held at Mishref Fairground from June 24th to 26th, aims to help students make informed decisions about their academic and professional futures.

Weyay Bank’s Commitment to Supporting Kuwaiti Youth

Weyay Bank’s sponsorship of this exhibition underscores its unwavering commitment to supporting Kuwaiti youth and empowering them to achieve their ambitions.

Recognizing that young people are the leaders of tomorrow and the foundation of development, Weyay Bank is dedicated to providing them with comprehensive support through educational initiatives and development programs. The bank views its contribution to guiding students toward specializations that align with the job market and Kuwait’s development needs as an integral part of its social responsibility.

A Pioneering Event for the Future of Youth

The “Choose Your Major” exhibition is the first



Photo during the exhibition held at Mishref Fairground.

of its kind in Kuwait, bringing together representatives from both public and private universities. Students and parents will have the opportunity to directly engage with academic advisors and ad-

missions representatives from various universities, gaining comprehensive information about available majors, admission requirements, and study prerequisites.

This platform also allows students to explore diverse educational options, compare study programs, and ask questions to help them determine the most suitable academic path for their interests and abilities.

Special Benefits for Weyay Bank Customers

In addition to its educational focus, Weyay Bank is highlighting its seamless digital banking experience, which enables students to open bank accounts in minutes without needing to visit a physical branch.

The Weyay app facilitates digital transfers of student allowances to their Weyay accounts and provides instant access to a digital SELECT prepaid card.

This card, specifically designed for students receiving allowances, offers a range of benefits tailored to their lifestyle, including cashback offers on purchases and exclusive discounts at a wide network of stores, restaurants, cafes, and entertainment services popular with this age group.

Push for a greener economy

China taps biomass resources to fuel its clean energy future

NANJING, June 25, (Xinhua): At a biomass power plant in the city of Xuzhou, east China’s Jiangsu Province, giant mechanical claws repeatedly feed bundles of dried straw onto conveyor belts. The straw is then transported to furnaces and converted into clean energy.

This facility can process around 300,000 tonnes of agricultural residues like wheat, corn and rice straw annually, producing over 220 million kilowatt-hours of electricity.

“That’s equivalent to saving about 90,000 tonnes of coal and cutting roughly 200,000 tonnes of carbon dioxide emissions each year,” said Zhang Yunfei, director of the dispatch center at State Grid Xuzhou Power Supply Company.

Biomass energy is largely derived from agricultural and forestry waste, livestock manure and organic refuse -- materials once dismissed as mere waste. With the rise of clean energy technologies and increasing environmental awareness, China is viewing these materials as a vital part of its energy transition.

ed straw and livestock waste into purified methane for liquefied bio-natural gas.

At a circular economy industrial park in the city of Suzhou in Jiangsu, advanced facilities process around 500 tonnes of corporate kitchen waste daily.

“About 90 percent of kitchen waste can be recycled into biomass natural gas for the city’s gas grid, or converted into nutrient-rich soil for landscaping,” said Huang Yuanchen, general manager of an environmental protection company in the park.

“It’s not just kitchen waste. Tree branches and fallen leaves can also be recycled and processed into biomass fuel pellets for use in thermal power plants,” Huang revealed, while noting that his company can process 100 tonnes of green waste daily, generating annual fuel pellet sales of up to 9 million yuan (roughly 1.26 million U.S. dollars).

Yu Tong, president of the China Association for the Promotion of Industrial Development, emphasized that achieving carbon neutrality demands transformative changes in energy consumption. “Biomass energy is abundant and versatile. It can be solid, liquid or gas -- and can replace fossil fuels across multiple sectors.”

According to a 2025 China biomass energy industry report, the country’s installed biomass power capacity had reached 45.99 million kilowatts by the end of 2024, with total power generation hitting 208.3 billion kilowatt-hours and biogas output reaching about 500 million cubic meters.

“To bring biomass power to the power grid, centralized control systems are being rolled out for real-time monitoring of power plant performance and output, enhancing both power generation efficiency and stability,” said Li Yi, head of development planning at State Grid Xuzhou Power Supply Company.

Yang Xudong, a professor at Tsinghua University in Beijing, underscored the further potential of biomass utilization.

“Biomass energy can be easily stored and transported, and can serve as an alternative to other commercial fuels. It not only yields substantial economic returns, but retains its carbon-neutral identity.”

“In the future, further efforts should be made to optimize the entire biomass value chain and boost biomass energy consumption to fully unleash its green potential,” Yang added.

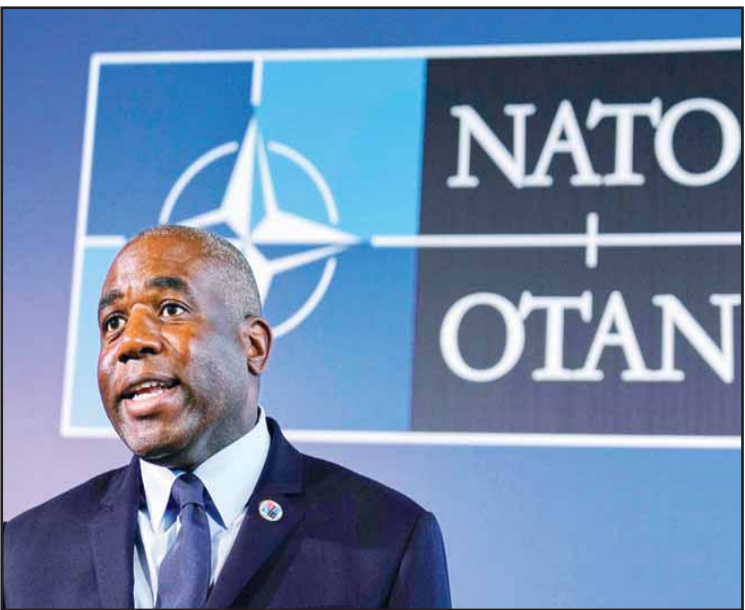
LONDON, June 25, (AP): China’s attempts to spy, destabilize and disrupt Britain’s economy and democracy have grown, but Beijing is still a vital economic partner for the U.K., the government said Tuesday.

Foreign Secretary David Lammy said “China’s power is an inescapable fact” and freezing relations with the world’s second biggest economy is “not an option.” He spoke to lawmakers as he outlined findings from the government’s “China audit.”

“China is our third biggest trading partner, our universities’ second largest source of international students. China will continue to play a vital role in supporting the U.K.’s secure growth,” Lammy said.

The Labour Party government pledged to conduct an in-depth examination of U.K.-China relations after it was elected almost a year ago, in an effort to balance the country’s economic interests and its security. Many details of the review will remain classified for security reasons, Lammy said.

Its conclusions were summarized in a document outlining the U.K. government’s broader national security strategy. It said that “instances of



A file photo of British Foreign Secretary David Lammy talking to journalists in Antalya, southern Turkey, May 15, 2025. (AP)

China’s espionage, interference in our democracy and the undermining of our economic security have increased in recent years.”

Yet the government resisted pressure from China hawks in Parliament to label China a threat on a par with Russia. The security review called it

a “geostrategic challenge” but also an essential player in tackling major issues such as climate change, global health and economic stability.

“We will seek a trade and investment relationship that supports secure and resilient growth, and boosts the U.K. economy,” the government said.

CMA eyes rules to open search to rivals

UK antitrust watchdog moves to break Google search stronghold

LONDON, June 25, (AP): Google could be forced to let British users choose whether to use rival search services, the country’s antitrust watchdog said Tuesday as it proposed using new digital regulations to boost competition.

The Competition and Markets Authority said its “priority measures” include requiring Google to present users with “choice screens” when they use key products like the Chrome browser and Android mobile operating system.

The choice screens would let users “easily select and switch between search services,” which could potentially include AI assistants, it said.

The watchdog is seeking to give Google a “strategic market status” label under the new U.K. digital rules. That would give it the power to use “targeted measures” to impose changes to “specific aspects” of its search operations in the U.K. The CMA’s move “could have significant implications for businesses and consumers in the UK,” Google said.

Oliver Bethell, Google’s senior director of competition, noted in a prepared statement that CMA reiterated that ‘strategic market status’ doesn’t imply that anti-competitive behavior has taken place, “yet this announcement presents clear challenges to critical areas of our business in the U.K.”

The watchdog has until Oct. 13 to decide on whether to give Google the label.

It has drawn up three other initial priority measures that it would carry out if it goes ahead.

Google would have to make its search results ranking and presentation fair and non-discriminatory, and give businesses an effective way to complain if they’ve been treated unfairly.

Publishers should be given choice and transparency about how their content collected by Google is used for AI services, such as AI-generated overviews that have been appearing at the top of search results.

The CMA also wants to ensure people can easily transfer their data, such as their Google search history, to other businesses, which the CMA said could foster innovative new products and services.

Ranks 12th in transition index

China rises as central driver of global energy shift: WEF expert

GENEVA, June 25, (Xinhua): China has emerged as a central driver of global energy transition in view of its significant strides in renewable energy and its broader commitment to transforming its energy system, according to Nicholas Wagner, an energy expert with the World Economic Forum (WEF).

In a recent written interview with Xinhua, Wagner, manager of Energy and Industry Transition Intelligence at the WEF’s Center for Energy and Materials, said China’s recent progress in energy transition underscores both the scale of its commitment and its visionary long-term planning and investments.

China now leads the world in renewable energy capacity additions and is projected to account for about 60 percent of all new global capacity through 2030, said Wagner, citing the International Energy Agency (IEA).

The Energy Transition Index, part of the Fostering Effective Energy Transition 2025 report released by the WEF, showed that China climbed five spots from the previous year to rank 12th out of 118 countries in 2025. It also placed fifth in transition readiness.

Wagner attributed this progress to China’s strong innovation ecosystem and supportive policy framework.

The government has backed this push with a wide range of policy tools, including support for large-scale and distributed renewable systems, a na-

tional emissions reduction plan, and a pledge to peak carbon dioxide emissions before 2030 and achieve carbon neutrality by 2060, he explained.

He said that “China’s performance in advancing the global energy transition is both impressive and essential.” This has demonstrated the possibility of large-scale energy transition efforts alongside maintaining strong economic growth, he added.

Despite China’s achievements, the report also highlighted broader global challenges. Global investment in low-carbon energy systems reached a record 2.1 trillion U.S. dollars in 2024, an 11 percent increase from the previous year. However, this growth rate has slowed compared to the 24-29 percent annual increases seen from 2021 to 2023. Moreover, current investment levels remain significantly below the estimated 5.6 trillion dollars required annually through 2030 to meet international climate goals.

