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Opinion

Ahmed Al-Jarallah

Editor-in-Chief, the Arab Times

ALTHOUGH it affects only a small segment of citizens, the increase in state property fees, particularly for marine properties, has sparked a huge uproar.

There are far more pressing issues that deserve such public outcry, given their widespread negative impact on a larger portion of the population. These issues could have achieved the same objective, particularly in relation to chalets, while also correcting several important problems that impact citizens' lives.

They objected to the increase in chalet fees, but didn't argue about the revocation of their mothers' citizenships!

It is true that vast stretches of Kuwait's seafront have been so heavily exploited that the public can no longer enjoy them as people do in many other countries.

Perhaps the fee increase is a step toward clearing and redeveloping these areas into public recreational spaces accessible to all.

However, that is not the topic for today. What matters here is the power of public opinion, the media's role in highlighting the concerns of citizens, and how journalism, especially the press, can help identify the root causes of problems and propose meaningful solutions.

Before addressing that, it is important to set the record straight. Minister of Finance Noura Al-Fas-

sam is not personally responsible for the decision to increase fees. She is simply carrying out the duties assigned to her. Al-Fassam is widely known for her commitment to serving the public interest, and therefore, she was not behind this decision. In reality, it stems from the direction of the policy set by the Council of Ministers as a whole.

More importantly, why hasn't there been a similar public outcry over far more critical issues such as food security and the urgent need to reduce our complete dependence on imported food? The COVID-19 pandemic clearly highlighted the risks of relying entirely on imported goods, with huge losses and supply disruptions that affected everyone.

There hasn't been a major public uproar over the

lack of industrial security, which continues to cost Kuwait's budget substantial amounts, despite the country's vast land resources that could be harnessed to develop a strong industrial base and position Kuwait as a regional economic power.

Indeed, when the Cabinet faced widespread criticism, many observed its efforts to revise and correct its course. This response should not be seen as a sign

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Photo by Rezk Tawfiq  
Winds whip across a Kuwait road, stirring up thick dust as motorists cautiously navigate through the hazy conditions.

Sunday dusty blast set, calmer Monday ahead

KUWAIT CITY, July 5, (KUNA): Director of the Meteorological Department Dhirar Al-Ali stated that the country will be affected by moderate to active winds, occasionally strong, causing dust storms on Sunday before gradually calming down on Monday.

Al-Ali explained in a statement to the Kuwait News Agency (KUNA) that weather maps and numerical models indicate the country is under the influence of the Indian monsoon low-pressure system extension, accompanied by a hot and dry air mass with northwest winds ranging from moderate to active speeds, occasionally strong, potentially exceeding 60 kilometers per hour. These winds cause dust storms that reduce horizontal visibility to less than 1,000 meters in some areas, especially

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Kuwait merges MoE units to eliminate redundancies

Education Ministry revamp paves way for strategic growth

By Abdulrahman Al-Shimmari

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, July 5: Minister of Education Jalal Al-Tabtabaei has approved the new organizational structure of his ministry, which includes three articles on educational reform and development of the administrative system.

The ministry confirmed that the decision is based on a comprehensive technical study on its needs and administrative structure, indicating this is one of the reform measures that the minister has been pursuing in order to improve institutional performance and modernize the educational work environment to meet the requirements of the next phase. It also reflects the

high directives of the political leadership regarding the development of the administrative system of the country.

The ministry added that the new organizational structure entails a move toward implementing effective governance principles.

The number of leadership positions has been reduced to just three — an undersecretary and two assistant undersecretaries — each overseeing one of the two main sectors: the Educational Affairs Sector, and the Administrative and Technical Affairs Sector. Each sector has eight general departments, bringing the total number of general departments to 16.

The structure includes the redistribution of sectors and the merger of some, ensuring clarity of powers and tasks, enhancing administrative efficiency, and reducing overlap and duplication of responsibilities.

The ministry emphasized that the adoption of the new

organizational structure is a pivotal step in the process of modernizing institutional work. Through this structure, it intends to establish a flexible administrative environment that keeps pace with educational and administrative developments, supports digital transformation efforts, and improves the quality of services in the educational field.

It pointed out that the new structure is a qualitative shift in administrative performance and reflects a comprehensive reform vision based on specialization and integration. It also lays the foundation for an effective institutional transformation that achieves efficiency and quality in educational and administrative services.

Article One of the decision stipulates the adoption of the organizational structure of the ministry.

Article Two details the responsibilities of all organizational units in accordance with the approved structure.

Article Three mandates all relevant entities to implement

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Platform key to power e-gov goals: Al-Omar

Sahel upgrade in Kuwait's next digital phase

KUWAIT CITY, July 5, (KUNA): Kuwaiti Minister of State for Communication Affairs Omar Al-Omar stressed on Saturday the importance of continuing efforts to improve the government application Sahel, and keep pace with Kuwait's vision in the field of digitization.

Al-Omar said in a statement to KUNA that the ministry held an expanded meeting on Thursday with Sahel's Executive Committee to follow up on the latest developments and review plans to develop digital services provided for citizens and residents.

He pointed out that in the next phase, there will be new services launched on the application, in addition to focusing on integration between government agencies through data exchange and technical linkage.

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KUNA photo  
Minister of State for Communication Affairs Omar Al-Omar during a meeting with Sahel's Executive Committee.

Kuwait urges non-political human rights support

GENEVA, July 5, (KUNA): Kuwait's delegation to the United Nations in Geneva called for avoiding politicization and selectivity in providing technical cooperation and capacity-building in the field of human rights, affirming the country's commitment to mutual respect.

This came in a speech delivered by Diplomatic Attache Asmaa Abdullah Al-Hajji during a panel discussion on capacity-building and technical coop-

eration in the field of human rights, held as part of the 59th session of the United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC) in Geneva.

Al-Hajji emphasized the importance of ensuring that such cooperation responds to the requests of countries and aligns with their national priorities and development needs in various relevant areas.

She also stressed Kuwait's strong emphasis on technical cooperation as a

key element in achieving the goals of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda.

Furthermore, she highlighted the importance of exchanging experiences and successful practices among countries based on partnership, understanding, and respect for the cultural and social specificities of each state thereby fostering an environment that supports rights and freedoms.

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Other Voices

Ambassador Aliya Mawani's legacy of friendship between Kuwait and Canada

By Nasser Al-Hajeri

As Ambassador Aliya Mawani concludes her distinguished tenure in Kuwait, we reflect on a years-long journey marked by vision, collaboration, and enduring friendship. Working closely with the Embassy team, her leadership brought Canada-Kuwait relations to vibrant new heights across diplomacy, culture, development, and youth empowerment.

One of the key diplomatic cornerstones during Ambassador Mawani's tenure was the signing of multiple MOUs: on bilateral consultations, development cooperation, and healthcare collaboration. These agreements not only reinforced institutional ties but also paved the way for joint initiatives benefiting both nations.

In 2025, Canada and Kuwait celebrated 60 years of diplomatic relations. The anniversary events spanned cultural exchange, healthcare, education, ICT, energy, defense, security, sports, and food security. Highlights included a dynamic art exhibition, as well as a spirited ice hockey match between the Canadian Mooseheads and Kuwait Stars. These unique moments underscored the power of people-to-people connections and creative dialogue.

Ambassador Mawani's time in Kuwait was also defined by her strong advocacy for gender equality and diversity. At events celebrating International Francophonie Day and International Women's Day, she emphasized that "when women succeed, society as a whole succeeds," highlighting Canada's commitment to inclusive leadership. Her partnerships with civil society groups consistently promoted the advancement of women in Kuwait.

A signature initiative of her mission was the Young Ambassador Programme, launched in partnership with the UN and the British Embassy. This program gave dozens of Kuwaiti youth hands-on exposure to diplomacy and global affairs. It reflects Ambassador Mawani's deep belief in youth as catalysts for peace, security, and sustainable development.



Ambassador Aliya Mawani

Ongoing humanitarian and outreach efforts further shaped her tenure. Ambassador Mawani partnered with UN agencies to raise awareness around refugee issues and promote education for displaced children, engaging with young people directly through storytelling and community events.

Throughout her time in Kuwait, she remained closely engaged with Canada-educated alumni, celebrating their success across fields from healthcare to technology. Many of these alumni now play important roles in Kuwait's public and private sectors, reinforcing the long-standing educational ties between the two countries.

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NewsWatch

KUWAIT CITY: First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad Yousef Saud Al-Sabah said Kuwait National Guard (KNG) plays a prominent role in supporting the efforts of the Ministry of Interior.

During an inspection tour of the KNG taskforce on Thursday, Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousef said the KNG leaders and personnel always show a high sense of responsibility and dedication in backing the security institution.

He thanked the KNG personnel for cooperation with the security services in protecting the interests of the homeland. (KUNA)

KUWAIT CITY: The General Administration of Customs announced the reac-

tivation of the Transports Internationaux Routiers (TIR) system, based on the approval of First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousef, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

As a result, three food trucks arriving from Türkiye and Iraq were received. This move follows extensive coordination with the World Road Transport Organisation (IRU) and customs authorities in both countries.

The administration explained that reactivating the TIR system will help in facilitating transit procedures and the movement of trucks and drivers across border crossings. This step marks huge progress in supporting the international land transport system and reflects Kuwait's commitment to implementing global standards that promote trade, ease the flow of goods, and serve national economic interests.

Canada appoints Scheurwater as new ambassador to Kuwait

By Fares Ghaleb

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, July 5: The Canadian Embassy in Kuwait has announced the appointment of Tara Scheurwater as new Ambassador of Canada to Kuwait, succeeding Ambassador Aliya Mawani.

The embassy stated on its official Instagram account that Scheurwater will officially assume her position in August.



Tara Scheurwater



2 Egyptians and Kuwaitis 'one family'



8 NBK prices \$800mn in landmark additional Tier 1 bond issuance



Prayer Timings			
Fajr .....	03:19	Asr .....	15:26
Sunrise ..	04:53	Maghrib ..	18:51
Zohr .....	11:52	Isha .....	20:23

# Local

Weather			
Expected weather for next 24 hrs:			
By Day: Hot with light to moderate freshening at times north-westerly wind, with speeds of 15-55 km/h causing rising dust and some high clouds will appear.			
By Night: Hot to rather hot and dust will subside gradually with			
light to moderate freshening at times over coastal areas north-westerly wind, with speeds of 12-40 km/h.			
Station	Max Exp	Min Rec	
Kuwait City	45	31	
Kuwait Airport	45	31	

Abdaly	45	25
Jahra	45	30
Salmiyah	40	31
Ahmadi	40	29
Nuwaisib	45	29
Wafra	44	29
Salmiyah	43	25
Managish	46	28



Sheikh Mubarak Al-Sabah presents a certificate of appreciation to Benoit Cathala. Ambassador of the French Republic to the State of Kuwait Olivier Gauvin was present at the event.

## Kuwait-France bonds grew solid in 4 years

### Sheikh Mubarak honors Cathala for service to Kuwait

KUWAIT CITY, July 5: In a special ceremony held at French Institute of Kuwait, H.E. Sheikh Mubarak A.M. Al Sabah honored Mr. Benoit Cathala, Counselor for Cooperation and Cultural Action and Director of the French Institute of Kuwait, in recognition of his four years of dedicated service in strengthening cultural, educational ties between Kuwait and France.