In 2024, global energy-related carbon emissions hit a record 37.8 billion tons, driven by a 2.2 percent increase in energy demand. This growth was largely fueled by the rise of artificial intelligence, data centers, increased cooling demand, and electrification, according to the report.

“One of the most critical challenges identified in this year’s Energy Transition Index is the disparity in financing conditions between advanced and emerging economies,” Wagner said.

Almost half (49%) is positive about AI, indicating a shift from neutrality to positivity

77% of MENA content creators say GCC is leading positive transformation in tourism & entertainment

DUBAI, UAE, June 25: Weber Shandwick MENAT has launched the second edition of InfluAnswer Arabia, a report informed by the perspectives of content creators, that delves into the MENA region’s evolving landscape of influencer marketing. The report also explores regional dynamics through the lens of its influencers, highlighting which countries they believe are spearheading positive transformation in specific sectors.

While personal belief in a brand is still the most important factor for creators choosing a brand to work with, brand reputation entered the top three factors for the first time -- overtaking even monetary value. This marks a clear shift from last year, reflecting how creators are thinking more critically about the public perception, values, and credibility of the brands they associate with. Other insights from the report include:

Real-life experiences and brand connections

With time and physical presence at a premium, creators say events must deliver something beyond the ordinary. Nearly two-thirds (63%) say a VIP experience is important -- a significant jump from 51% last year. However, the most important goal when considering attending an event is still the connection with the brand -- and this sentiment is growing even stronger for creators, from 66% last year to 80% this year.

Positive about AI, concerned about deepfakes

Positive sentiment toward AI tools has soared as influencers move beyond neutrality into practical implementation and wider experimentation. Almost half (49%) of MENA creators is positive about the use of AI -- up from just 29% last year. Digital creators say the top impact of AI will be the introduction of more advanced tools and analytics (63%), allowing them to automate repetitive tasks and focus more on storytelling. Despite enthusiasm, there is concern about deepfakes, which ranked third (41%) in the



Ghaleb Zeidan, Regional Managing Director, Weber Shandwick MENAT



Ziad Hasbani, Regional CEO, Weber Shandwick MENAT

most prominent impacts of AI.

“MENA’s influencer landscape continues to mature, and despite increased competition, content creators are growing in confidence. The themes that are

Why small business owners need better retirement solutions

Aging entrepreneurs struggle to exit their businesses



An elderly woman focuses intently as she works on a computer in this undated photo. (AP)

‘ But while owners often hope to finance their golden years by selling their companies, only 20% of small businesses are ready for sale even in good times, according to the Exit Planning Institute. ’

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

By Nancy Forster-Holt
University of Rhode Island

Americans love small businesses. We dedicate a week each year to applauding them, and spend Small Business Saturday shopping locally. Yet hiding in plain sight is an enormous challenge facing small business owners as they age: retiring with dignity and foresight. The current economic climate is making this even more difficult. As a professor who studies aging and business, I’ve long viewed small business owners’ retirement challenges as a looming crisis. The issue is now front and center for millions of entrepreneurs approaching retirement. Small enterprises make up more than half of all privately held U.S. companies, and for many of their owners, the business is their retirement plan. But while owners often hope to finance their golden years by

selling their companies, only 20% of small businesses are ready for sale even in good times, according to the Exit Planning Institute. And right now, conditions are far from ideal. An economic stew of inflation, supply chain instability and high borrowing costs means that interest from potential buyers is cooling. For many business owners, retirement isn’t a distant concern. In the U.S., baby boomers - who are currently 61 to 79 years old - own about 2.3 million businesses. Altogether, they generate about US\$5 billion in revenue and employ almost 25 million people. These entrepreneurs have spent decades building businesses that often are deeply rooted in their communities. They don’t have time to ride out economic chaos, and their optimism is at a 50-year low. You can’t blame them for being gloomy. Recent policy shifts have only made life harder for business owners nearing retirement. Trade instability, whipsawing tariff announcements and disrupted supply chains have eroded already thin

margins. Some businesses - generally larger ones with more negotiating power - are absorbing extra costs rather than passing them on to shoppers. Others have no choice but to raise prices, to customers’ dismay. Inflation has further squeezed profits. At the same time, with a few notable exceptions, buyers and capital have grown scarce. Acquirers and liquidity have dried up across many sectors. The secondary market - a barometer of broader investor appetite - now sees more sellers than buyers. These are textbook symptoms of a “flight to safety,” a market shift that drags out sale timelines and depresses valuations - all while Main Street business owners age out. These entrepreneurs typically have one shot at retirement - if any. Adding to these woes, many small businesses are part of what economists call regional “clusters,” providing services to nearby universities, hospitals and local governments. When those anchor institutions face budget cuts - as is happening now - small business

vendors are often the first to feel the impact. Research shows that many aging owners actually double down in weak economic times, sinking increasing amounts of time and money in a psychological pattern known as “escalating commitment.” The result is a troubling phenomenon scholars refer to as “benign entrapment.” Aging entrepreneurs can remain attached to their businesses not because they want to, but because they see no viable exit. This growing crisis isn’t about bad personal planning - it’s a systemic failure. A key mistake that policymakers make is to lump all small business owners together into one group. That causes them to overlook important differences. After all, a 68-year-old carpenter trying to retire doesn’t have much in common with a 28-year-old tech founder pitching a startup. Policymakers may cheer for high-growth “unicorns,” but they often overlook the “cows and horses” that keep local economies running. Even among older business own-

ers, circumstances vary based on local conditions. Two retiring carpenters in different towns may face vastly different prospects based on the strength of their local economies. No business, and no business owner, exists in a vacuum. Relatedly, when small businesses fail to transition, it can have consequences for the local economy. Without a buyer, many enterprises will simply shut down. And while closures can be long-planned and thoughtful, when a business closes suddenly, it’s not just the owner who loses. Employees are left scrambling for work. Suppliers lose contracts. Communities lose essential services. That’s why I think policymakers should reimagine how they support small businesses, especially owners nearing the end of their careers. First, small business policy should be tailored to age. A retirement-ready business shouldn’t be judged solely by its growth potential. Rather, policies should recognize stability and community value as markers of success. The U.S. Small Business Administration and regional agencies can provide resources specifically for retirement planning that starts early in a business’s life, to include how to increase the value of the business and a plan to attract acquirers in later stages. Second, exit infrastructure should be built into local entrepreneurial ecosystems. Entrepreneurial ecosystems are built to support business entry - think incubators and accelerators - but not for exit. In other words, just like there are accelerators for launching businesses, there should be programs to support winding them down. These could include confidential peer forums, retirement-readiness clinics, succession matchmaking platforms and flexible financing options for acquisition. Third, chaos isn’t good for anybody. Fluctuations in capital gains taxes, estate tax thresholds and tariffs make planning difficult and reduce business value in the eyes of potential buyers. Stability encourages confidence on both sides of a transaction. And finally, policymakers should include ripple-effect analysis in budget decisions. When universities, hospitals or governments cut spending, small business vendors often absorb much of the shock. Policymakers should account for these downstream impacts when shaping local and federal budgets. If we want to truly support small businesses and their owners, it’s important to honor the lifetime arc of entrepreneurship - not just the launch and growth, but the retirement, too. (AP)

Layoff survival: Protecting your well-being and planning ahead

Tips for staying resilient after losing your job

‘ In a layoff, it becomes even more imperative that you treat every dollar with more attention than you have in the past, ’

NEW YORK, June 25, (AP): Recent layoffs from technology and media companies and government agencies might have you thinking about job security. Losing your job is a difficult thing to process and you might feel the impact in several parts of your life. But there are things you can do to alleviate some of the stress and anxiety. If you’ve been laid off, experts recommend that you first take a moment to process and then move on with a plan for your job search. “A layoff can feel so personal but it’s not a reflection of your value or what you contributed. Especially in the U.S., the work we do is so tied to our identity,” said Lindsay Bryan-Podvin, a financial therapist. Here are some expert recommendations to help you take care of your finances and your mental health if you’ve lost your job: Losing your job can cause a lot of stress and financial anxiety, so it’s important that you take time to emotionally process. “Acknowledge and normalize that they’re going to feel a range of emotions, whether it’s anger or

sadness,” Bryan-Podvin said. Whether you are feeling sadness, shock, anger or even relief, taking a moment to feel those emotions can help you move forward. To make plans for the future, it’s essential that you review your current financial situation, said career coach Marlo Lyons. If you have a budget, take a closer look and review whether you have expenses that you can temporarily cut to save money. Lyons recommends that you know how long your severance package will last if you’re receiving one. Applying for unemployment benefits as soon as possible can help alleviate some of the financial stress of a layoff. While the amount you get for unemployment might not be as much as your salary, it can help you to stay afloat for some time, Lyons said. The Labor Department has tips on applying for unemployment. Getting laid off from a job can affect your self-esteem, so Bryan-Podvin recommends that you create a list of good qualities about yourself that add to your overall value as a person. Bryan-Podvin calls this a “non-financial asset list.”

“If I were doing a non-financial asset list on myself I might say I’m a pretty good partner and a fun aunt,” she said. When working with her clients, Bryan-Podvin recommends that they create this list to remind them that their self-worth is part of their net worth. If you lose your job, you’ll need to be more strategic about your spending, said Jesse Mecham, founder of the money management app YNAB. “In a layoff, it becomes even more imperative that you treat every dollar with more attention than you have in the past,” Mecham said. Part of YNAB’s budgeting strategy is giving each dollar a job, whether it is to pay rent, buy groceries or add to your savings account. When adjusting your spending, Bryan-Podvin also recommends that you approach this with some compassion. Since cutting back can bleed into not doing activities that make you happy, she recommends reminding yourself that this is a temporary pause rather than a permanent change in your lifestyle.