The event was held in the presence of H.E. Olivier Gauvin, Ambassador of the French Republic to the State of Kuwait, along with distinguished guests and members of the diplomatic and cultural communities.

In his remarks, Ambassador Gauvin expressed sincere gratitude to H.E. Sheikh Mubarak for his kind gesture and recognition of Mr. Cathala's service. He highlighted the strong and growing relationship between Kuwait and France, much of which has been enriched through cultural initiatives led by Mr. Cathala.

Mr. Benoit Cathala, visibly honored, said: "It is truly an honor for me to receive this recognition. I sincerely thank H.E. Sheikh Mubarak for this generous and thoughtful gesture."

The tribute acknowledged Mr. Cathala's vision, dedication, and unwavering commitment to promoting arts, cultural exchange, and educational cooperation. His efforts have been instrumental in revitalizing and deepening the bilateral cultural relationship, creating a legacy of meaningful intellectual and artistic engagement.

H.E. Sheikh Mubarak praised Mr. Cathala for his outstanding contributions and emphasized the role of cultural, educational, diplomacy in fostering mutual respect and enduring friendship between nations.

# Egyptians and Kuwaitis 'one family'

## Robust trade ties headed for boom: Ambassador Al-Shaltout



Egyptian Ambassador to Kuwait Osama Shaltout and Minister of State for Municipal Affairs and Minister of State for Housing Affairs Abdullatif Al-Mishari at the cake-cutting ceremony.



Egyptian Ambassador to Kuwait Osama Shaltout receives Editor-in-Chief of Al-Seyassah and Arab Times newspapers Ahmed Al-Jarallah.



Egyptian Ambassador to Kuwait Osama Shaltout receives the US Ambassador to Kuwait Karen Sasahara.

By Fares Ghaleb  
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

**KUWAIT CITY, July 5: Egyptian Ambassador to Kuwait Osama Shaltout emphasized that Egyptians and Kuwaitis are like one family; indicating that what binds Egypt and Kuwait is not just official relations, but also strong public ties built on mutual love and appreciation, making this relationship a model for joint Arab cooperation.**

In a speech marking the 73rd anniversary of the July 23, 1952 Revolution, Ambassador Shaltout asserted that Kuwaiti-Egyptian relations are continuing to advance under the wise leadership of the leaders of both countries, enhancing the security and stability of the entire region.

Present at the event were Minister of State for Municipal Affairs and Minister of State for Housing Affairs Abdullatif Al-Mishari, a number of officials, ambassadors and representatives of diplomatic missions in the country.

Shaltout, who is preparing to end his diplomatic mission after four years in Kuwait, expressed his gratitude and appreciation to the Kuwaiti government and people for the warm welcome and generous hospitality he received throughout his tenure. He affirmed Egypt's keenness to strengthen ties of cooperation to serve the interests of the two sisterly countries.

Ambassador Shaltout explained that hard work has borne fruit in the exchange of summit visits. His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah visited Egypt in 2024, and then welcomed Egyptian President Abdel Fattah El-Sisi in Kuwait in April 2025 at the kind invitation of His Highness the Amir.

He added that his mission in Kuwait was both easy and challenging. He explained that the distinguished relations between the two leaderships and peoples pose a challenge for any ambassador to add a new dimension. He stated that the joint efforts



Egyptian Ambassador to Kuwait Osama Shaltout with guests from the Coptic Church in Kuwait and army personnel.

resulted in strengthening cooperation between the two sisterly countries.

In press statements on the sidelines of the ceremony, Ambassador Shaltout disclosed that the volume of trade exchange between Kuwait and Egypt reached \$3 billion annually, while Kuwaiti investments in Egypt amount to approximately \$20 billion, making it among the largest foreign and Arab investments in Egypt.

Ambassador Shaltout added that the investments achieved in recent years have been the result of economic and legislative reforms in Egypt and the creation of an attractive investment climate. He cited the imminent announcement of new investment projects and upcoming visits by economic delegations from both sides.

Regarding the anniversary, Shaltout narrated that "on July 23, 1952, the spark of one of the greatest revolutions in modern Egyptian history was ignited, led by the Free Officers who believed in their homeland and their people's right to dignity, freedom and social justice." He revealed that the July 23 Revolution was not merely a change in the regime, but rather the beginning of a new era that carried the hopes of millions of Egyptians for liberation from colonialism, the building of a strong national army, and the establishment of principles that still live in the conscience of every free Egyptian. He added that the revolution established a stage of national independence, sovereignty and patriotism that made Egypt a fundamental pillar in supporting national liberation movements in Africa and the Arab world and established the principle of non-alignment."

Ambassador Shaltout renewed his pledge to continue building and working for a modern Egypt based on justice and active participation, in light of the wise leadership and directives of President Abdel Fattah El-Sisi, who, along with his people, led the June 30 Revolution toward the new republic.

In response to a question about the e-visa, Ambassador Shaltout explained that it is available to all nationalities, valid for five years, and can be applied for electronically for a specific fee that varies depending on the visa duration.

The Egyptian ambassador confirmed that there is close cooperation between Cairo and Kuwait to facilitate the movement of Egyptian workers, provided they are qualified and trained, ensuring their proper integration into the Kuwaiti labor market and protecting them from any violation.

He stated that Egypt currently has more than 85 vocational training centers, where workers undergo comprehensive training on Kuwaiti laws and the work environment before traveling, reflecting both countries' commitment to ensure a safe and organized work environment.

Regarding the new ambassador, Shaltout confirmed that the incoming Egyptian ambassador -- Mohamed Jaber Abu Al-Wafa -- served in Kuwait as deputy head of the diplomatic mission, and has vast experience and knowledge of Kuwaiti society, as well as his distinguished relations with Kuwaiti officials. He affirmed that the latter will continue to develop cooperation between the two countries.



KFAED's Acting Director General Waleed Al-Bahar at the ceremony.

## Kuwait funds Mongolia airport development and enlargement

KUWAIT CITY, July 5, (KUNA): Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development (KFAED) participated on Friday in Mongolia's Undurkhaan Airport development and expansion project, a step towards the ongoing partnership between Kuwait and Mongolia.

KFAED's Acting Director General Waleed Al-Bahar said in a statement issued by the Fund that the project was financed by a grant previously provided by the Kuwaiti Government to the Government of Mongolia, under the Fund's supervision, worth of KD 1.06 million (approximately USD 3.4 million).

He added that the Fund also signed a grant worth KD 80,000 (approximately USD 262,000) with the Government of Mongolia to finance the technical and economic feasibility study for the project, with the aim of transforming it into a Category 4C international airport to be a major driver of economic development in line with Mongolia's strategy to achieve sustainable development by 2050.

He stressed that the airport expansion project will be a vital hub that contributes to facilitating transportation, stimulating trade, and creating new economic opportunities for the region, thus enhancing long-term growth and prosperity in Mongolia.

The opening was attended by Minister of Roads and Transport of Mongolia Delgier Saikhan, the Ambassador of Kuwait to Mongolia Mutlaq Al-Thuwaimer, and a number of representatives of the Mongolian government.

The Kuwait Fund has so far provided about KD 23.7 million (about USD 77.6 million) in soft loans, in addition to technical assistance amounting to KD 519 thousand (about USD 1.7 million) to Mongolia.

## MEW gives go ahead for fresh-water filling station in Al-Dhahr

By Mohammad Ghanem  
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, July 5: The Ministry of Electricity, Water and Renewable Energy has referred the tender contract for the construction, completion and maintenance of the freshwater filling station and ancillary works in Al-Dhahr -- valued at KD3.469 million -- to the State Audit Bureau (SAB) for study, audit and review.

Sources from the ministry revealed that the contract will then be signed with the winning company, which previously obtained approval from the Central Agency for Public Tenders (CAPT).

Sources stated that the project is included in the plan of the ministry to develop the freshwater system, particularly in remote and new residential areas, to ensure continuous water supply; especially in the event of water outage from the main network for any reason, such as during periodic maintenance work.

Sources said Al-Dhaher filling station will be built as an alternative to the Mangaf station, which has been a source of inconvenience to residents due to the constant movement of tankers, particularly in densely populated areas.

"This also affected road infrastructure, specifically asphalt, as a result of the constant movement of these tankers," sources revealed.

Moreover, the ministry included in its plan for the current fiscal year a contract for the construction and maintenance of facilities for 26 water filling stations in various areas.

This contract aims to carry out the necessary maintenance work for the stations, in addition to constructing new buildings to replace the dilapidated structures.

Sources confirmed that the new buildings will be state-of-the-art; and that the plan will contribute to the reduction of expenditures on recurring maintenance works, enhancing operational efficiency and prolonging the life of the facilities in the future.



Sheikha Jawaher Al-Sabah meets Tunisia's Asma Jabri.

## Women, kids, families, elderly issues in talks

TUNIS, July 5, (KUNA): Kuwaiti Assistant Foreign Minister for Human Rights Affairs, Ambassador Sheikha Jawaher Ibrahim Duaij Al-Sabah, and Tunisian Minister of Family, Women, Children and Seniors Asma Jabri discussed boosting joint cooperation.

This came on the occasion of Sheikha Jawaher Al-Sabah's participation in the high-level Arab regional meeting held in the Tunisian capital in preparation for the Second World Summit for Social Development, scheduled for next November in the Qatari capital, Doha.

The meeting, which took place on Thursday, addressed the exchange of shared expertise and best practices in the fields of women, children, families, and the elderly.

Sheikha Jawaher visited the Center for Research, Studies, Documentation, and Information on Women (CREDIF), which documents the journey and struggle of Tunisian women throughout history. She also visited the National Observatory on Violence against Women, learning about its mechanisms and methodology for dealing with cases of abused women.







Crown Prince and Prime Minister extend congratulations

Amir congratulates Cape Verde, Venezuela on Independence Days

KUWAIT CITY, July 5, (KUNA): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah sent Saturday a cable of congratulations to President Jose Maria Neves of Cape Verde on the occasion of his country's Independence Day. In the cable, His Highness expressed his best wishes for the President's continued good health, and for further progress and prosperity for Cape Verde and its friendly people.

His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah also sent a cable to

President Neves, extending his congratulations and wishing him lasting good health.

Similarly, His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah sent a congratulatory cable to the Cape Verdean President on the national occasion.

In a separate message, His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah sent a cable of congratulations to President Nicolas Maduro of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela on the anniversary of his country's Independence Day. His

Highness wished the President well-being and continued success and prosperity for Venezuela and its people.

His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah also congratulated President Maduro in a similar cable, wishing him good health.

His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah likewise sent a congratulatory message to the Venezuelan President on the occasion.

Kuwait ranks second regionally, 31st globally in '25 Peace Index

KUWAIT CITY, July 5: Kuwait ranked second regionally and 31st globally in the Global Peace Index 2025, reports Al-Anba daily quoting CNN. Meanwhile, Qatar ranked first regionally and 27th globally, the Sultanate of Oman ranked third (42nd globally) and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) ranked fourth (52nd globally).