While utilizing your credit card to pay for some expenses is almost inevitable, it’s best to not completely lean on credit while you’re searching for a new job. “If getting a new job takes them a little longer than they thought, that credit card has just become an anchor for them,” Mecham said. Even though unemployment is temporary, Mecham recommends cutting expenses rather than keeping them at the same level and leaning on credit. Look for community resources, whether that means finding a food bank near you or applying for a temporary hardship program. “Lots of communities offer temporary hardship programs when it comes to necessary bills, such as electricity or water,” Bryan-Podvin said. USA.Gov offers a benefit finder where you can find available programs and how to apply. As you are applying to new jobs, Lyons recommends that you take some time to assess if your professional goals are still the same. If you’re continuing in the same field, Lyons recommends that you make your resume “forward-look-

ing,” which means showing your future employer what you can do, not just what you have done. “You want to show the employer what you can do, what unique value you can bring to that particular job that no other candidate can bring because of your previous experience,” Lyons said. Lyons also recommends that you activate your network by reaching out to past colleagues on LinkedIn or attending industry networking events. Online certifications are another great way to make yourself a better candidate, she added. Having a routine can help you take care of your mental health and keep a cadence of applying to jobs. Plan your days so they include eating at your usual time, exercising and applying for jobs for a specific amount of time. “When we are laid off, unemployment can feel really aimless, especially if it came at us kind of out of nowhere,” Bryan-Podvin said. It’s also important to avoid isolating yourself and lean on your support system for emotional support, she added.

editor’s choice



Greenpeace, local groups rally against lavish event

Bezos' starry Venice wedding sparks protests over inequality

VENICE, Italy, June 25, (AP): This weekend's star-studded Venice wedding of multi-billionaire Amazon founder Jeff Bezos and Lauren Sanchez has galvanized activist groups that are protesting it as a sign of the growing disparity between the haves and have-nots as well as disregard of the city's residents.

About a dozen Venetian organizations - including housing advocates, anti-cruise ship campaigners and university groups - have united to protest the multi-day event under the banner "No Space for Bezos," a play on words also referring to the bride's recent space flight.

They have staged small-scale protests, unfurling anti-Bezos banners on iconic Venetian sites. They were joined this week by Greenpeace and the British group "Everyone Hates Elon," which has smashed Teslas to protest Elon Musk, to unfurl a giant banner in St. Mark's Square protesting purported tax breaks for billionaires.

"IF YOU CAN RENT VENICE FOR YOUR WEDDING YOU CAN PAY MORE TAX," read the banner, which featured a huge image of Bezos. Police quickly took it away.

There has been no comment from Bezos' representatives on the protests.

The local activists had planned a more organized protest for Saturday, aiming to obstruct access to canals with boats to prevent guests from reaching a wedding venue. Then they modified the protest to a march from the train station after claiming a victory, asserting that their pressure forced organizers to change the venue to the Arsenale, a more easily secured site beyond Venice's congested center.

"It will be a strong, decisive protest, but peaceful," said Federica Toninello, an activist with the Social Housing Assembly network. "We want it to be like a party, with music, to make clear what we want our Venice to look like."

Among the 200 guests confirmed to be attending the wedding are Mick Jagger, Ivanka Trump, Oprah Winfrey, Katy Perry and Leonardo DiCaprio.



This photo released by Greenpeace shows a large banner against Amazon founder Jeff Bezos' planned wedding, in St. Mark Square, in Venice, Italy Monday, June 23. (AP)

Venice, renowned for its romantic canal vistas, hosts hundreds of weddings each year, not infrequently those of the rich and famous. Previous celebrity weddings, like that of George Clooney to human rights lawyer Amal Alamuddin in

2014, were embraced by the public. Hundreds turned out to wish the couple well at City Hall.

Bezos has a different political and business profile, said Tommaso Cacciari, a prominent figure in the movement that successfully pushed for a ban on cruise ships over 25,000 tons traveling through the Giudecca Canal in central Venice.

"Bezos is not a Hollywood actor," Cacciari said. "He is an ultra-billionaire who sat next to Donald Trump during the inauguration, who contributed to his re-election and is contributing in a direct and heavy way to this new global obscurantism."

Critics also cite Amazon's labor practices, ongoing tax disputes with European governments and Bezos' political associations as additional reasons for concern.

Activists also argue that the Bezos wedding exemplifies broader failures in municipal governance, particularly the prioritization of tourism over residents' needs. They cite measures such as the day-tripper tax - which critics argue reinforces Venice's image as a theme park - as ineffective. Chief among their concerns is the lack of investment in affordable housing and essential services.

City officials have defended the wedding. Mayor Luigi Brugnaro called the event an honor for Venice, and the city denied the wedding would cause disruptions.

"Venice once again reveals itself to be a global stage," Brugnaro told The Associated Press, adding he hoped to meet Bezos while he was in town.

Meanwhile, a Venetian environmental research association, Corila, issued a statement saying Bezos' Earth Fund was supporting its work with an "important donation."

Corila, which unites university scholars and Italy's main national research council in researching Venetian protection strategies, wouldn't say how much Bezos was donating but said contact began in April, well before the protests started.

Obituary

From heartthrob to healer

Bobby Sherman, teen idol of the 1960s, dies

LOS ANGELES, June 25, (AP): Bobby Sherman, whose winsome smile and fashionable shaggy mop top helped make him into a teen idol in the 1960s and '70s with bubblegum pop hits like "Little Woman" and "Julie, Do Ya Love Me," has died. He was 81.

His wife, Brigitte Poulblon, announced the death Tuesday and family friend John Stamos posted her message on Instagram: "Bobby left this world holding my hand - just as he held up our life with love, courage, and unwavering grace." Sherman revealed he had Stage 4 cancer earlier this year.

Sherman was a squeaky-clean regular on the covers of Tiger Beat and Sixteen magazines, often with hair over his eyes and a choker on his neck. His face was printed on lunchboxes, cereal boxes and posters that hung on the bedroom walls of his adoring fans. He landed at No. 8 in TV Guide's list of "TV's 25 Greatest Teen Idols."

He was part of a lineage of teen heartthrobs who emerged as mass-market, youth-oriented magazines and TV took off, connecting fresh-scrubbed Ricky Nelson in the 1950s to David Cassidy in the '70s, all the way to Justin Bieber in the 2000s.

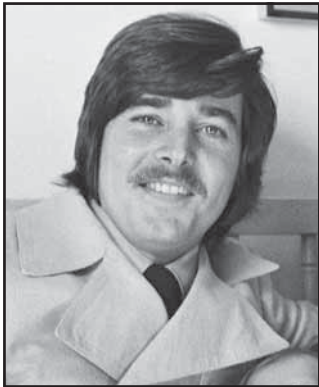
Sherman had four Top 10 hits on the Billboard Hot 100 chart - "Little Woman," "Julie, Do Ya Love Me," "Easy Come, Easy Go," and "La La La (If I Had You)." He had six albums on the Billboard 200 chart, including "Here Comes Bobby," which spent 48 weeks on the album chart, peaking at No. 10. His career got its jump start when he was cast in the ABC rock 'n' roll show "Shindig!" in the mid-'60s. Later, he starred in two television series - "Here Come the Brides" (1968-70) and "Getting Together" (1971).

Honor

Admirers from Hollywood took to social media to honor Sherman, with actor Patricia Heaton posting on X: "Hey all my 70s peeps, let's take a minute to remember our heartthrob Bobby Sherman" and Lorenzo Lamas recalling listening to Sherman's "Easy Come, Easy Go" on the school bus as a kid.

After the limelight moved on, Sherman became a certified medical emergency technician and instructor for the Los Angeles Police Department, teaching police recruits first aid and CPR. He donated his salary.

"A lot of times, people say, 'Well, if you could go back and change things, what would you do?'" he told The Tulsa World in 1997. "And I don't think I'd change a thing - except to maybe



Singer Bobby Sherman appears in Los Angeles on Dec. 21, 1972. (AP)

be a little bit more aware of it, because I probably could've relished the fun of it a little more. It was a lot of work. It was a lot of blood, sweat and tears. But it was the best of times."

Sherman, with sky blue eyes and dimples, grew up in the San Fernando Valley, singing Ricky Nelson songs and performing with a high-school rock band.

"I was brought up in a fairly strict family," he told the Sunday News newspaper in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, in 1998. "Law and order were important. Respect your fellow neighbor, remember other people's feelings. I was the kind of boy who didn't do things just to be mischievous."

Change

He was studying child psychology at a community college in 1964 when his girlfriend took him to a Hollywood party, which would change his life. He stepped onstage and sang with the band. Afterward, guests Jane Fonda, Natalie Wood and Sal Mineo asked him who his agent was. They took his number and, a few days later, an agent called him and set him up with "Shindig!"

Sherman hit true teen idol status in 1968, when he appeared in "Here Come the Brides," a comedy-adventure set in boom town Seattle in the 1870s. He sang the show's theme song, "Seattle," and starred as young logger Jeremy Bolt, often at loggerheads with brother, played by David Soul. It lasted two seasons.

Following the series, Sherman starred in "Getting Together," a spinoff of "The Partridge Family," about a songwriter struggling to make it in the music business. He became the first performer to star in three TV series before the age of 30. That television exposure soon translated into a fruitful recording career: His first single, "Little Woman," earned a gold record in 1969.

Film



This image released by Warner Bros Pictures shows Damson Idris in a scene from 'F1 The Movie.' (AP)

Actor shifts gears from 'Snowfall' to global fame

With 'F1,' Idris enters Hollywood's fast lane

LOS ANGELES, June 25, (AP): Damson Idris was trying to tune out the noise, but that's a little difficult at a Formula One race.

The British-Nigerian actor was in the zone, in character, filming the high-octane summer movie "F1" with Brad Pitt at some of the world's most famous racetracks. While Idris' profile has been rising in recent years, after six seasons starring in the FX series "Snowfall," there's nothing like being next to globally famous Formula One drivers and a Hollywood megastar to put things into perspective. He was pretty sure he was going to coast under the radar.

Then he started hearing not just his own name from fans in the crowd but "Franklin Saint," too, the name of his drug kingpin character on "Snowfall."

"It's funny, because I see myself as a young actor who nobody knows," Idris, 33, said in a recent interview with The Associated Press.

Anonymity may already be a thing of the past for Idris, though. In May, he made a splash at the Met Gala, arriving in a full racing suit (branded with "F1's" fictional team name APXGP) and a Swarovski crystal-studded helmet that he and two ushers removed to reveal a second look underneath. The boldness and theatricality of the stunt made it one of the most talked about moments at an event where everyone is trying to stand out.

And things are poised to rev up even more when "F1" opens globally Friday. Speeding into theaters on a wave of great reviews and the promise of a "Top Gun: Maverick"-style spectacle, filmmaker Joseph Kosinski is pretty sure Idris is going to start hearing people shout "Joshua Pearce" at him too.

That's the name of Idris' character, the hotshot rookie driver of the worst team on the circuit who's desperate to prove himself and hang on to one of the coveted seats.

"I'm very excited for people to see him own this character and go toe to toe with a giant movie star," Kosinski said. "I think he can do anything. He's just super talented, and I feel like I'm lucky to see him at the beginning of what's going to be a pretty strato-

spheric launch."

Idris tries to seek out projects that challenge him and characters who are as different as possible - from each other and, especially, from him. Joshua Pearce fit the bill in a moment when he was preparing to say goodbye to Franklin Saint. After he read the "F1" script, the character even infiltrated his dreams.

"I said to myself, 'Man, no one's going to be able to play this part like I will.' I remember writing Joe (Kosinski) a letter and telling him that," Idris said. "When we finally jumped in the cars for the first time, I was hooked. I was like, 'Yep this movie's mine. It's no one else's and I can't wait to give my all to it.' And that's exactly what I did."

"F1" wouldn't just require playing a part. Both he and Pitt had to learn how to drive the cars at speeds of up to 180 mph. It took months of training behind the wheel the supervision of stunt drivers Luciano Bacheta and Craig Dolbey, as well as physical training to adapt to the G-forces they'd feel in the car.

Imagine

When it came time to film, which they did with special cameras attached to the cars, sometimes they were driving during breaks at real races with hundreds of thousands of spectators around. Every time you see Idris' or Pitt's face in the car, Kosinski said, they're really driving that car.

"It's so insane. It's actually quicker in real life and it looks really fast on the screen," Idris said. "In a split second, a decision could be really detrimental. But I couldn't imagine doing this movie any other way. If it was on green screen, you'd be able to tell."

There's a bit of art-meets-life symmetry wrapped up in "F1," in which an up-and-comer teams up with a veteran. In the film, it's a reluctant pairing of two alphas. The mentorship is fraught, the lessons are hard-earned and the competition is not exactly friendly. Unlike Joshua, Idris is more than willing to get advice from those around him, whether it's producers like Jerry Bruckheimer and Jeremy Kleiner, his director Kosinski, or his co-stars, from Pitt to Javier Bardem.

Variety

HARTFORD, Conn.: Mark Davis, a television news journalist who covered Connecticut politics for three decades for a local ABC affiliate, has died. He was 76.

Davis died on Monday, WTNH-TV announced on Tuesday. He worked at the station for 36 years and retired in 2020 as chief Capitol correspondent. The cause of death was not disclosed. He had surgery last year for bladder cancer, the station previously reported.

Known for always beating out other reporters to ask the first question at news conferences, Davis covered the most high-profile political stories in the state including the 2000 vice presidential candidacy of US Sen. Joe Lieberman, a Connecticut Democrat who ran with Al Gore, and the 2004 resignation of Republican Gov. John Rowland during a corruption scandal.

"The thing I like the best about the job is ... when someone walks up to me on the street and says, 'I like you, Mark Davis. You're a plain talker,'" he said in a 2017 WTNH video celebrating his 50th anniversary in broadcasting. "I mean that's our job, is to be plain talkers."

Davis worked at Boston radio stations in the 1970s before moving to Connecticut in 1980 to take a radio job in Hartford.

He moved to television in 1984 when he joined WTNH. He held various jobs there, including anchor, before becoming a political reporter in 1989. He retired in 2020, citing worries about contracting the coronavirus at his age. (AP)

BRISTOL, Conn.: ESPN has renewed its media

"I speak to them every day and I ask for advice," he said. "The main focus is on stories, playing characters that I can be proud of and range. That's everything I'm setting out to do in this career."

Acting was not always the goal for Idris. Like many kids in South London, he once dreamed of being a soccer player. Sure, the idea of being a renowned athlete held some appeal, but he also loved the sheer discipline it required. Then, at age 18, he realized he'd never be as great as Lionel Messi.

"When I see him one day, hopefully I'm blessed to meet him, I'm going to tell him that he's the reason why I quit football, because he was so good," he said. "Wonderfully, acting is a subjective industry, so I can at least cheat my way into working with Brad Pitt."

Cheating is, of course, a bit of cheeky hyperbole for an actor who studied drama at university and continued training at London's Identity School of Acting afterward. Since he made his stage debut in Ade Solanke's "Pandora's Box" over 10 years ago, Idris has been hitting the pavement like the rest of his peers. And he's just getting started.

Idris recently wrapped filming the Tomi Adeyemi adaptation "Children of Bone and Blood" in Cape Town, South Africa. Directed by Gina Prince-Bythewood, Idris plays Prince Inan in the African fantasy that co-stars Viola Davis, Cynthia Erivo, Chiwetel Ejiofor and Idris' idol and real-life mentor Idris Elba.

"It's not just a namesake," Idris said. "I feel so blessed to be able to say that I'm like his little brother and I can call him and get advice."

Next up, Idris will prepare to portray Miles Davis in Bill Pohl's "Miles & Juliette," about the jazz legend's romance with French singer Juliette Gréco. He's also founded a fine jewelry line, named Idris, inspired by his mother, and is getting into producing as well - his production company has a deal with FX Networks and wants to make opportunities for emerging talents.

And like his character in "F1," Idris is learning to block out the noise. He knows that a film career is a long journey and there will be ups and downs.

rights deal with the Premier Lacrosse League for five seasons, the network announced Wednesday.

The deal begins next year and includes all PLL games, Maybelline Women's Lacrosse League games, as well as future drafts for both leagues. ESPN began carrying PLL games in 2022.

ESPN also announced it has also made a minority equity investment in the PLL.

"This partnership marks a historic moment for the PLL and WLL. ESPN's renewed commitment, along with their investment, speaks volumes about the future of lacrosse," PLL co-founder and President Paul Rabil said in a statement. "Together, we're not only bringing the best in professional lacrosse to more fans, more often, but we're building a model for how modern sports leagues can grow - with equity, innovation, and access at the center."

The PLL has eight teams and is in its seventh season. The WLL is in its first year with four franchises. (AP)



Idris Elba, (left), Priyanka Chopra Jonas and John Cena attend the world premiere of 'Heads of State' at Alice Tully Hall on Tuesday, June 24, in New York. (AP)

Experts offer tools to help youth cope with climate fears

Emotional toll of climate change hits young people hard

NEW YORK, June 25, (AP): Anxiety, grief, anger, fear, helplessness. The emotional toll of climate change is broad-ranging, especially for young people.

Many worry about what the future holds, and a daily grind of climate anxiety and distress can lead to sleeplessness, an inability to focus and worse. Some young people wonder whether it's moral to bring children into the world. Many people grieve for the natural world.

Activists, climate psychologists and others in the fight against climate change have a range of ways to build resilience and help manage emotions. Some ideas:

Feeling isolated? Find ways to connect with like-minded people and help nature, said climate psychologist Laura Robinson in Ann Arbor, Michigan. There are many ways to get involved.

Work locally to convince more residents to give up grass lawns and increase biodiversity with native plants, for instance. Help establish new green spaces, join projects to protect water, develop wildlife corridors, or decrease pesticide use to save frogs, insects and birds. Work to get the word out on turning down nighttime lighting to help birds and lightning bugs.

"I see people struggling with these

emotions across the age range," said Robinson. "I have parents who are themselves really struggling with their own feelings and really worried about their children in the future."

Climate news and the onslaught of disaster and mayhem in general has become heavy and overwhelming for many with the rise of social media and mobile phone use. Try scheduling breaks from notifications on your phone or stepping back from the news cycle in other ways.

Consider the idea of a "positivity sandwich," where you begin with a good piece of news, followed by a harder tidbit, then finish with a second feel-good story.

Phoebe Yu, 39, gave up a cushy job in health technology to work on an MBA with a focus on sustainability. She started a business selling sponges made from the luffa gourd. And she does it all while raising her 6-year-old son with her husband in Fremont, California.

"I am generally a very happy person and I'm very optimistic. And I'm still that, but sometimes it becomes very difficult to manage. Like, what will happen and thinking about the long term," she said. "At points, I've regretted bringing a child into this world, knowing how things could get much,



Eaton Fire evacuee Alyson Granaderos, left, sobs while trying to comfort her son, Ceiba Phillips, 11, as he visits their home for the first time since the fire in Altadena, Calif., Feb. 8, 2025. (AP)

much worse."

Part of managing her own emotions is trying to model sustainable behaviors for her son while educating him on the importance of helping the environment. The family drives an electric vehicle. They don't eat meat and have encouraged extended family to do the same. They recycle, compost and limit travel by air.

Reid participated in a pilot project for a free teacher tool kit on climate put together by the National Environmental Education Foundation and the Climate Mental Health Network, a collective of community advocates working on the emotional impacts of climate change.

The kit is full of ways to help teachers support students' mental health and manage their own climate-related emotions. One of the exercises involves students documenting their interactions with the natural world in an environmental timeline. Laying it all out often stirs action, Reid said.

"They can be anxious, they can be angry, they can feel fearful, but they're like these go-getters of, 'I'm going to make the change in this world.' There's kind of two truths at once where they feel scared but they also feel like, you know, I can do something about this," she said.

"The timelines," Reid said, "provided some good, rich conversations."

Psychotherapist Patricia Hasbach, just outside of Eugene, Oregon, has written several books on eco-psychology and eco-therapy and has taught graduate students on those topics.

"We incorporate nature into the healing process," she said. "And we address a person's relationship with

the natural world. Certainly with climate change, eco-therapy has a huge role to play."

One of her most important missions is helping people find their words to talk about climate change in pursuit of resilience.

"There have been some studies done that show an increased number of young people reporting concern, like 84% of young people in the U.S. reporting concern about climate change, but only like 59% of them think that other people are as concerned as they are," Hasbach said.

That, she said, contributes to inaction and feelings of anxiety, depression or isolation.

Climate scientist Kate Marvel, a physicist and author of the new book "Human Nature: Nine Ways to Feel About our Changing Planet," urges people to think differently about their place in preserving the environment.

"A lot of times, the anxiety and the hopelessness comes from a feeling of powerlessness. And I don't think any of us is powerless," she said.

"I think collectively, we're incredibly powerful," Marvel said. "The atmosphere cares about what all of us together are doing, and I think you can have much more impact if you think of yourself as part of the collective."

Experts warn of new epidemics of infectious diseases

Vaccination efforts worldwide stall, putting millions of children at risk

LONDON, June 25, (AP): Efforts to vaccinate children globally have stalled since 2010, leaving millions vulnerable to tetanus, polio, tuberculosis and other diseases that can be easily prevented.

Protection from measles in particular dropped in 100 countries between 2010 and 2019, unravelling decades of progress, including in rich countries that had previously eliminated the highly infectious disease, according to a new analysis of global vaccination trends published Tuesday in the journal Lancet.

"After clean water, vaccination is the most effective intervention for protecting the health of our children," said Helen Bedford, a professor of children's health at University College London, who was not connected to the research. She warned there has been a small but worrying rise in the number of parents skipping vaccination for their children in recent years, for reasons including misinformation.

In Britain, Bedford said that has resulted in the largest number of measles recorded since the 1990s and the deaths of nearly a dozen babies from whooping cough. Vaccination rates in the US are also falling, and exemptions from vaccinations are at an all-time high.