This came amid the most challenging conditions since World War II, with the Middle East and North Africa remaining the least peaceful region in the world for the 10th consecutive year.

The report revealed that global peace has been deteriorating since 2014, with notable declines in 100 countries over the past decade.

Sheikh Athbi Al-Nasser joins local initiatives to enhance parks and community facilities

Farwaniya Governor inspects Al-Firdous Park to boost public spaces

KUWAIT CITY, July 5: Farwaniya Governor Sheikh Athbi Al-Nasser Al-Athbi Al-Sabah conducted an inspection tour of Al-Firdous public park Wednesday evening as part of ongoing efforts to develop parks and landscaping in the governorate.

According to a press release issued by Farwaniya Governorate, the tour included the "Bu Jarrah Changes" team, which leads initiatives to improve public facilities, parks, and roads in cooperation with relevant authorities and the private sector.

The visit was attended by Farwaniya Security Director Brigadier General Mohammad Mutlaq Al-Mutairi, Municipal Council member Walid Khaled Al-Dagher, Director of the Public Hygiene and Road Works Department at Kuwait Municipality Muhammad Al-Jabaa, media figure Ali Al-Omran, owner of the "Bu Jarrah Yagher" campaign Abdulrahman Al-Badah, members of the Al-Firdous Cooperative Society, and residents of Farwaniya Governorate.

During the visit, an inspection tour of the park's facilities was carried out to review existing issues and identify the needs.

The governor joined the "Bu Jarrah Yagher" team in their initiative, which was launched for the benefit of local residents.

Sheikh Athbi Al-Nasser called for coordinated efforts among relevant authorities to enhance security and improve public facilities in order to provide a safe and enjoyable recreational environment.

At the end of the field visit, Bu Jarrah, his team, and local residents expressed their gratitude to the governor for his presence and ongoing support in developing services and public parks in Farwaniya Governorate.



Farwaniya Governor Sheikh Athbi Al-Nasser Al-Athbi Al-Sabah conducted an inspection tour of Al-Firdous public park Wednesday evening as part of ongoing efforts to develop parks and landscaping in the governorate.

# JULY

## Room Promotion

Ministry of Education suspends facility use

Third parties off-limit

KUWAIT CITY, July 5: Minister of Education Eng. Sayed Jalal Al-Tabtabaei issued a decision to suspend the use of the ministry's facilities and movable property by third parties until the regulations governing the use of educational buildings and facilities are approved, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

In a press statement issued on Wednesday, the ministry stated that the decision suspends Ministerial Resolu-

tion No. 79/2003, which regulated the use of the ministry's facilities and movable property by external parties.

This decision is part of the state's efforts to enhance efficiency of resource utilization, achieve financial sustainability, and implement the comprehensive reform strategy.

The ministry clarified that the suspension applies to all pending applications for the use of its facilities.

Furthermore, it stated that, in accordance with the ministerial decision, all existing licenses and contracts between the ministry and entities using its facilities and movable property will be reviewed in line with Ministerial Resolution No. 79/2003, pending the adoption of the new regulations.



KU photo  
Kuwait University's employees behind the new digital medical records system being honored.

KU honors employees behind digital medical records system

KUWAIT CITY, July 5: Acting Secretary General of Kuwait University Dr. Bader Ahmed Al-Jasser Al-Rajhi has honored employees at the Security and Safety Department and the Information Systems Center in appreciation of their outstanding contributions to the successful launching of the digital records system in the clinics affiliated with the department.

Al-Rajhi explained that this project is a strategic step toward the development of university clinics, particularly the health-care services provided to the personnel and students, through the secure electronic archiving of medical records to guarantee quick access to such information.

In addition, acting Assistant Secretary General for Facilities Management Affairs Mohammed Saud Al-Sulaiman said the project is in line with modern trends in digital transformation and reflects the commitment of the university to develop its technical infrastructure in order to polish educational and administrative procedures.

He indicated that the honoring ceremony is a manifestation of the appreciation and concern of the university for its staff. He underscored the importance of teamwork and coordination between departments and work centers to achieve the university's vision of building an advanced and sustainable digital future.

NCSC calls on Minister Al-Tabtabaei to add cybersecurity to curriculum

KUWAIT CITY, July 5, (Agencies): The National Cyber Security Center (NCSC) has asked Minister of Education Jalal Al-Tabtabaei to include cybersecurity in the public education curricula, reports Al-Rai daily.

The center believes this move will directly contribute to improving the ranking of Kuwait on the Global Cybersecurity Index (GCI); thereby, reflecting the country's commitment to build comprehensive and

sustainable national capabilities in this vital field. In a letter addressed to Al-Tabtabaei, Director of the center Abeer Al-Awadhi confirmed their readiness to provide full support, expertise and technical guidance on the content of the cybersecurity curriculum; in cooperation with the Ministry of Education, in order to establish an integrated educational system that enhances cybersecurity awareness.





KUNA photo  
Kuwaiti student delegation at the 2025 International Chemistry Olympiad in Dubai.

## Kuwaiti students compete at 2025 Int’l Chemistry Olympiad in Dubai

DUBAI, July 5, (KUNA): A Kuwaiti student delegation, supported by Sabah Al-Ahmad Center for Giftedness and Creativity, participated in the 2025 International Chemistry Olympiad, which kicked off in Dubai on Saturday and will continue until July 14.

A statement by the center to KUNA said that this participation came in co-operation with the Ministry of Education and Kuwait University.

The center, which is part of the Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sciences (KFAS), explained that the participation also came within the

center’s plan to prepare and qualify students through intensive theoretical and practical training programs.

Sabah Al-Ahamd Center wished the Kuwaiti students participating in the Olympiad, namely students Ali Behbehani, Ali Yousef, Manal Al-Kandari and Ghazil Al-Mutairi, all the best in achieving outstanding results.

The center aims to enable students to achieve outstanding performances that reflect the level of national competencies, in line with KFAS’s vision of supporting scientific research and innovation and nurturing young talent.

## PAM announces teaching jobs for Kuwaitis at Al-Jari schools

KUWAIT CITY, July 5: The Public Authority for Manpower (PAM) has announced job opportunities for Kuwaiti nationals at Al-Jari Shareholding Group schools, with registration open until July 17, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

PAM highlighted that the available

positions include teaching roles in the following subjects: physics, chemistry, Arabic, English, social studies, mathematics, science, computer science, physical education, Islamic education, art, music, and French, in addition to a librarian position.

# Nationwide mourning councils commemorate Imam Hussein’s Martyrdom

**By Mohammad Al-Enezi**  
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, July 5: Mourning councils held in schools throughout the country commemorated the ninth night of Muharram; specifically the martyrdom of Imam Hussein, his family and his companions.

The mourning councils witnessed remarkable security organization by the Ministry of Interior and other relevant agencies, which intensified their field presence to secure the sites and ensure smooth movement and the safety of everyone.

The Hussainiyat visitors praised the high level of organization; stressing that the heavy presence

of security personnel, their regulation of traffic, and their facilitation of the entry and exit of participants contributed to the rituals being held in an atmosphere of security and reassurance. They explained that the field visits conducted by ministry officials prior to the councils had a significant impact in meeting the needs and preparing for any requirement.

A number of mourning council participants emphasized that the atmosphere at the Husseiniyas this year was characterized by a high degree of awareness among attendees, particularly in adhering to security instructions and cooperating with the organizing authorities. This reflected a civilized image, and conveyed a spiritual and moral

## Leaders praise historic ties, express commitment to future cooperation

# Amir congratulates US on Independence Day

KUWAIT CITY, July 5, (KUNA): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah on Friday sent a cable of congratulations to U.S. President Donald Trump on the occasion of the United States’ 249th Independence Day.

In his message, His Highness the Amir praised the historic and strategic ties between Kuwait and the United States, expressing a strong desire to further enhance bilateral cooperation and deepen the shared interests that unite both nations. He also conveyed Kuwait’s sincere wishes for continued progress and prosperity to the American people

and leadership.

His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah also extended his congratulations to President Trump, highlighting the enduring strategic partnership between the two countries and wishing the United States further development and success.

His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah sent a similar congratulatory cable to President Trump, marking the U.S. national celebration.

Meanwhile, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister

of Defense Sheikh Abdullah Ali Abdullah Al-Sabah sent a congratulatory cable to U.S. Secretary of Defense Pete Hegseth, extending best wishes to him and the U.S. Armed Forces on this national occasion.

Sheikh Abdullah commended the strong and distinguished defense ties between Kuwait and the United States, expressing deep appreciation for the historic role played by the U.S. in liberating Kuwait and for its continued support of justice and peace. He reaffirmed Kuwait’s commitment to further strengthening joint cooperation and military collaboration.

# Environmental Committee to finalize landfill oversight plan

## Calls for better coordination on waste site management

**By Inaas Awadh**  
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, July 5: The Environmental Affairs Committee at the Municipal Council, chaired by Alia Al-Farsi, meets on Sunday to discuss the letter of the Ministry of Health regarding health oversight of landfills.

The committee previously discussed the same issue twice, during which it presented two recom-

mendations. The first stipulated that the matter be returned to the executive branch to update the response in coordination with the ministry. The updated response was later presented to the committee, including a statement from Kuwait Municipality that the landfill sites will be allocated



Al-Farsi

for future government projects. However, the committee was not convinced by the response and agreed that more details were needed regarding the implementation framework for these projects to avoid the environmental damage resulting from these landfills; which are breeding grounds for rodents and stray dogs, and a source of soil and air pollution.

The committee then issued its second recommendation to return the updated response to the executive branch -- specifically to the Environmental Affairs Department in the

Projects Sector at the Municipality -- to coordinate with the ministry, Environment Public Authority (EPA), and Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) regarding health oversight of waste landfills.

The committee is expected to issue its final recommendations regarding the proposal in its meeting on Sunday.

Meanwhile, council member Abdullah Al-Enezi on Saturday submitted a proposal to construct a service road and an entrance parallel to the Sixth Ring Road, opposite the Jahra Industrial City, to relieve pressure on the current entrance.

## Security and spirituality mark ninth night of Muharram



Photo by Rezk Tawfiq  
The sermons on the ninth night of Muharram, highlight love, tolerance, and the Prophet's family as a beacon of harmony.

message.

In the sermons on the ninth night of Muharram, the preachers emphasized that the Husseiniyas councils are platforms for guidance and goodness; emphasizing that the Prophet’s family is a model of love, tolerance and rejection of division, and that Islam is a religion of mercy, humanity and solidarity. They explained that deviation from implementing Islamic rulings led to the disintegration of the nation and the spread of strife in societies. They pointed out that the Husseiniyas pulpits always call for goodness and rapprochement, benefiting from the life of Imam Hussein and his family, and emulating their morals and virtues.

At the same time, they emphasized the importance of rallying around whatever unites Muslims. They called for taking the family of the Prophet as a role model in their daily lives and deepening their understanding of their revolution and principles, including asceticism, patience, courage and sacrifice for the sake of truth.