After the World Health Organization established its routine immunization program in 1974, countries made



A health worker administers a polio vaccine to a child in Karachi, Pakistan, Jan. 8, 2024. (AP)

significant efforts to protect children against preventable and sometimes fatal diseases; the program is credited with inoculating more than 4 billion children, saving the lives of 154 million worldwide.

Since the program began, the global coverage of children receiving three doses of the diphtheria-tetanus-whooping cough vaccine nearly doubled, from 40% to 81%. The percentage of kids getting the measles vaccine also jumped from 37% to 83%, with similar increases for polio and tuberculosis.

But after the COVID-19 pandemic, coverage rates dropped, with an estimated 15.6 million children missing out on the diphtheria-tetanus-whooping cough vaccine and the measles vaccine. Nearly 16 million children failed to get vaccinated against polio and 9 million missed out on the TB vaccine,

with the biggest impact in sub-Saharan Africa. The study was funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and Gavi, The Vaccine Alliance.

Researchers at the Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation at the University of Washington, who conducted the analysis, noted that more than half of the world's 15.7 million unvaccinated children live in just eight countries in 2023: Nigeria, India, Congo, Ethiopia, Somalia, Sudan, Indonesia and Brazil.

Since President Trump has begun to withdraw the US from the WHO and dismantled the US Agency for International Aid, public health experts have warned of new epidemics of infectious diseases. The researchers said it was too early to know what impact recent funding cuts might have on children's immunization rates.

The WHO said there had been an 11-fold spike in measles in the Americas this year compared to 2024. Measles infections doubled in the European region in 2024 versus the previous year and the disease remains common in Africa and Southeast Asia.

"It is in everyone's interest that this situation is rectified," said Dr. David Elliman, a pediatrician who has advised the British government, in a statement. "While vaccine-preventable infectious diseases occur anywhere in the world, we are all at risk."



SpaceX Falcon 9 crew, Shubhanshu Shukla of the Indian Space Research Organization, (from left), Tibor Kapu of Hungary, commander Peggy Whitson, and Slawosz Uznanski-Wisniewski of Poland, pose for a photo before departing for a launch to the International Space Station at the Kennedy Space Center in Cape Canaveral, Fla., Tuesday, June 24. (AP)

Private space mission

India, Poland, Hungarian astronauts blast off to ISS

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla., June 25, (AP): India, Poland and Hungary launched their first astronauts in more than 40 years Wednesday, sending them on a private flight to the International Space Station.

The three countries shared the tab for the two-week mission. Axiom Space, the Houston company that arranged the deal, put the ticket price at more than \$65 million per customer.

SpaceX's Falcon rocket blasted off from NASA's Kennedy Space Center two weeks late because of space station leak concerns. The capsule on top carried not only the three newcomers to space - none of whom were alive when their countries' first astronauts launched - but America's most experienced astronaut, Peggy Whitson.

Besides Whitson, the crew includes India's Shubhanshu Shukla, a pilot in the Indian Air Force; Hungary's Tibor Kapu, a mechanical engineer; and Poland's Slawosz Uznanski-Wisniewski, a radiation expert and one of the European Space Agency's project astronauts sometimes pressed into tempo-

rary duty.

The astronauts are due to arrive at the orbiting lab the next morning.

In addition to dozens of experiments, the astronauts are flying food that celebrates their heritage: Indian curry and rice with mango nectar; spicy Hungarian paprika paste; and freeze-fried Polish pierogies.

Hungary's first astronaut, Bertalan Farkas, traveled to the launch site to cheer on Kapu.

Farkas launched with the Soviets in 1980, taking along a teddy bear in a cosmonaut suit that went back up with Kapu. India and Poland's original astronauts also launched with the Soviets in the late 1970s and 1980s.

Uznanski-Wisniewski carried up the Polish flag worn on his predecessor's spacesuit, noting that Miroslaw Hermaszewski was his biggest supporter until his death in 2022. India's first astronaut, Rakesh Sharma, couldn't make it to Florida for the launch; Shukla said he's been a mentor "at every step of this journey" and is flying a surprise gift for him.

'Sugarbag'

Bee honey may fight superbugs

SYDNEY, June 25, (Xinhua): Researchers have found that honey made by native stingless bees possesses distinctive antimicrobial qualities, offering new hope in the fight against the worldwide threat of antibiotic resistance.

Known locally as "sugarbag" honey, honey from three species, such as *Austroplebeia australis*, demonstrates remarkable antimicrobial activity, even after undergoing heat treatment and long-term storage, a trait that could benefit commercial medical applications, according to a release from the University of Sydney on Monday.

This resilience sets it apart from honey produced by European honeybees, whose antimicrobial effects often rely on hydrogen peroxide and can diminish over time or with heat, the release said.

The study found that stingless bee honey's antimicrobial power relies on both peroxide and non-peroxide mechanisms, remaining effective even without hydrogen peroxide -- unlike manuka honey, whose potency depends mainly on certain plants.

The study's lead author, Kenya Fernandes at the University of Sydney, said the honey's consistent antimicrobial effects across locations suggest the bees themselves, not just the plants, play a key role.

□ □ □

Measles: Bolivia declared a National Health Emergency on Tuesday in response to a measles outbreak that has seen 60 confirmed cases in different parts of the South American country.

"After urgently convening the National Strategic Council for Health Emergencies, in response to the measles epidemic that the country is experiencing and the high risk of the disease spreading, we have decided to declare a National Health Emergency with the firm intention of protecting the health and lives of the Bolivian people," Bolivian President Luis Arce announced on social media.

The measure seeks to contain the spread of the virus through a mass vaccination campaign and a coordinated plan with local and regional governments, and international organizations.

Family-based therapy eases depression in kids

SYDNEY, June 25, (Xinhua): New Australian research highlights the importance of involving a child's immediate support network, particularly parents and caregivers, in effectively addressing childhood anxiety and depression.

The study examined the impact of Behavior Exchange and Systems Therapy - Foundations (BEST-F) on children aged 3 to 11. This family-based approach places the parent-child relationship at the center of treatment,

according to a release from Murdoch University in Western Australia published on the Science Media Exchange website on Tuesday.

Since the COVID-19 pandemic, childhood anxiety and depression have risen worldwide, but the study shows that involving families in therapy can significantly reduce children's internalized symptoms, the release said.

"We know that children are embedded within many systems, and the family system is of prime importance,"

said Renita Almeida, the study's co-author from Murdoch University.

Family environments strongly affect children's mental health, and improvements within the family often lead to ongoing benefits for both children and parents, Almeida said.

The research, published in the journal of Children, demonstrated that the BEST-F model, developed in Melbourne and Perth, had a substantial effect on lowering the frequency with which children internalized their symptoms.

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Reese has a double-double as Sky downs Sparks

Mystics finish strong to hand Collier-less Lynx second loss

WASHINGTON, June 25, (AP): Shakira Austin scored 19 points and the Washington Mystics scored the last six points of the game to hand the Minnesota Lynx, without All-Star Napheesa Collier, their second loss, 68-64 on Tuesday night.

Austin's putback tied the game at 64 with 32 seconds left. After a timeout to advance the ball, Bridget Carleton's inbounds pass went off Courtney Williams' hands and Sug Sutton scooped up the loose ball and raced in for the winning basket. Sonia Citron secured the win with two free throws with 6.4 seconds remaining.

Washington didn't make a basket after the 5:12 mark, when Kiki Iriafen's short jumper on the baseline gave Washington a 62-61 lead until Austin's tying basket.

Sutton scored 12 points for the Mystics (7-8) and Kiki Iriafen added 11 points and 11 rebounds. Citron finished 3 of 13 from the field for nine points, ending her streak of double-figure games to start her career at 14.

Sky 97, Sparks 86

In Chicago, Kamilia Cardoso scored a career-high 27 points, Angel Reese had a double-double and Chicago beat Los Angeles.

Reese finished with 18 points and 17 rebounds. Ariel Atkins scored 13 points for the Sky (4-10).

Chicago took its first lead, 74-72, at 7:23 of the fourth quarter on a driving layup by Cardoso and outscored Los Angeles 30-17 in the final period.

Azura Stevens scored 21 points and Kelsey Plum added 20 for the Sparks (4-11), who lost their fourth straight. Dearica Hamby had 15 points and Rick-ea Jackson 11.



Seattle Storm forward Nneka Ogumwume (3) defends against Indiana Fever forward Aliyah Boston (7) during the first half of a WNBA basketball game in Seattle. (AP)

Wings 68, Dream 55

In Arlington, Arike Ogumbowale scored 21 points, Paige Bueckers scored in double figures for the 12th straight game and Dallas topped Atlanta.

Poms ‘outclass’ India with sensational 371-run chase



England's Ben Duckett plays a shot on day five of the first cricket test match between England and India at Headingley in Leeds, England. (AP)

Duckett and Crawley lead England's chase

LEEDS, England, June 25 (AP): England brilliantly paced a mammoth chase of 371 runs to beat India by five wickets and take the series-opening Headingley test with 14 overs to spare.

England pulled off the 10th-highest successful run chase in Test history by playing clinically and confidently on a fifth-day pitch and in conditions, especially in the morning and afternoon, that suited India's bowlers.

Ben Duckett's and Zak Crawley's magnificent opening partnership of 188, knocking off more than half of the required runs - underpinned a chase that was ultimately finished in style by Jamie Smith's massive knee-down six over long-on.

After a wicketless morning, pacers Prasidh Krishna and Shardul Thakur were India's surprising wicket-takers in the afternoon. When spinner Ravindra Jadeja claimed captain Ben Stokes after tea with 69 runs needed, the chase finally became tense.

But Joe Root, 53 not out, and Smith, 44 not out, removed all drama by hitting the remaining runs without giving India a sniff.

The odds were heavily against England when it resumed the chase on a gloomy morning on 21-0, needing 350 more runs. However, England strengthened its reputation for targeting large-scale objectives. It achieved



India's Mohammed Siraj bowls a delivery on day five of the first cricket test match between England and India at Headingley in Leeds, England. (AP)

its 12th successful run chase in 14 chances at home under coach Brendon 'Baz' McCullum.

In a big year for England with four more home tests against India followed by the Ashes in Australia, England said it was prioritizing winning over entertainment. And this wasn't a typical "Bazball" crash-bang chase, but grown-up.

It still entertained all five days, only the third test in history in which all four innings were 350 runs or more. England scored 465 and 373-5 against India's 471 and 364.

England became the first team in

first-class cricket, let alone tests, to concede five centuries in a game and win.