The speakers unanimously agreed that the Husseiniyas councils are a fertile ground for disseminating values, raising awareness, emphasizing national unity, rejecting strife, and prioritizing the interests of the country and its people in discussion and debate; while embodying the spirit of the Husseinii revolution and its timeless humanitarian principles.

## Continued from Page 1

## They objected

of disregard for the law, but rather as a demonstration of the Cabinet’s flexibility and its willingness to reverse measures that prove ineffective.

The truth is that raising fees on the use of state property will not significantly improve the general budget, as the amounts collected are relatively modest. Far greater savings could be achieved by addressing the issue of arbitrary and excessive subsidies granted to those who do not qualify. These subsidies amount to KD 7 billion, approximately \$24 billion, representing nearly one-third of the total public budget of KD 24 billion. Reorganizing and reforming the subsidy system deserves far more attention.

Why, then, did we not witness a similar outcry over the revocation of citizenships from Kuwaiti mothers, who were granted citizenship legally under Article 8 of the applicable law? If there were any violations in the procedures for granting citizenship, then accountability should lie with the authority that issued them, not with the women.

Most of these mothers breastfed their children with milk infused with love and loyalty to the nation. They worked tirelessly to educate and raise them to become valuable contributors to Kuwait. Many of their children have gone on to serve the country as ambassadors, doctors, university professors, undersecretaries, officers, and in many other roles that make Kuwait proud.

So, isn’t it only fair that their case receives the same level of attention as the uproar over the chalet fee hike? Are we now measuring the importance of issues based on private interests rather than the public good?

Let me be clear, anyone who obtained citizenship through deception, whether by lying, forgery, fraud, false declarations, or dishonest means, deserves to be held accountable, including the revocation of citizenship. However, those who were granted citizenship by dependency should not be included in the punishment. I say this with firm conviction in the importance of preserving the integrity of national identity, which is a fundamental pillar of state policy, something no one should oppose.

Nevertheless, I see no reason to stifle open discussion about certain decisions, especially given Kuwait’s long-standing tradition of a vibrant and active media, which predates its independence. I also recall the repeated assurances from Kuwait’s leadership

that no one will be wronged in this era.

What is surprising is that the public uproar has been limited to the increase in chalet fees, while other state-owned properties, such as industrial, agricultural, and service zones, are more severely affected by this decision, despite the vital contributions these sectors make to the gross domestic product.

Don’t service and entertainment projects also deserve support and increased investment, given their substantial economic and social benefits?

These and other questions remain open for the government to reflect upon. It is essential that decisions are thoroughly reviewed before being issued, to prevent the need for reversals. The government must carefully consider the potential repercussions of its decisions and how best to manage them in order to avoid the public backlash they may provoke.

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the government and His Highness the Prime Minister for proving that they listen to the voices of the people and respond to their demands.

At the same time, I wonder if the government has a solution for the issue of Kuwaiti mothers whose citizenships were revoked and who are still awaiting a decision from the Grievances Committee. We hope the government will uphold the directives of the leader of the new era, ensuring that no one is wronged in Kuwait.

I am surprised that the owners of a small number of chalets have become enraged over the fee increase, while a much more serious issue, the revocation of citizenships from Kuwaiti mothers, is being ignored, leaving these women to live in uncertainty. Where are they supposed to turn to?

So why haven’t they called on the First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior to show mercy toward these women, just as they demanded leniency by pushing for reduced fees on chalets that mar the waterfront view?

## Sahel upgrade

Al-Omar explained that digitization is not just a technical process, but rather a comprehensive change in the way of providing service, stressing the government’s support for Sahel’s committee, lauding the efforts made by the various work teams.

He stressed that the next phase requires intensifying work on developing the application (Sahel Business) to

enhance its ability to serve the private sector and enable entrepreneurs and companies to complete their transactions easily and effectively within the framework of digitizing the business environment in Kuwait.

Sahel represents a central national platform for e-government services and is the most important state tool in digitizing government services and facilitating procedures for obtaining services from various government agencies in one place, noted Al-Omar.

## Kuwait urges

Al-Hajji expressed Kuwait’s readiness to continue constructive cooperation with the relevant UN mechanisms and to support all initiatives aimed at empowering countries and enhancing their capacity to safeguard rights and freedoms in a spirit of solidarity and mutual respect.

The panel discussion addressed the role of technical cooperation and capacity-building in supporting the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) in its efforts to assist countries in strengthening their national human rights protection structures.

It also focused on the importance of national institutions and mechanisms responsible for implementation, reporting, and follow-up, as part of a broader effort to develop comprehensive and effective approaches to ensuring respect for fundamental rights and freedoms.

Meanwhile, the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) on Friday stressed the importance of technical cooperation and capacity building towards promotion and protection of human rights in a manner that complies with requirements of every country.

Kuwait’s Permanent Representative to the United Nations Office and other International Organizations in Geneva Naser Al-Hayen, chairman of Council of GCC Ambassadors, made the remarks during a seminar about capacity building and technical cooperation of human rights, part of the 59th session of the UN Human Rights Council.

The GCC countries, he said, were deeply worried about financial challenges facing the UN high commission for human rights.

These challenges, added Al-Hain, would undermine the commission’s ability to honor growing technical support demand by countries and organizations.

He reaffirmed the GCC support for

the commission to help it boost national capacity on human rights.

The GCC consists of Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and Oman.

## Kuwait merges

the provisions of this decision from the date of its issuance, repealing any previous decisions that conflict with its contents.

**Following are details of the new organizational structure of the ministry:**

- Office of the Minister of Education: consists of six departments — Office of the Minister; Education and Administrative; National Commission for Education, Science and Culture; Legal; Public Relations and Educational Media; and Inspection, Audit and Gifted Office.
- Undersecretary of the Ministry of Education: supervises two main sectors — Educational Affairs Sector and the Administrative, Financial and Technical Affairs Sector. Each sector has eight general departments in charge of various areas of educational and administrative work.
- Assistant Undersecretary for Educational Affairs: supervises eight general departments — Special Education; Educational Technologies and Libraries; School Activities; Educational Districts; Religious Education and Special Education; Psychological and Social Services; Technical Guidance, Research and Curricula; and Evaluation and Measurement.
- Educational Districts General Department: supervises the directors of educational and administrative affairs in the six educational districts. These directors oversee five supervisory offices; four specializing in educational levels, and one for administrative and technical affairs. This contributes to improving work efficiency and achieving integration between the sectors of the ministry and the educational field.
- Organizational Structure of School Administration: In a first-of-its-kind step in the history of the ministry, a clear organizational structure was created for school administrations, including three assistant directors for the educational levels from primary to secondary. The ‘Assistant Administrative Director’ position was created to reduce the administrative burden on the teaching staff and enable teachers to devote themselves to educational and teaching work. The Performance Improvement Division was also incorporated under the supervision of the school principal.
- Religious Education and Special Education General Department: The Religious Education and Special Education departments were merged into a single general department supervised by the Assistant Undersecretary for Educational Affairs.
- Psychological and Social Services General Department: Its organizational level was raised to become a general department overseeing three specialized departments — Technical Guidance Department for Social and Psychological Services, Social and Psychological Services Department for Educational Districts, and the Psychological and Social Services Department at the head office.
- Technical Guidance, Research and Curricula General Department: established as an independent administrative entity. The amendment includes the integration of the Research and Curricula Department to unify educational efforts within a single organizational framework supervised by a specialized director general.
- Evaluation and Measurement General Department: tasked to develop educational assessment tools according to scientific standards with three departments — Students Measurement and Evaluation Department, Teachers Department and Curricula Department
- Educational Technology and Libraries General Department: The Educational Technology and Libraries departments were merged into one, responsible for providing educational technologies and resources to all districts.
- School Activities General Department: it includes the Scouts and Guides departments with expanded powers, along with the educational districts.
- Assistant Undersecretary for Administrative, Financial and Technical Affairs: supervises eight general departments: Educational Facilities and Projects General Department, Financial Affairs General Department, Human Resources General Department, Services General Department, Technology and Information Systems General Department, Supplies and Warehousing General Department, Development General Department, and Planning General Department.
- Educational Facilities and Projects General Department: supervises nine departments — Design and Contracts, Maintenance, Projects and six engineering affairs departments in the educational districts.

■ Technology and Information Systems General Department: supervises two departments in charge of all technical aspects and beneficiary support in the educational districts.

■ Planning General Department: its organizational level was raised to emphasize the importance of strategic planning. It supervises two departments and two monitoring units — Monitoring of Educational Policy Development and Monitoring of Educational Evidence Management.

■ Human Resources General Department: oversees two departments — Budget and Recruitment, and Selection and Employment Affairs, each of which is divided into units in charge of recruitment, attendance and promotions.

■ Services General Department: Its organizational level was raised to provide better services commensurate with the large size of the ministry.

## Ambassador Aliya

As Ambassador Mawani bids farewell, her legacy lives on through the relationships, initiatives, and values she championed. She leaves behind not just strengthened diplomacy, but meaningful connections between the people of Canada and Kuwait. We wish her continued success in her next chapter.

## Sunday dusty

in open areas, and sometimes lead to rising sea waves.

The northwest winds will continue to be active on Sunday, with moderate to strong speeds ranging between 15 and 55 kilometers per hour. These winds will stir up dust, reducing horizontal visibility in some areas, especially open areas, and cause sea waves to rise, sometimes exceeding six feet.

Wind speeds are expected to gradually ease on Monday as weather conditions improve and temperatures begin to rise steadily until the end of the week.

The general forecast for Sunday calls for hot and dusty conditions during the day and mildly warm weather at night, with dust gradually settling by evening.

Maximum temperatures are expected to range between 44 and 46 degrees Celsius, while minimum temperatures will be between 30 and 33 degrees Celsius.





First responders scan the banks of the Guadalupe River for individuals swept away by flooding in Ingram, Texas on July 4. (AP)

Desperate search for missing girls

At least 25 killed in Texas flooding

KERRVILLE, Texas, July 5, (AP): At least 25 people were killed and a frantic search continued overnight for many others missing in the Texas Hill Country, including more than 20 from a girls camp, after a storm unleashed nearly a foot of rain and sent floodwaters spilling out of the Guadalupe River.

The destructive force of the fast-rising waters just before dawn Friday washed out homes and swept away vehicles. There were hundreds of rescues around Kerr County, including at least 167 by helicopter, authorities said. The total number of missing was not known but the sheriff said between 23 and 25 of them were girls who had been attending Camp Mystic, a Christian summer camp along the river.

On social media, parents and families posted desperate pleas for information about loved ones caught in the flood zone.

"The camp was completely destroyed," said Elinor Lester, 13, one of hundreds of campers at Camp Mystic. "A helicopter landed and started taking people away. It was really scary."

She said a raging storm woke up her cabin around 1:30 a.m. Friday, and when rescuers arrived, they tied a rope for the girls to hold as the children in her cabin walked across bridge with floodwaters whipping around the calves and knees.

The flooding in the middle of the night on the Fourth of July holiday caught many residents, campers and officials by surprise. Officials defended their preparations for severe weather and their response but said they had not expected such an intense downpour that was, in effect, the equivalent of months' worth of rain for the area.

One National Weather Service forecast this week had called for only between three and six inches (76 to 152 millimeters) of rain, said Nim Kidd, the chief of the Texas Division of Emergency Management.

"It did not predict the amount of rain that we saw," he said.

At a news conference late Friday Kerr County Sheriff Larry Leitha said 24 people had been confirmed killed. Authorities said 237 people had been rescued so far.

A river gauge at Hunt recorded a 22 foot rise (6.7 meters) in about two hours, according to Bob Fogarty, meteorologist with the National Weather Service's Austin/San Antonio office. The gauge failed after recording a level of 29 and a half feet (9 meters).

"The water's moving so fast, you're not going to recognize how bad it is until it's on top of you," Fogarty said.

On the Kerr County sheriff's office Facebook page, people posted pictures of loved ones and begged for help finding them.

At least 400 people were on the ground helping in the response, Texas Lt. Gov. Dan Patrick said. Nine rescue teams, 14 helicopters and 12 drones were being used, with some people being rescued from trees.

Ingram, Erin Burgess woke to thunder and rain at 3:30 a.m. Just 20 minutes later, water was pouring into her home directly across from the river, she said. She described an agonizing hour clinging to a tree and waiting for the water to recede enough so they could walk up the hill to a neighbor's home.

"My son and I floated to a tree where we hung onto it, and my boyfriend and my dog floated away. He was lost for a while, but we found them," she said.

Of her 19-year-old son, Burgess said: "Thankfully he's over 6 feet tall. That's the only thing that saved me, was hanging on to him."

Matthew Stone, 44, of Kerrville, said police came knocking on doors at 5:30 a.m. but that he had received no warning on his phone.

'America's winning, winning, winning like never before'

US President Trump signs tax and spending cut bill at White House July 4 picnic

WASHINGTON, July 5, (AP): US President Donald Trump signed his package of tax breaks and spending cuts into law Friday in front of Fourth of July picnickers after his cajoling produced almost unanimous Republican support in Congress for the domestic priority that could cement his second-term legacy.

Flanked by Republican legislators and members of his Cabinet, Trump signed the multitrillion-dollar legislation at a desk on the White House driveway, then banged down a gavel gifted to him by House Speaker Mike Johnson that was used during the bill's final passage Thursday.

Against odds that at times seemed improbable, Trump achieved his goal of celebrating a historic - and divisive - legislative victory in time for the nation's birthday, which also was his self-imposed deadline for Congress to send the legislation to his desk. Fighter jets and stealth bombers streaked through the sky over the annual White House Fourth of July picnic.

"America's winning, winning, winning like never before," Trump said, noting last month's bombing campaign against Iran's nuclear program, which he said the flyover was meant to honor. "Promises made, promises kept, and we've kept them."

The White House was hung with red, white and blue bunting for the Independence Day festivities. The US Marine Band played patriotic marches - and, in a typical Trumpian touch, tunes by 1980s pop icons Chaka Khan and Huey Lewis. There were three separate flyovers.

Trump spoke for a relatively brief 22 minutes before signing the bill, but was clearly energized as the legislation's passage topped a recent winning streak for his administration. That included the Iran campaign and a series of US Supreme Court rulings he's fought for.

After dark, chants of "USA, USA" rose from the picnic crowd on the South Lawn when Trump and the first lady, Melania, appeared on the Truman Balcony to watch the fireworks. They danced to "Y.M.C.A." and waved goodbye to the crowd before they left for their home in New Jersey.

The budget legislation is the president's highest-profile win yet. It includes key campaign pledges like no tax on tips or Social Security income. Trump, who spent an unusual amount of time thanking individual Republican lawmakers who shepherded the measure through Congress, contended "our country is going to be a rocket ship, economically," because of the



US President Donald Trump signs his signature bill of tax breaks and spending cuts at the White House on July 4, in Washington, surrounded by members of Congress. (AP)

legislation.

Critics assailed the package as a giveaway to the rich that will rob millions more lower-income people of their health insurance, food assistance and financial stability.

"Today, Donald Trump signed into law the worst job-killing bill in American history. It will rip health care from 17 million workers to pay for massive

2017 multitrillion-dollar tax cuts and cuts Medicaid and food stamps by \$1.2 trillion. It provides for a massive increase in immigration enforcement. Congress' nonpartisan scorekeeper projects that nearly 12 million more people will lose health insurance under the law.

The legislation extends Trump's

tax credits for renewable energy.

The Congressional Budget Office estimates the package will add \$3.3 trillion to the deficit over the decade and 11.8 million more people will go without health coverage.

Democratic National Committee Chair Ken Martin on Friday called the bill "devastating" and said in a statement that Trump's signature on the legislation "sealed the fate of the Republican Party, cementing them as the party for billionaires and special interests - not working families."

He predicted Republicans would lose their majority in Congress over it. "This was a full betrayal of the American people," Martin said.

Trump complained Friday about Democrats opposing the bill, "and we knew that because their hatred of either the country or me or both is so great they didn't vote at all and it's terrible."

He said their "standard line" is to say Republican legislation is "dangerous" or "everybody's going to die" and "we can't let them get away with it." With his bill, Trump said, "it's actually just the opposite, everybody's going to live."

"And I just want you to know, if you see anything negative put out by Democrats, it's all a con job," Trump said, defending a package that now is law.

Power outage hits Czech Republic and disrupts Prague public transport

PRAGUE, July 5, (AP): A temporary power outage hit parts of the Czech Republic's capital and other areas of the country Friday, bringing public transport and trains to a standstill, officials said.

Prague's entire subway network was inoperative starting at noon, the capital city's transport authority said, though subway service was restored within half an hour.

Prime Minister Petr Fiala said in a post on X that the outage hit other parts of the country and authorities were dealing with the problem.

"We are facing an extraordinary and unpleasant situation," Fiala said, adding it was a priority to renew power supplies.

The CEPS power grid operator acknowledged problems in parts of four regions in northern and eastern Czech Republic. It said a fallen electricity line in the northwestern



High-voltage power line pylons are seen as Czech Republic faces a major electricity blackout near Benesov, Czech Republic on July 4. (AP)

part of the country was identified as a possible cause for the outage. Officials have ruled out a cyber

or terror attack.

Of the eight substations in the grid that were affected, including a major one in Prague, five renewed operations in less than two hours, CEPS said.

Industry and Trade Minister Lukas Vlcek said the cause was likely a "mechanical malfunction."

Most trams on the right bank of the Vltava River in Prague were halted, while the left bank was not affected. Some trains near Prague and other regions could not operate, causing delays but the situation was gradually getting back to normal.

There were no immediate reports that Václav Havel Airport Prague, the city's international airport, was hit by the power outage.

In downtown Prague, stores and restaurant that remained open accepted only payments in cash.



Smoke rises after a Russian strike on Kyiv, Ukraine on July 4. (AP)

Ukraine strikes Russian airbase as Moscow sends hundreds of drones into Kyiv

KYIV, Ukraine, July 5, (AP): Ukraine said it struck a Russian airbase on Saturday, while Russia continued to pound Ukraine with hundreds of drones overnight as part of a stepped-up bombing campaign that has further dashed hopes for a breakthrough in efforts to end the more than 3-year-old war.

Ukraine's military General Staff said Saturday that Ukrainian forces had struck the Borisoglebsk airbase in Russia's Voronezh region, describing it as the "home base" of Russia's Su-34, Su-35S and Su-30SM fighter jets.

Writing on Facebook, the General Staff said it hit a depot containing glide bombs, a training aircraft and "possibly other aircraft."

Russian officials did not immediately comment on the attack.

Such attacks on Russian airbases aim to dent Russia's military capability and demonstrate Ukraine's capability to hit high-value targets in Russia. Last month, Ukraine said it destroyed more than 40 Russian planes stationed at several airfields deep in Russia's territory in a surprise drone attack.

Russia fired 322 drones and decoys into Ukraine overnight into Saturday, Ukraine's air force said. Of these, 157 were shot down and 135 were lost, likely having been electronically jammed.

According to the air force, Ukraine's western Khmelnytskyi region was the main target of the attack. Regional GovSerhii Tyurin said Saturday that no damage, injuries or deaths had been reported.

Russia has been stepping up its long-range attacks on Ukraine. Waves of drones and missiles targeted Kyiv overnight into Friday in the largest aerial assault since Russia's invasion of Ukraine began. On Saturday, Kyiv Mayor Vitali Klitschko said the number of people killed in the assault had increased to two. A further 26 people were wounded.

The fresh wave of attacks came after Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said Friday that he had a "very important and productive" phone call with US President Donald Trump.

The two leaders discussed how Ukrainian air defenses might be strengthened, possible joint weapons production between the US and Ukraine, and broader US-led efforts to end the war with Russia, according to a statement by Zelenskyy.

Asked Friday night by reporters about the call, Trump said, "We had a very good call, I think."

When asked about finding a way to end the fighting, Trump said: "I don't know. I can't tell you whether or not that's going to happen."

'Like an earthquake'

Rome's gas explosion injures 45 people

ROME, July 5, (Agencies): A gas station explosion early Friday in south-eastern Rome injured 45 people, Italy's ANSA news agency reported that the injured include 12 police officers, six firefighters, and three emergency rescuers who had arrived on the scene after an initial smaller blast.

The explosion was heard across the Italian capital shortly after 8 am and sent up a huge cloud of dark smoke and fire that was visible from several areas of the city.

Rome Mayor Roberto Gualtieri said that local police and firefighters rushed to the area after receiving a report of a gas leak. Two explosions followed after they arrived, he added.

"Local police immediately evacuated a sports center nearby, while other officers evacuated buildings on the other side of the gas station, avoiding a much more serious tragedy," Gualtieri said.

Police said that at least 24 residents were injured, including two who were in "severe conditions," and hospitalized at Rome's Casilino hospital.

Fifteen firefighting teams were at the site trying to bring the fire under control.

Rome prosecutors have begun an investigation into the cause of the explosion, which could be related to a previous gas leak during the unloading phase of liquefied petroleum gas at the station.



Firefighters monitor the area where a gas station exploded on the outskirts of Rome on July 4. (AP)

The sports center near the gas station was evacuated swiftly by police following the first explosion, with several children brought to safety just in time to avoid the second.

Fabio Balzani, president of the sports center, noted that the timing of the first explosion was key to avert a carnage, as just half an hour later dozens of children would have arrived at the summer camp.

"As soon as we heard the second explosion, we were also hit by a ball of fire. I thought that a car near us exploded, metal fragments were flying in the air," she said. "We felt the fire on the skin, the arm of my daughter is still red, it was horrible."

Other residents said the explosion was so loud and violent it struck nearby buildings "like an earthquake," breaking windows and ripping off shutters.

Pope Leo XIV said that he was praying for those affected by the explosion, which happened "in the heart of my Diocese."

Europe

**EU leaders reaffirm support for Moldova:** Senior officials from the European Union were in Moldova on Friday for a landmark bilateral summit to strengthen ties and reaffirm the bloc's commitment to the EU candidate country, just months before it holds a pivotal parliamentary election.

Moldova's pro-Western President Maia Sandu and Prime Minister Dorin Recean held talks with European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen and Council President António Costa in the capital, Chisinau. Talks focused on EU membership, trade, investments and security.