Duckett and Crawley calmly absorbed India's pressure to take the total to 117-0 by lunch and become the first set of England openers to score 2,000 runs as a pair since Alastair Cook and Andrew Strauss 13 years ago.

Crawley was happy to let Duckett be the aggressor and hit his slowest test 50. He was lucky on 42 when Jasprit Bumrah missed a low caught-and-bowled chance. No. 1 test bowler Bumrah hurled 16 overs without a wicket.

After lunch, Duckett was dropped on 97 by a diving Yashasvi Jaiswal, angering bowler Mohammed Siraj. That was Jaiswal's third drop of the match.

Duckett reverse-swept Jadeja for his 14th boundary and his hundred off 121 balls. He jumped and punched the air to celebrate his sixth test hundred and second against India.

But he lost his partner, Crawley, after a brief rain delay on 65 off 126 balls. The pair achieved the fifth-highest opening stand in the fourth innings in test history, and dropped the odds in England's favor.

Krishna, who had been going for six an over, was the unlikely wicket-taker. Then he got a second 11 minutes later, Ollie Pope on 8.

Duckett was almost scoring at will. When he reverse-swept Jadeja for a six, India wicketkeeper Rishabh Pant acknowledged its daring by tapping Duckett's arm.

But he finally fell to a catch in the covers on 149 off 170 balls, including 21 boundaries. Next ball, the barely used Thakur got Harry Brook to nick off for a duck.

England still needed 118 runs, and India sensed a chance, but in the middle was already Root, who averages 58 against India.

He and Stokes added 49 together, helped along by India's misfields and three poor India reviews. Stokes was out for 3.3 but Smith came in and hit the winning runs after Root cruised to his 102nd 50-plus score in his 154th test.

Bueckers scored 12 points and has reached double figures in all 12 games she has played. Aziaha James added 11 points and Li Yueru had 10 with a career-high 15 rebounds for the Wings (4-12), who have won three of their last four games.

Ryne Howard had 23 points and surpassed 2,000 for her career for Atlanta (10-5), which had won 9 of its last 11 games. Alisha Gray added 13 points and Brionna Jones 12. The Dallas reserves outscored the Atlanta bench 21-5. The Dream went 0 for 11 from 3-point range in the first quarter and finished 7 of 34 (21%), while shooting 23% overall.

Fever 94, Storm 86

In Seattle, Aliyah Boston scored a career-high 31 points and Kelsey Mitchell chipped in 26 points and five 3-pointers as Indiana beat Seattle.

Caitlin Clark scored just six points in the win on a tough shooting night. She went 0 for 6 from 3-point range and 3 for 13 from the field.

Boston's previous career best was 30 points on Sept. 8, 2024, against the Atlanta Dream. The 6-foot-5 forward and former No. 1 overall pick scored 26 points in her last game against the Las Vegas Aces, as well.

The duo of Mitchell and Boston was particularly impactful in a dominant third quarter for the Fever (7-7), when they outscored the Storm (9-6) 30-19. Mitchell had seven points in the quarter, while Boston added eight more, building a lead the Storm couldn't erase, despite a valiant late push.

Lexie Hull added 15 points and Damiris Dantas contributed 10 for the Fever. It was an impressive all-around effort from Indiana, especially considering Clark's recent struggles from beyond the 3-point arc continued. Clark has converted just 1 of her last 23 3-point attempts.

Porzingis going to Hawks

Irving and Mavs agree on \$119m, 3-year deal

DALLAS, 25, (AP): The Dallas Mavericks and Kyrie Irving have agreed on a \$119 million, three-year contract with the All-Star guard still recovering from a torn ACL that will sideline him into the 2025-26 season, a person with knowledge of the deal said.

Irving is declining the \$43 million player option in the final year of his current three-year contract, the person told The Associated Press on condition of anonymity because the deal isn't expected to be finalized until the start of the new league year on July 6.

The new contract will align Irving with co-star Anthony Davis, who joined the Mavericks in the seismic trade that sent Luka Doncic to the Los Angeles Lakers in February. Davis has three years remaining on his contract, with a player option that now will be the same season as Irving, 2027-28.

The agreement with Irving came on the eve of the NBA draft, with the Mavericks poised to take former Duke star Cooper Flagg with the No. 1 overall pick after winning the draft lottery despite having just a 1.8% chance to do so.

Irving also is a Duke alum, as is young center Dereck Lively II. Once the nine-time All-Star returns from his injury, perhaps in December or January, all three among Irving, Lively and Flagg figure to be in the starting lineup.

The 33-year-old Irving came to the Mavericks in a 2023 trade after a tumultuous tenure in Brooklyn. The idea then was to pair him with Doncic, and a year later the duo led Dallas to the NBA Finals for the first time in 13 years. Boston beat the Mavs in five games last June.

The stunning decision to send Doncic to the Lakers elevated Irving's status, although Davis' championship pedigree with the Lakers essentially put the two on



Dallas Mavericks guard Kyrie Irving advances the ball up court during an NBA basketball game against the Milwaukee Bucks in Dallas. (AP)

even footing.

Davis went down with a groin injury in his Dallas debut, and before he could come back, Irving sustained his knee injury about a month after the Doncic trade.

Kristaps Porzingis is being traded by the Boston Celtics to the Atlanta Hawks, and part of what will be a three-team deal gives the Brooklyn Nets another selection in Wednesday's first round of the NBA draft, according to a person with knowledge of the agreement.

Porzingis is going to the Hawks, while Georges Niang and a second-round pick will be acquired by Boston, and Brooklyn will wind up with Terance Mann and the No. 22 pick that is held by Atlanta in Wednesday's draft, said the person who spoke to The Associated Press on condition of anonymity because the trade isn't expected to be finalized until the start of the new league year on July 6.

ESPN first reported the trade, which was later confirmed by The Atlanta Journal-Constitution.

First pro race in Europe

Gout lowers his national record in 200

OSTRAVA, Czech Republic, June 25, (AP): Gout Gout is 17, he's being compared with Usain Bolt and he has lowered his national record in his first professional race in Europe.

The Australian high school senior improved his own national record when he won the 200 meters at the Golden Spike meet in Ostrava in 20.02 seconds. It's not the fastest he's ever run over the half-lap sprint, but it's gaining him more attention.

Gout posted two wind-assisted times under 20 seconds, clocking 19.84 and 19.98 at the national championships at Perth in April, but neither was considered legal because the wind was above allowable thresholds.

Even without those two sub-20 times, he's still in the top seven all-time for Under-20s, a list that includes Bolt, the great Jamaica sprinter who dominated the 2008 and 2012 Olympics.

At age 16 last December, Gout ran 20.04 seconds to win the 200 at the national high school championships and break a 56-year-old national record over that distance set by 1968 Olympic silver medalist Peter Norman.

Running in Lane 6 at Ostrava on Tuesday - the timing made it perfect for Wednesday morning TV news shows back in Australia - Gout finished powerfully to surge past Cuba's Reynier Mena on his inside over the last 30 meters.

"Another national record! Pretty happy with that. It's not a bad first-up in Europe," he said. "I've felt stronger in training these last couple of months and I've felt good since I got to Europe last Thursday."

Gout was born in Ipswich, near Brisbane, in Queensland state. His parents are South Sudanese immigrants who moved to Australia in 2005.

Gout will race again in Europe next month before returning to Australia for some school work and preparation for the world championships in Tokyo in September.

Lore and Rodriguez to serve as co-chairmen on the board

NBA owners unanimously approve \$1.5b sale of Wolves, Lynx

MINNEAPOLIS, June 25, (AP): The \$1.5 billion sale of the Minnesota Timberwolves from Glen Taylor to an investment group led by e-commerce entrepreneur Marc Lore and former baseball star Alex Rodriguez gained NBA approval on Tuesday, finalizing a complex and contentious process more than four years after the deal was reached.

The ownership transfer that Taylor tried to stop last year received an unanimous vote from the league's board of governors that comprises the 30 team owners. The deal, which is expected to close this week nearly 51 months and more than 1,500 days after the initial agreement, includes the four-time WNBA champion Minnesota Lynx.

The Timberwolves are planning an introductory news conference for Lore and Rodriguez next month in Las Vegas during the NBA Summer League.

Lore and Rodriguez will serve as co-chairmen on the board, with Lore as Timberwolves governor and Rodriguez as alternate governor, the league announced. For the Lynx,

Rodriguez will serve as governor and Lore as alternate governor.

"We fully recognize the great responsibility that comes with serving as stewards of these exceptional franchises," Lore said in a statement distributed by the organization. "We are committed to building an organization that sets the standard for excellence, is universally admired, and rooted in pride that spans generations."

The business partners and close friends who met during the pandemic over a Zoom call have said they're committed to keeping the teams in Minnesota.

"I've dedicated my entire life to the world of sports, not just as a game, but as a powerful force that unites people, uplifts communities, and changes lives," Rodriguez said. "I'm incredibly honored and energized to roll up my sleeves and get to work. I know what it takes to be a champion, and I'm ready to bring that same commitment and drive to create a winning culture in Minnesota."

The 83-year-old Taylor, who grew up on a Minnesota dairy farm and built a fortune with a business that specialized in printing wedding invitations, bought the Timberwolves for about \$88 million in 1994 to prevent them from moving after a deal between the original owners and a group in New Orleans was nixed by the NBA.

After Lore and Rodriguez were outbid for the New York Mets by hedge fund manager Steve Cohen, they turned their attention to basketball after learning Taylor was exploring a sale. The deal was arranged in phases to allow Taylor to stay as a mentor of sorts.

The value of the franchise has more than doubled since that April 10, 2021, agreement due largely to soaring NBA revenues. Forbes has estimated the Timberwolves are worth \$3.1 billion. Sportico's most recent calculations pegged the club at \$3.29 billion. Both publications put them as the third-lowest in the league, playing in a midsized market in a 35-year-old arena.

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Youth categories included for first time to support future stars of Kuwaiti sports

Kuwait Football’s brightest stars shine at Zain’s annual Excellence Awards

KUWAIT CITY, June 25: Zain Kuwait, the strategic partner of the Kuwait Football Association, honored the stars of the 2024-2025 Zain Premier League (Dawri Zain) season during the annual Excellence Awards, which brought together an elite group of Kuwaiti sports stars, media figures, and sports personalities.

The event marked the conclusion of the third season of Zain’s strategic partnership with the KFA, reaffirming the company’s commitment to supporting sports and youth in Kuwait, contributing to the development of Kuwaiti football, and encouraging players and coaching staff to achieve peak performance.

The event was attended by Sheikh Ahmad Al-Yousef Al-Sabah, President of the Kuwait Football Association; Waleed Al-Khashti, Chief Corporate Affairs & Relations Officer at Zain Kuwait; senior KFA officials; members of the technical committee responsible for selecting this year’s award winners; honored players; along with sports leaders and media representatives.

In his opening remarks, Sheikh Ahmad Al-Yousef Al-Sabah stated: “I am very pleased to be here today at Zain, this leading company that has provided tremendous and impactful support to the Kuwait Football Association over the past three years.”

He added: “I extend my sincere thanks to the Chairman, members of the Board of Directors, and Mr. Bader Al-Kharafi for this fruitful collaboration. This outstanding event and its excellent organization truly reflect their genuine commitment to the advancement of football in Kuwait.”

He continued: “It also brings me great joy to see this talented group of young players, who represent the future of Kuwaiti football. I wish them continued success and progress, to see them in the Premier League and eventually in our national teams.”

He concluded: “In collaboration with Zain, we at the KFA promise to provide even greater support in the upcoming season, which kicks off on 14 September, aiming for an even more competitive and successful league. We will also place special focus on further developing the Under-20 League. Our heartfelt thanks go to everyone who contributed to this success.”

In his remarks during the event, Waleed Al-Khashti said: “It is my pleasure to welcome you all to Zain’s Wonderful World, where we gather to celebrate the conclusion of an exciting sports season and to honor an elite



Sheikh Ahmad Al-Yousef Al-Sabah and Waleed Al-Khashti with the technical committee and award-winning players.

group of athletes from the 2024-2025 Zain Premier League.”

He added: “We believe that the role of the private sector in supporting youth and sports is not optional, but a national responsibility and a cornerstone for building a vibrant and ambitious society. For this reason, we remain committed to supporting and motivating sports talent to excel, so that Kuwait’s name continues to shine in regional and international arenas. One clear example of this is the great success of the Khaleeji Zain 26 tournament held earlier this year, which united the GCC nations here in Kuwait.”

He further stated: “At Zain, we view sports support as more than just a marketing partnership. Our aim is to instill a spirit of achievement and contribute to building an integrated sports ecosystem that leaves a positive impact on society. We take great pride in our partnership with the Kuwait Football Association, which has resulted in key milestones in recent years, and we look forward to an even more distinguished season ahead.”

He added: “We also believe that sports is an effective platform for instilling values such as teamwork, perseverance, and discipline, values we are equally committed to fostering within our work environment at Zain.”

Sheikh Ahmad Al-Yousef Al-Sabah:

- “Zain has provided tremendous and impactful support to the KFA over the past years”

Waleed Al-Khashti:

- “We aim to instill a spirit of achievement and build an integrated sports ecosystem that leaves a positive mark on society”
- Company hosted annual Excellence Awards in partnership with Kuwait Football Association
- Event attended by Kuwait’s sporting community, athletes, officials, and media

He continued: “Today, we honor an outstanding group of players and athletes who excelled last season, recognizing their exceptional performance on the field. We are also pleased to introduce a new addition to this event — honoring a group of talented youth players from the age categories — a gesture aimed at encouraging them at the start of their careers and nurturing their talents to become future stars.”

He also said: “I would also like to take this opportunity to extend my heartfelt thanks and appreciation to the Kuwait

Football Association and the members of the technical committee who worked tirelessly with great professionalism to select this year’s Excellence Award winners in a transparent manner.”

He concluded: “At Zain, we renew our deep commitment to supporting everything that helps elevate Kuwait’s name, whether on the sports field or in the fields of innovation and technological progress.”

To ensure the highest level of transparency in the selection process, the KFA formed a technical committee at

the beginning of the season, consisting of distinguished former national players and experts: Thamer Enad (Committee Head), Jamal Mubarak, Faisal Borqaba, Waleed Ali, and Mubarak Al-Woqayan. Zain extended its sincere thanks and appreciation to them for their great efforts and high professionalism throughout the season.

Zain expressed its pride in this partnership with the Kuwait Football Association, which has elevated the professional standards of Kuwaiti football competitions. This season, matches featured strong performances and widespread fan engagement.

Zain firmly believes that the private sector plays a vital role in supporting sports and youth, not only through financial sponsorship, but by actively contributing to the creation of a sus-

tainable sports environment that fosters excellence, innovation, and higher competition levels locally.

As this season concludes with the Excellence Awards, Zain reaffirms its commitment to continuing this leadership role in cooperation with the Kuwait Football Association, under a strategic partnership that includes sponsorship of the Premier League (Dawri Zain), H.H. the Amir’s Cup, H.H. the Crown Prince’s Cup, and the First Division League.

Zain affirms that its support for Kuwaiti sports will remain a fundamental pillar of its social responsibility strategy, with the goal of elevating national sports, inspiring future generations to excel, and helping Kuwaiti sports achieve honorable representation in regional and international competitions.

This year, Zain honored winners in the following main categories, as announced at the beginning of the season:

Winner	Club	Award
Mohammed Daham	Kuwait SC	Player of the Season (KD 10,000)
Yousef Nasser	Kuwait SC	Top Local Scorer (KD 5,000)
Vitor Vieira	Fahaheel SC	Top Professional Scorer (KD 5,000)
Saud Al-Houshan	Kuwait SC	Goalkeeper of the Season (KD 5,000)
Nebojša Jovović	Kuwait SC	Coach of the Season (KD 3,000)
Jassim Matar	Qadsia SC	Rising Star of the Season (KD 2,000)

Zain also honored several standout youth players in the age categories:

Blue League (Under 21)		
Winner	Club	Award
Saleh Al-Muthebb	Kazma	Best Player
Hussein Kankouni		Best Goalkeeper
Abdullah Al-Adwahi		Top Scorer

Under 19 League		
Winner	Club	Award
Fadhel Al-Sarraf	Qadsia SC	Best Player
Abdulaziz Abdeen		Top Scorer

Under 17 League		
Winner	Club	Award
Abdullah Al-Rasheedi	Al-Arabi SC	Best Player
Ahmed Al-Hazzaa	Al-Salmiya SC	Best Goalkeeper
Jaber Sanan	Kazma	Top Scorer

Under 15 League		
Winner	Club	Award
Saad Al-Shammari	Qadsia SC	Best Player
Hussein Dashti		Best Goalkeeper
Mohammed Al-Yousef		Top Scorer



Sheikh Ahmad Al-Yousef Al-Sabah delivers his speech.



Waleed Al-Khashti delivers his opening remarks.



Honoring Mohammed Daham with the Best Player Award.



Honoring Jassim Matar with the Best Rising Star Award.



Honoring Saad Al-Shammari from the youth categories.

Judge slams DFB for avoiding responsibility

German soccer federation fined for tax evasion related to suspicious 2006 Cup payment to FIFA

BERLIN, June 25, (AP) — The German soccer federation has been convicted of tax evasion related to its successful 2006 World Cup bid.

It brought an end of sorts on Wednesday to a 10-year process prompted by allegations that Germany used a slush fund to buy votes from FIFA executive committee members to be certain of hosting the tournament.

A regional court in Frankfurt fined the federation, known by its German acronym DFB, 110,000 euros (\$128,000) at the culmination of a nearly 16-month trial at the end of the investigation process.

Prosecutors had been pushing for a larger fine after accusing the DFB of failing to pay approximately 2.7 million euros (now \$3.1 million) in taxes related to its payment of 6.7 million euros (\$7.8 million) to FIFA, world soccer’s governing body, in April 2005.

That payment settled a loan that Germany’s great Franz Beckenbauer, the head of the World Cup organizing committee, had accepted three years earlier from Robert Louis-Dreyfus, a former Adidas executive and then part-owner of the Infront marketing agency.

The money was channeled through a Swiss law firm to a Qatari company belonging to Mohammed Bin Hammam, then a member of FIFA’s Executive Committee. The exact purpose of the money was never determined.

Theo Zwanziger, who was DFB president



In this file photo, Franz Beckenbauer, then head of the FIFA 2006 World Cup Organizing Committee attends the presentation in hotel Esplanade in Zagreb, Croatia. (AP)

at the time, told Spiegel magazine in 2015, “there was definitely a slush fund in the German World Cup bid.” He accused his successor, Wolfgang Niersbach, of lying about it. Both were on the World Cup organizing committee.

The DFB concealed the repayment of the loan as a contribution toward a planned World Cup opening gala, which was later canceled, and falsely declared it a business expense a year later.

Zwanziger, Niersbach, and DFB general

secretary Horst R. Schmidt were originally charged in the trial. The proceedings against all three, who consistently denied the allegations of tax evasion, were eventually dropped upon payment of fines.

“The court is certain without a doubt that the DFB evaded taxes and that those involved put up with it,” presiding judge Eva-Marie Distler said Wednesday in comments reported by news agency dpa.

The DFB was initially fined 130,000 euros (\$151,000), but 20,000 euros was waived because of the “procedural delays” in the case.

Distler was scathing in her criticism of the DFB, saying it presented a “catastrophic image” in its investigation of the affair and must bear the costs for the proceedings.

“The clock ticks differently at the DFB. It generates astronomical legal fees. The responsible people externalize responsibility. No one has to face personal consequences,” Distler said. “No DFB representative participated in either the investigation or the trial. You have to ask, are they not taking the justice system seriously?”

The DFB can appeal the ruling.

“The DFB will make a final assessment of the next steps after receiving and evaluating the written reasons for the judgment,” it said in a statement.

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Sri Lanka's Prabath Jayasuriya unsuccessfully appeals during the first day of the second cricket test match between Sri Lanka and Bangladesh in Colombo, Sri Lanka. (AP)

Sports

Three foreign players allowed per club next season

Asian Championship in Kuwait prompts early handball season kickoff

By Khaled Al-Enezi
Al-Seyassah/ArabTimes Staff

KUWAIT CITY, June 25: The Kuwait Handball Federation has announced that the 2025–2026 sports season will begin in early or mid-September, allowing clubs and national teams ample time to prepare for key international events. These include the Islamic Solidarity Games, scheduled for November in Riyadh, and the Asian Championship, which Kuwait will host in January.

The decision was revealed by the Federation's Secretary-General, Qaid Al-Adwani, during the Extraordinary General Assembly held two days ago.

Al-Adwani explained that the upcoming season features a packed calendar both domestically and internationally. Starting early ensures better preparation and maximizes the chances of successful participation for clubs and national teams.

Al-Adwani also announced that Tadamon has officially requested to withdraw from participating in the general category competitions. This makes it the third club to withdraw, following the continued absence of Al-Jahra and Al-Shabab for a third consecutive season.

The league system for the new season will follow a two-tier format:



Player makes a goal attempt during league game in Kuwait.