Sandu thanked the EU leaders for attending the summit, the

first bilateral of its kind, which she hailed as a "milestone in our relationship, that we intend to make a regular platform." (AP)

**O'Flaherty concerned over rights situation:** Europe's human rights watchdog Friday expressed concern that Serbian authorities were using excessive force and arbitrary detentions to break up street protests against the populist government of President Aleksandar Vucic.

Michael O'Flaherty, the Council of Europe's commissioner for human rights, said in a statement that "freedom of assembly and freedom of expression are key human rights enshrined in the European Convention on Human Rights and it is Serbia's duty to guarantee them." (AP)



Chinese, Ghanaian FMs exchange congratulations on 65th anniversary of ties

# China and France should act as forces for stability, openness, inclusiveness: Wang

PARIS, July 5, (Xinhua): Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi on Friday called on China and France to act as forces for stability, openness, inclusiveness and unity.

Wang Yi, also a member of the Political Bureau of the Communist Party of China Central Committee, made the remarks during a joint press conference with his French counterpart, Jean-Noël Barrot.

Wang said that the two foreign ministers held talks and co-chaired the 7th meeting of the China-France high-level dialogue mechanism on people-to-people exchanges, engaging in in-depth, positive and candid exchanges on China-France and China-EU relations, and reaching a series of important consensuses.

The two sides aligned their efforts in the field of cultural exchanges and made new plans for cooperation, he said.

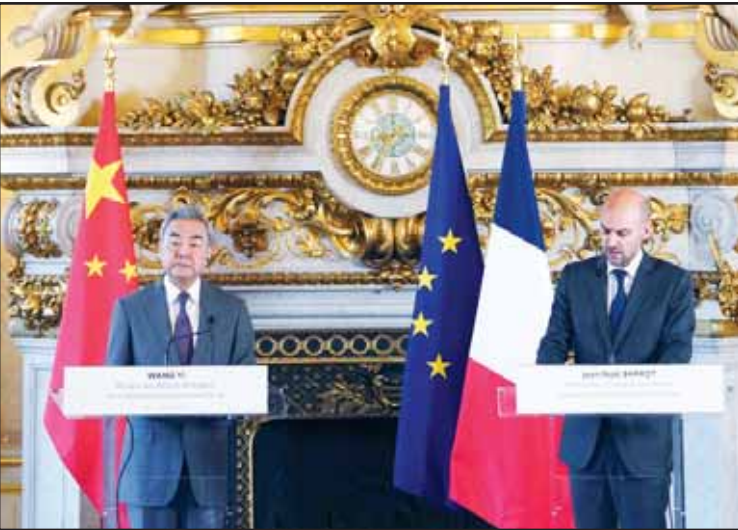
Both sides agreed that given the current complex and turbulent international situation, major countries should take on greater responsibilities. As permanent members of the United Nations Security Council, China and France should adhere to the founding principles of the United Nations, uphold the spirit of independence and self-reliance that underpinned the establishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries, and jointly contribute to world peace, stability and development, Wang said. First, China and France should strengthen strategic communication and serve as forces for stability, he said.

Noting that China-France relations are highly strategic and forward-looking, he said that regardless of changes in the international situation, China and France are both willing and capable of forging consensus, properly handling differences and deepening cooperation through communication and dialogue to ensure stable and sustained development of bilateral relations.

Respecting each other's core interests is the cornerstone of strategic mutual trust between China and France, Wang said, noting China appreciates France's reiterated commitment to the one-China policy.

Wang also said that dialogue and consultation are the right path for peacefully resolving international disputes. China is willing to strengthen strategic communication and coordination with France to play a constructive role in seeking political solutions to hotspot problems such as the Ukraine crisis and Middle East issues, he said.

Second, China and France should promote mutually beneficial cooperation and serve as forces for openness, Wang said. He warned that some major countries are



Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi, left, and French Foreign Minister Jean-Noël Barrot address journalists during a news conference at the foreign ministry in Paris on July 4. (AP)

currently weaponizing tariffs, treating economic and trade cooperation as security issues, and placing their own interests above those of other countries. Such actions severely disrupt the stable operation of global supply chains and seriously harm the common interests of the international community, Wang said.

He said that history and reality have proven that competitiveness cannot be enhanced by building walls and barriers, and that decoupling and breaking chains will ultimately only isolate oneself.

China has entered a new stage of high-quality development and will continue to expand high-level opening-up, Wang said, adding that China and the EU have resolved the brandy issue through friendly consultations.

China is ready to import more high-quality French products, encourages competitive Chinese enterprises to invest in France, and hopes and believes that the French side will provide a fair, transparent and non-discriminatory business environment for Chinese enterprises, he said. Both sides should continue to deepen cooperation in traditional fields such as nuclear energy, aviation and aerospace, but also actively explore the potential for cooperation in emerging fields such as artificial intelligence, green energy and biotechnology, he added.

Third, China and France should promote people-to-people exchanges and serve as forces for inclusiveness, Wang said, noting that people-to-people connections that foster heart-to-heart communication are the best way for countries to enhance understanding, overcome differences and coexist in harmony.

**Also:**

**BEIJING:** Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi on Saturday exchanged congratulations with his Ghanaian counterpart, Samuel Okudzeto Ablakwa, on the 65th anniversary of diplomatic ties between the two countries.

Wang, also a member of the Political Bureau of the Communist Party of China Central Committee, noted that Ghana is one of the first Sub-Saharan African countries to establish diplomatic ties with China.

Over the past 65 years, China-Ghana relations have developed in a sound and stable manner, he said, adding that the two sides have continuously deepened their political mutual trust, yielded fruitful results in practical cooperation in various fields, and maintained close coordination in international affairs.

Wang expressed his readiness to work with Ablakwa to take the 65th anniversary of bilateral diplomatic relations as an opportunity to push for greater development of the China-Ghana strategic partnership.

For his part, Ablakwa expressed his gratitude to China for its long-term valuable support and assistance to Ghana's socio-economic development. The Ghanaian side looks forward to working with China to push for the continuous development of the Ghana-China strategic partnership, he noted.

## Asia

**N.Korean man crosses land border to South:** An unidentified North Korean man crossed the heavily fortified land border separating the two Koreas and is in South Korean custody, the South's military said Friday.

The South's Joint Chiefs of Staff said the military identified and tracked the individual near the central-west section of the military demarcation line and conducted a "guiding operation" before taking the person into custody Thursday night.

It said authorities plan to investigate the border crossing and did not immediately say whether they view the incident as a defection attempt.

The Joint Chiefs said it notified the US-led United Nations Command about the incident and had not detected any immediate signs of unusual military activity by the North.

According to the Joint Chiefs, a South Korean military team approached the unarmed North Korean man after detecting him and, after identifying themselves as South Korean troops, guided him safely out of the mine-strewn Demilitarized Zone that divides the two Koreas.

Border tensions have flared in recent months as the two Koreas traded Cold War-style psychological warfare, with North Korea sending thousands of trash-filled balloons toward the South and South Korea blasting anti-Pyongyang propaganda through loudspeakers. (AP)

☐ ☐ ☐

**Quake rocks southwestern Japan islands:** An earthquake with a preliminary magnitude of 5.4 struck off the Tokara island chain in Japan's southwestern prefecture of Kagoshima on Saturday, the latest in a series of temblors in the area, the country's weather agency said.

The quake, which occurred at 6:29 a.m. local time, measured upper 5 on the Japanese seismic intensity scale of 7 on Akusekijima, part of the Tokara island chain, said the Japan Meteorological Agency.

The weather agency said the temblor originated at a depth of 19 km, but there is no threat of tsunami.

A magnitude 5.5 quake measuring lower 6 of the Japanese scale was logged in the same area on Thursday, prompting the village of Toshima, consisting of seven inhabited islands and five uninhabited ones, to evacuate those willing to leave Akusekijima. (Xinhua)

☐ ☐ ☐

**Teenagers charged over Sydney stabbing:** Two teenagers have been charged with murder over a fatal stabbing in western Sydney in late June.

Luke Manassa, 21, was attacked by two men in the driveway of a home in the western Sydney suburb of Pemulwuy at about 10:45 p.m. on June 26. He managed to enter his vehicle and drive a short distance before succumbing to his stab wounds and could not be revived by ambulance paramedics.

Police in the Australian state of New South Wales said on Friday that detectives from the homicide squad on Thursday executed simultaneous search warrants at three addresses in the nearby suburbs of South Penrith, Mount Druitt and Woodcroft.

A 17-year-old boy was arrested in South Penrith and charged with murder, as was a 16-year-old boy who was arrested in Mount Druitt. (Xinhua)

It will be alleged in court that a vehicle seized from Woodcroft was used by the teenagers as a getaway car from the scene of the attack.

Both boys were refused bail and will make an initial appearance at a Sydney children's court on Friday. (Xinhua)



An aerial drone photo taken on July 2, 2025 shows a view of Hanfeng Lake and urban area of Kaizhou District in southwest China's Chongqing. Kaizhou is noted for a scenic internal lake named Hanfeng, with a capacity of 80 million cubic meters. This artificial lake was built after the completion of the Three Gorges Dam. (Xinhua)

## 6 killed, 18 injured in road accident

# Building collapse in Pakistan kills 17

ISLAMABAD, July 5, (Xinhua): The death toll from the collapse of a residential building in Pakistan's southern port city of Karachi rose to 17 as more bodies were recovered from the debris, a spokesperson of the state-owned rescue organization Rescue 1122 told Xinhua on Saturday morning.

"The life detection equipment indicates that at least 10 people are still alive under the rubble. We're working urgently but carefully to rescue them," Hassan Ul Haseeb Khan, the operation's spokesperson, told Xinhua from the site.

Rescue teams, equipped with five disaster response vehicles, two snorkels, several ambulances, cranes, and lifters, reached the site shortly after receiving distress calls, and over 100 personnel are actively participating in the operation to locate and retrieve victims from the debris, he added.

He said the operation, which has continued for over 20 hours, may require another seven to eight hours to complete. Talking to Xinhua, Mayor of Karachi Murtaza Wahab said that they had previously declared the building "dangerous," directing the residents to evacuate it.

The five-storey structure, located in the densely populated Lyari area, collapsed on Friday, causing scenes of panic and distress.

**Also:**

**ISLAMABAD:** At least six people were killed and 18 others injured when a passenger bus collided with a trailer in Pakistan's eastern Punjab province



Rescuers work at the scene of a residential building collapse in Karachi, Pakistan, on July 4. (Xinhua)

on Saturday morning, local officials said.

The accident took place around 7:00 a.m. local time (0200 GMT) in **Muzaffargarh** district, when a Muzaffargarh-bound bus hit the trailer, police sources from the district told Xinhua.

According to rescue officials, the deceased included two men, two women, and two children.

☐ ☐ ☐

**ISLAMABAD:** At least three militants affiliated with the outlawed Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) were killed during a late-night operation in north-west Pakistan's Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, the Counter Terrorism

Department (CTD) said on Saturday.

The operation was launched around 1:00 a.m. local time (2000 GMT) in **Lakki Marwat** district, following intelligence reports about the presence of suspects involved in multiple attacks targeting police and other security personnel, the CTD said in a statement.

During the raid, security forces recovered four hand grenades, rifles, ammunition and two mobile phones from the site, the statement added.

The development comes two days after a deadly bombing in Bajaur district, where at least five people were killed.

# Kenyans put president on notice over broken campaign promises, corruption and violence

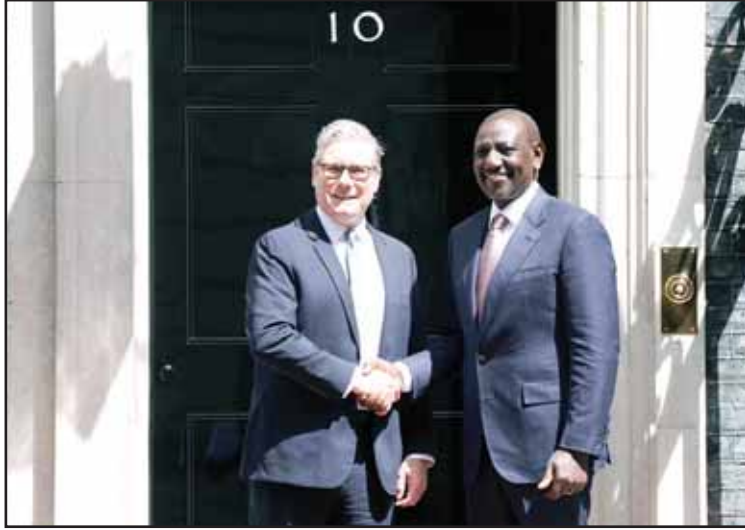
NAIROBI, Kenya, July 5, (AP): Kenyans disaffected with President William Ruto hold placards proclaiming "WANTAM," a sensational slogan distilling their efforts to disgrace him as a "one-term" leader. They stick their index fingers in the air, saying Ruto must vacate the presidency when his term expires in 2027.

For others who want him gone only three years after he was elected, even that's a long time.

Kenya's fifth president became a remarkably unpopular leader barely two years into his presidency after proposing aggressive tax measures that many saw as a betrayal of his campaign promise to support working-class people. Ruto said new taxes were necessary to keep the government running.

Ruto survived the tax-protest movement last year as thousands of young people took to the streets in an unsuccessful attempt to force his resignation. In the most violent incident that left at least 22 people dead, protesters sacked and attempted to burn the parliamentary building in the capital, Nairobi. Ruto said that would never happen again.

Ruto now faces a new wave of protests provoked most recently by the death of a blogger in police custody. Many Kenyans saw the incident as symptomatic of bad rule in



British Prime Minister Keir Starmer, (left), shakes hands with President of Kenya William Ruto, in Downing Street, London, ahead of a bilateral meeting on July 1. (AP)

Kenya, with the president firmly in control of the legislature and security apparatus.

"He has control of the institutions, but he doesn't have control of the people," said Karuti Kanyinga, an analyst and professor of development studies at the University of Nairobi. He noted Ruto suffers such "a low level of public confidence" that he is probably the most hated man in Kenya.

Ruto likely will stay in power until 2027, but "violence will continue to deepen" as young people, opposition politicians and others try to make an example of him in an escalating campaign to reform Kenya's government, Kanyinga warned.

# Rwanda's prez gives cautious welcome to US-brokered peace deal with Congo

KIGALI, Rwanda, July 5, (AP): Rwanda's President Paul Kagame said Friday he was "thankful" for US mediation in his country's conflict with neighboring Congo following last week's agreement in Washington.

But he warned that the success of the peace deal depends on goodwill from the warring parties.

American mediators "are not the ones to implement what we have agreed," Kagame told reporters in the capital, Kigali.

"You will never find Rwanda at fault with implementing what we have agreed to do," he said.

"But if the side we are working with plays tricks and takes us back to the problem, then we deal with the problem like we have been dealing with it."

The comments were Kagame's first public reaction to the peace deal facilitated by the US to help end the decades-long deadly fighting in eastern Congo. The deal will also help the US government and American companies gain access to critical minerals in the region.

The agreement was signed at the State Department, with Secretary of State Marco Rubio standing between



US Secretary of State Marco Rubio, (center), stands with Rwanda's Foreign Minister Olivier Nduhungirehe, left, and Democratic Republic of the Congo's Foreign Minister Therese Kayikwamba Wagner, (right), as they shake hands after signing a peace agreement at the State Department on June 27. (AP)

the foreign ministers of Rwanda and Congo. Rubio called it "an important moment after 30 years of war."

The agreement has provisions on territorial integrity, prohibition of hostilities and the disengagement, disarmament and conditional integration of

non-state armed groups.

While the deal is seen as a turning point, analysts don't believe it will quickly end the fighting because a major belligerent in the conflict - the Rwanda-backed M23 - says it does not apply to it.

# Mexico demonstrations against surging mass tourism end in vandalism and harassment

MEXICO CITY, July 5, (AP): A protest by hundreds against gentrification and mass tourism that began peacefully Friday in Mexico City neighborhoods popular with tourists turned violent when a small number of people began smashing storefronts and harassing foreigners.

Masked protesters smashed through the windows and looted high-end businesses in the touristic areas of Condesa and Roma, and screamed at tourists in the area. Graffiti on glass shattered glass being smashed through with rocks read: "get out of Mexico." Protesters held signs reading "gringos, stop stealing our home" and demanding local legislation to better regulate tourism levels and stricter housing laws.

Marchers then continued on to protest outside the US Embassy and chanted inside the city's metro system. Police reinforcements gathered outside the Embassy building as police sirens rung out in the city center Friday eve-



A demonstrator sprays graffiti during a protest against gentrification, as the increase in remote workers has risen prices and increased housing demand in neighborhoods like Condesa and Roma, in Mexico City on July 4. (AP)

ning.

It marked a violent end to a more peaceful march throughout the day calling out against masses of mostly American tourists who have flooded into Mexico's capital in recent years.

Tension had been mounting in the city since US "digital nomads" flocked to Mexico City in 2020, many to escape coronavirus lockdowns in the U.S. or to take advantage of cheaper rent prices in the Latin American city.

Since then, rents have soared and locals have increasingly gotten pushed out of their neighborhoods, particularly areas like Condesa and Roma, lush areas packed with coffee shops and restaurants.

Michelle Castro, a 19-year-old college student, was among the flocks of people protesting. She said that she's from the city's working class city center, and that she's watched slowly as apartment buildings have been turned into housing for tourists.



Kuwait oil price down 3 cents to USD 70.07 pb

KUWAIT CITY, July 5, (KUNA): The price of Kuwait oil fell three cents to USD 70.07 per barrel (pb) on Friday as opposed to USD 70.10 on Friday, said the Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) on Saturday. Brent futures went down by 50 cents to USD 68.30 pb and West Texas Intermediate fell by 50 cents to USD 66.50 pb.

Business

Represents the bank's largest AT1 transaction to date amid strong global investor demand

NBK prices \$800mn in landmark additional Tier 1 bond issuance



NBK headquarters

KUWAIT CITY, July 5: National Bank of Kuwait (NBK) successfully priced a US\$800 million PNC6 Additional Tier 1 bond issuance (AT1) – its largest issuance to date in this capital tier – following strong investor demand.

The issuance was met with broad interest from global investors, marking a notable return to the GCC AT1 market after a brief pause that followed a concentrated wave of issuances in May.

The issuance attracted strong demand, with subscription orders peaking at US\$2.2 billion – 2.75x the issued amount – underscoring robust interest from a diversified pool of global investors and financial institutions. Private banks, in particular, played a pivotal role as key anchors during the orderbook building process. This overwhelming response reflects international investor confidence in NBK's solid credit profile and Kuwait's position as an attractive investment destination.

MENA-based investors accounted for 47% of total allocations, followed by investors from the UK (19%), the United States (18%), Europe (13%), and Asia (3%).

By investor type, asset managers and investment funds represented the largest share at 48%, followed by banks and private banking clients at 44%, while sovereign entities, insurance firms, and pension funds comprised the remaining 8%

of total demand.

Robust investor demand enabled NBK to achieve highly favorable pricing for the issuance, with the final yield set at 6.375% – representing a 50 basis point tightening from the initial price thoughts (IPTs) of 6.875% (equivalent to UST+240.3bps).

The investment-grade credit rating of the issuance, at Baa3 from Moody's, further enhanced its appeal – driving strong interest from international private banking platforms and global asset managers.

Citigroup, J.P. Morgan, HSBC, and Standard Chartered acted as Global Coordinators for the issuance, while the Joint Lead Managers included Citigroup, J.P. Morgan, HSBC, Standard Chartered, First Abu Dhabi Bank, Emirates NBD, Abu Dhabi Commercial Bank, KAMCO Investment Company, and National Bank of Kuwait.

The bonds, which will be listed on the London Stock Exchange, are expected to strengthen NBK's capital adequacy ratios.

The new issuance was conducted in parallel with NBK's liability management exercise which offered holders of the Bank's outstanding US\$750 million Additional Tier 1 securities, issued on November 27, 2019, the option to roll their existing positions into the new offering.

OPEC+ to boost oil output by 548,000 bpd in August

Global outlook set for release July 9–10

ALGIERS, July 5, (KUNA): OPEC+ decided on Saturday to increase oil production by 548,000 barrels per day (bpd) in August, the Algerian Energy Ministry said in a statement.

The decision came at the conclusion of a ministerial meeting held remotely and attended by eight OPEC+ countries that have implemented voluntary adjustments to their oil production levels since April 2023, the statement added.

The meeting was attended by the energy and oil ministers of Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Russia, Iraq, the UAE, Kazakhstan, Oman, and Algeria, it said.

The statement indicated that the meeting focused on exchanging views on global oil market developments and studying its short-term prospects, with particular attention to the implementation of voluntary production cuts and mechanisms to compensate for excess production.

It added that, based on expectations of improving global oil demand during the summer season, the participants agreed to implement a gradual



KUNA photo

Mohamed Arkab, Algerian Minister of Energy

ual collective increase in production levels, estimated at 548,000 bpd in August 2025.

"In this context, Algeria's share of crude oil production will increase by 12,000 barrels per day starting next August," the statement noted.

The ministers also agreed to continue coordination and consultation through monthly meetings to closely

monitor market developments, ensure full compliance with voluntary commitments, and evaluate the approved compensation mechanisms.

The next ministerial meeting is scheduled for August 3.

Also:

VIENNA: The Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC)

said on Friday it will unveil its forecasts for global oil market developments next week.

In a statement, OPEC announced that it will present its annual World Oil Outlook 2025 report during a special event at the Hofburg Palace in Vienna on July 9–10, coinciding with the second day of an international symposium scheduled for the same dates.

OPEC Secretary General Haitham Al-Ghais will deliver the opening address, followed by a panel discussion featuring directors and analysts from the OPEC Secretariat's Research Department to highlight the report's key findings.

First published in 2007, OPEC's annual report is considered one of the organization's most prominent publications. It provides an in-depth analysis of the global oil and energy industry, as well as a review of potential medium- and long-term development scenarios.