Premier League (Three Divisions):
8 Clubs: Kuwait Club, Burgan, Kazma, Sulaibikhat, Salmiya, Al-Arabi, and newly promoted Qadsia SC and Al-Nasr SC.

First Division (Two or Three Divisions):
5 Clubs: Al-Qurain, Khaitan, Yarmouk, Fahaheel, and Al-Sahel.

Joined by the national youth team to complete the division structure.

The exact number of divisions in the First Division Championship will be determined based on the final number of participating clubs.

Starting from the 2025–2026 season,

clubs will be permitted to register three foreign professional players, a move previously approved by the Federation's Board of Directors. According to Al-Adwani:

All three players will be included on the official match scoresheet.

Only two foreign professionals can participate on the court at any time.

The third professional will serve as a substitute on the bench, available for in-game rotations.

Al-Adwani expressed optimism that this policy will elevate the level of competition and yield positive results in the upcoming season.

Benfica clinches top spot in Group C, Chelsea routs Esperance to advance



Chelsea's Noni Madueke, right, and Esperance Tunis' Mohamed Ben Ali battle for the ball during the Club World Cup Group D soccer match between Esperance Tunis and Chelsea in Philadelphia. (AP)

Al-Arabi considers reshuffle

Al-Qadsia eyes Al-Juwaini ahead of the Zain Premier League season

KUWAIT CITY, June 25: Al-Qadsia is evaluating the possibility of signing former Tunisian international Haithem Al-Juwaini, following a recommendation by Tunisian coach Nabil Maaloul. Al-Juwaini, 32, most recently played for Dibba Al-Hisn in the United Arab Emirates and has built a wealth of international experience across various leagues.

This move comes as Al-Qadsia seeks to rebuild its foreign roster ahead of the new season in the Zain Premier League, set to kick off on September 12. The club recently terminated contracts with Moroccan Ismail Khafi, Nigerian Daniel Jibola, and Algerian Hussein Dhiri.

The futures of Libyan Mohamed Soula and Moroccan Mehdi Berrahma remain uncertain, as both players are still under contract through next season. In addition to Al-Juwaini, several other professional players have been offered to the club to reinforce its lineup.

Coach Nabil Maaloul has officially begun his squad preparations, aiming to secure experienced reinforcements ahead of the club's external training camp, which follows the start of domestic training on July 16.

At Al-Arabi, changes could be on the horizon, with Hussein Ashour, a mem-

ber of the General Assembly, emerging as a strong candidate to lead the football team's administrative staff. Ashour brings extensive experience, having served in a similar role during the 2014–2015 season, when Al-Arabi competed for the league title until the final round.

The future of current head coach Nasser Al-Shatti remains undecided. As of Tuesday, both sides are still engaged in contract renewal negotiations, with a decision expected before the end of June. Al-Shabab Club has kicked off its 2025–2026 season preparations early by signing Brazilian striker Kike Chagas, who previously played in Montenegro.

The club, known as the "Sons of Ahmadi," has also bolstered its squad with several local signings: Yaqoub Al-Tarawah, Shaheen Al-Khamis, and Dhahi Al-Shammari. Al-Shabab is determined to make a strong impact in the Premier League after finishing second in the Zain First Division League last season and earning promotion.

In other club movements: Fahaheel has signed Ali Yaldoukhi, the top scorer of the First Division, as part of its plan to improve offensive firepower.

Al-Tadamon added Saudi midfielder Turki Al-Mutairi to its ranks, bringing him in from Al-Hazem Club in Saudi Arabia.



Tunisian international Haithem Al-Juwaini.

NEW YORK, June 25, (Xinhua): Benfica secured top spot in Group C at the FIFA Club World Cup with a 1-0 win over Bayern Munich, as Chelsea advanced from Group D and Auckland City stunned Boca Juniors with a 1-1 draw. Flamengo, already assured of a place in the last 16, drew 1-1 with Los Angeles FC in Orlando.

In Charlotte, an early goal from Norway international forward Andreas Schjelderup inflicted Bayern's first blemish of the tournament.

Schjelderup timed his run to perfection to sweep home a first-time effort from 12 yards after compatriot Fredrik Aursnes crossed from the right wing.

Bayern enjoyed almost three-quarters of the total possession but rarely threatened against a disciplined and compact Benfica defense.

The result left the Lisbon-based club a point ahead of the Bundesliga champions, who also advanced to the tournament's next stage.

"I think this was a very fair and important win, historic really," Benfica manager Bruno Lage said. "We were as straightforward and assertive as we should be, and I think we were very effective in delivering our strategy."



Auckland City's Nathan Garrow, right, saves a shot by Boca Juniors' Exequiel Zeballos during the Club World Cup Group C soccer match between Auckland City and Boca Juniors in Nashville, Tenn. (AP)

Benfica will meet Chelsea in Charlotte on Saturday, while Bayern Munich faces Flamengo in Miami the next day.

In Nashville, Christian Gray struck a second-half equalizer as Auckland City clinched its first point of the tournament against Boca Juniors.

The Argentine outfit went ahead when Lautaro Di Lollo's header from a corner hit the left post before ricocheting in off goalkeeper Nathan Garrow.

But Gray equalized by latching onto a Jerson Lagos corner with a low header beyond Agustin Marchesin.

Garrow repeatedly denied Boca with a series of sharp saves as the semi-

professional team from New Zealand bowed out on an encouraging note.

Boca finished third in Group C, joining fourth-placed Auckland City in exiting the competition.

"I'm from a small town, a long way from here, and a lot different from this environment. So it is somewhat of a dream," Gray said after the match, explaining that he would go back to his job as a school teacher upon returning to New Zealand.

"We've had some tough results, but I'm just happy for the team and the boys. I think we deserve it," the 28-year-old added.

In Philadelphia, Chelsea secured its passage to the knockout phase with a 3-0 victory over Tunisia's Esperance in Group D.

Tosin Adarabioyo opened the scoring with a looping header into the far corner after Enzo Fernandez's floating free-kick.

Argentina international midfielder Fernandez was again the provider as his lofted pass released Liam Delap, who shook off two defenders before calmly slotting a low finish past goalkeeper Bechir Ben Said.

The Premier League side made it 3-0 in second-half stoppage time when Tyrrique George's long-range shot slipped through Ben Said's gloves and rolled into the back of the net.

The result meant Chelsea finished second in Group D with six points, three ahead of the eliminated Esperance.

In Wednesday's other fixture, a late Wallace Yan strike earned Flamengo a 1-1 draw with Los Angeles FC in Orlando.

Denis Bouanga broke the deadlock against the run of play when he ran onto Timothy Tillman's long free-kick before nutmegging goalkeeper Agustin Rossi with a composed finish.

Wallace leveled two minutes later for the Brazilian club as he bulldozed his way into the box after Jorginho's pass and lashed low past Hugo Lloris.

Despite the result, Flamengo topped Group D with seven points while Los Angeles, which entered the match without hope of progressing, finished last, six points further back.

Sri Lankan bowlers restrict Bangladesh to 220 for eight

COLOMBO, Sri Lanka, June 25, (AP): Debutant spinner Sonal Dinusha and fast bowlers Vishwa Fernando and Asitha Fernando took two wickets each to help Sri Lanka limit Bangladesh to 220 for eight at stumps on the opening day of the second cricket test on Wednesday.

Bangladesh captain Najmul Hossain Shanto won the toss and elected to bat first at the Singhaile Sports Club. The visitors endured a nervous start losing their first wicket with the total on five.

Opening batter Anamul Haque failed to capitalize on a reprieve when Sri Lankan wicketkeeper Kusal Mendis dropped him off fast bowler Asitha Fernando. But he was soon out by the same bowler after a few deliveries without scoring.

Mominul Haque and Shadman Islam shared a promising partnership of 38 runs but Sri Lankan captain Dhananjaya de Silva removed Mominul (21), caught by substitute fielder Pawan Rathnayake. This left the visitors 71 for two at lunch.

Sri Lanka took two quick wickets after lunch as Vishwa Fernando had Shanto, who scored centuries in each innings in the first test in Galle, caught behind by Mendis for eight.

Off spinner Tharindu Rathnayake then had Shadman caught by de Silva for 46, the highest score of the innings so far, leaving Bangladesh four down for 76.

Sri Lanka missed out on another wicket when Lahiru Udara dropped Mushfiqur Rahim in the deep on eight. Rahim and Litton Das shared 67

runs for the fifth wicket and steadied Bangladesh's innings.

Das (34) edged a catch to Mendis and Vishwa Fernando didn't miss out on a second chance given by Rahim (35) in the deep.

Dinusha had bowling figures 2-22.

Sri Lankan captain de Silva credited his two fast bowlers Vishwa and Asitha for being able to finish the day well.

"We had a good three months break after the Australian test series and they were on a fitness block and they have worked really, really hard," he said.

"And also on top of the fitness they have been bowling regularly and all the coaches have been monitoring them. So I think that's the key and they gave their heart out."

Bangladesh batter Islam said the pitch was slower and a first innings total of 270 to 280 would be safe.

"If we can bowl in good areas then we can make a come back as there is help on the wicket," he added.

Allrounder Dinusha, who is 24, made his test debut for Sri Lanka after the retirement of senior allrounder Angelo Mathews after the first test.

Dinusha has scored 2,478 runs playing in 48 first-class matches and averaging more than 40 runs per innings. He has also taken 99 first-class wickets.

Fast bowler Milan Rathnayake was left out of the lineup because of injury and left-arm paceman Vishwa Fernando has taken his place. Bangladesh allrounder Mehidy Hasan Miraz, who missed the first test due to an injury, returned in the place of Jaker Ali.

Canada edges El Salvador to reach Gold Cup quarters

HOUSTON, June 25, (AP): Jonathan David and Tajon Buchanan scored 2 minutes, 35 seconds apart early in the second half and Canada defeated El Salvador 2-0 on Tuesday night to reach the CONCACAF Gold Cup quarterfinals.

El Salvador, which was eliminated, finished two men short after Santos Ortiz and Jairo Henriquez

were ejected late in the first half.

Canada won Group B with seven points and advanced to a quarterfinal against Guatemala on Sunday in Minneapolis, with the winner moving on to a semifinal against the U.S. or Costa Rica.

In the other quarterfinals, Mexico meets Saudi Arabia and Panama plays Honduras, both on Saturday in Glendale, Arizona.

El Salvador was last in the group with one point, becoming the 14th team not to score a goal in the group stage. Canada coach Jesse Marsch returned from a two-game suspension assessed for his conduct during the CONCACAF Nations League third-place match against the U.S. in March.