The report also addresses pivotal issues such as supply and demand, investment, the impact of global policies, and sustainable development. It further analyzes the challenges and opportunities facing the global energy sector, including oil.



KUNA photo

GCC chief discusses free trade deal reference with Vietnamese Ambassador.

MoU drives closer ties

GCC chief tackles free trade deal reference with Vietnamese envoy

RIYADH, July 5, (KUNA): The Secretary-General of the Cooperation Council for the Arab States of the Gulf (GCC), Jassim Al-Budaiwi, discussed with the Vietnamese Ambassador to Saudi Arabia, Hung Huy, the latest developments regarding the terms of reference for the free trade agreement between the GCC and Vietnam.

In a statement Thursday, the General Secretariat stated that the meeting addressed ways to strengthen Gulf-Vietnamese co-

operation relations within the framework of the memorandum of understanding signed between the two sides in 2023, in addition to the latest developments regarding the proposed joint action plan for 2024-2028.

According to the statement, Al-Budaiwi expressed his aspiration to sign the terms of reference in preparation for the commencement of negotiations on the free trade agreement between the two sides.

Data signals gradual easing

Türkiye's annual inflation falls to 35.05% in June, amid policy shift

ANKARA, July 5, (Xinhua): Türkiye's annual consumer inflation eased more than anticipated in June, slowing to 35.05 percent, according to official data released by the Turkish Statistical Institute on Thursday.

The monthly inflation rate for June also came in lower than forecasts, at 1.37 percent, the data showed.

The figures mark a continued moderation from May, when annual inflation stood at 35.41 percent and monthly inflation at 1.53 percent.

Türkiye has been grappling with rising inflation for years. High inflation and the depre-

ciation of the national currency have brought hardships for most households in the country.

The Turkish government has been implementing tight monetary policies and structural reforms over economic challenges marked by high inflation and currency volatility.

In mid-2023, Türkiye shifted away from its unconventional policy of keeping interest rates artificially low despite surging inflation, adopting a more stringent monetary policy that has since helped reduce inflation.

Jordan, Syria discuss energy, water cooperation

AMMAN, July 5, (Xinhua): Jordanian and Syrian officials on Wednesday held talks in Amman to enhance bilateral cooperation in the fields of energy and water.

Jordan's Minister of Energy and Mineral Resources Saleh Kharabsheh and Minister of Water and Irrigation Raed Abul Saud met with Mohammad al-Bashir, chief of Syria's energy authorities, to discuss joint infrastructure projects, regional integration and sustainable development.

The two sides explored increasing the volume of natural gas exports to Syria, in cooperation with Qatar and Egypt, to support electricity generation in the war-torn country.

Jordan has been supplying Syria with Qatari natural gas through the Arab Gas Pipeline since March.

Talks also covered raising the electricity interconnection capacity from 250 to 300 megawatts, and enhancing cooperation in petroleum logistics and electricity distribution.

On the water front, Abul Saud announced a joint technical com-



SANA photo

Jordanian and Syrian officials on Wednesday hold talks in Amman to enhance bilateral cooperation in the fields of energy and water.

mittee meeting on July 8 to review the 2005 Yarmouk River agreement and Jordan's proposed amendments.

He also welcomed Syrian measures to curb illegal well drilling

in Daraa, which had previously impacted Jordan's water reserves.

Jordan and Syria signed their first water-sharing agreement in 1953, amended in 1987 to include the Wahdah Dam project. Jordan

funded the dam, but water flow has often fallen short of expectations, a situation Jordan attributes in part to additional dam construction and well drilling upstream in Syria.





Why millions of working Americans will lose health insurance

Medicaid rollbacks hit working families hard



A car enters the drive at Day Kimball Hospital, July 18, 2022 in Putnam, Conn. (AP)

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



By Sumit Agarwal,  
University of Michigan

Even if an employer offers health insurance to their low-wage employees, those workers may forego it because the premiums and deductibles are too high to make it worth earning less take-home pay.

The Congressional Budget Office estimates that 7.8 million Americans across the U.S. will lose their coverage through Medicaid - the public program that provides health insurance to low-income families and individuals - under the multitrillion-dollar domestic policy package that President Donald Trump signed into law on July 4, 2025.

That includes 247,000 to 412,000 of my fellow residents of Michigan.

Many of these people are working Americans who will lose Medicaid because of the onerous paperwork involved with the proposed work requirements.

They won't be able to get coverage in the Affordable Care Act Marketplaces after losing Medicaid. Premiums and out-of-pocket costs are likely to be too high for those making less than 100% to 138% of the federal poverty level who do not qualify for health insurance marketplace subsidies. Funding for this program is also

under threat.

And despite being employed, they also won't be able to get health insurance through their employers because it is either too expensive or not offered to them. Researchers estimate that coverage losses will lead to thousands of medically preventable deaths across the country because people will be unable to access health care without insurance.

I am a physician, health economist and policy researcher who has cared for patients on Medicaid and written about health care in the U.S. for over eight years. I think it's important to understand the role of Medicaid within the broader insurance landscape. Medicaid has become a crucial source of health coverage for low-wage workers.

A few years ago, Michigan was slated to institute Medicaid work requirements, but the courts blocked the implementation of that policy in 2020. It would have cost upward of US\$70 million due to software upgrades, staff training, and outreach to Michigan residents enrolled in the Medicaid program, according to the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services.

Had it gone into effect, 100,000 state residents were expected to

lose coverage within the first year.

The state took the formal step of eliminating work requirements from its statutes earlier this year in recognition of implementation costs being too high and mounting evidence against the policy's effectiveness.

When Arkansas instituted Medicaid work requirements in 2018, there was no increase in employment, but within months, thousands of people enrolled in the program lost their coverage. The reason? Many people were subjected to paperwork and red tape even though not many people failed to meet the criteria of the work requirements. It was a recipe for widespread coverage losses without meeting any of the policy's purported goals.

Work requirements, far from providing an incentive to work, paradoxically remove working people from Medicaid with nowhere else to go for insurance.

Nearly half of Americans get their health insurance through their employers.

In contrast to a universal system that covers everyone from cradle to grave, an employer-first system leaves huge swaths of the population uninsured. This includes tens of millions of working Americans who are unable to get health insur-

ance through their employers, especially low-income workers who are less likely to even get the choice of coverage from their employers.

Over 80% of managers and professionals have employer-sponsored health coverage, but only 50% to 70% of blue-collar workers in service jobs, farming, construction, manufacturing and transportation can say the same.

There are some legal requirements mandating employers to provide health insurance to their employees, but the reality of low-wage work means many do not fall under these legal protections.

For example, employers are allowed to incorporate a waiting period of up to 90 days before health coverage begins. The legal requirement also applies only to full-time workers. Health coverage can thus remain out of reach for seasonal and temporary workers, part-time employees and gig workers.

Even if an employer offers health insurance to their low-wage employees, those workers may forego it because the premiums and deductibles are too high to make it worth earning less take-home pay.

To make matters worse, layoffs

are more common for low-wage workers, leaving them with limited options for health insurance during job transitions. And many employers have increasingly shed low-wage staff, such as drivers and cleaning staff, from their employment rolls and contracted that work out. Known as the fissuring of the workplace, it allows employers of predominately high-income employees to continue offering generous benefits while leaving no such commitment to low-wage workers employed as contractors.

Low-income workers without access to employer-sponsored insurance had virtually no options for health insurance in the years before key parts of the Affordable Care Act went into effect in 2014.

Research my coauthors and I conducted showed that blue-collar workers have since gained health insurance coverage, cutting the uninsured rate by a third thanks to the expansion of Medicaid eligibility and subsidies in the health insurance marketplaces. This means low-income workers can more consistently see doctors, get preventive care and fill prescriptions.

Further evidence from Michigan's experience has shown that Medicaid can help the people it covers do a better job at work by addressing health impairments. It can also improve their financial well-being, including fewer problems with debt, fewer bankruptcies, higher credit scores and fewer evictions.

Premiums and cost sharing in Medicaid are minimal compared with employer-sponsored insurance, making it a more realistic and accessible option for low-income workers. And because Medicaid is not tied directly to employment, it can promote job mobility, allowing workers to maintain coverage within or between jobs without having to go through the bureaucratic complexity of certifying work.

Of course, Medicaid has its own shortcomings. Payment rates to providers are low relative to other insurers, access to doctors can be limited, and the program varies significantly by state. But these weaknesses stem largely from underfunding and political hostility - not from any intrinsic flaw in the model. If anything, Medicaid's success in covering low-income workers and containing per-enrollee costs points to its potential as a broader foundation for health coverage.

The current employer-based system, which is propped up by an enormous and regressive tax break for employer-sponsored insurance premiums, favors high-income earners and contributes to wage stagnation. In my view, which is shared by other health economists, a more public, universal model could better cover Americans regardless of how someone earns a living.

Over the past six decades, Medicaid has quietly stepped into the breach left by employer-sponsored insurance. Medicaid started as a welfare program for the needy in the 1960s, but it has evolved and adapted to fill the needs of a country whose health care system leaves far too many uninsured. (AP)

Video generator tech to accelerate digital transformation of manufacturing, other traditional industries

Chinese companies embrace AI-driven industrial upgrades

In recent years, the Chinese government has introduced a wide range of measures to accelerate AI innovation and promote its application, intending to support new industrialization and the development of the industrial sector.

BEIJING, July 5, (Xinhua): When picturing a steel factory, words like "heavy," "smoky," and "arduous" often come to mind. But a technological breakthrough is proving that the iron and steel industry can be smart and sophisticated, thanks to the power of artificial intelligence (AI).

Shougang Group, one of China's largest steelmakers, is leading the way with an AI-powered visual system that is transforming the entire steelmaking process from labor-driven to model-driven. With this cutting-edge technology in place, the steel giant has boosted production efficiency by over 20 percent and reduced defects by 35 percent.

Exemplifying the shift toward digital and intelligent industrial transformation, the AI-powered system was named one of the top 10 benchmark applications at the 2025 Global Digital Economy Conference, which wrapped up in Beijing on Saturday. During the event, business leaders and industry representatives discussed the growing impact of AI across industries, highlighting China's

broader push toward smart manufacturing.

"For a company of our size, the top priority in the face of the ongoing AI revolution is to explore how this technology can deliver better solutions to our challenges, and how it improves quality, increases efficiency and reduces cost," said Jiang Xingqun, senior vice president of BOE Technology Group Co., Ltd., one of the world's largest display panel manufacturers.

"Traditional visual technology has been widely used for quality checks, but it still falls short in addressing some issues," Jiang said. "This is why we employ AI for data labeling, model training, and detection of defects and abnormalities." He noted that in recent years, BOE has also developed its own automated decision-making system, which is already being used in production.

The company has been actively seeking ways to integrate AI into display panel manufacturing, a comprehensive process that encompasses quality inspection, monitoring and analysis, defect

repairs, and equipment maintenance. With the help of AI, BOE has effectively improved graphic processing efficiency, shortened defect handling cycles, and reduced labor costs.

Similarly, numerous companies across the country are accelerating their digital transformation efforts. According to the China Internet Development Report 2024, the country now has nearly 10,000 digitalized workshops and intelligent factories. Of these, more than 400 have been recognized as national-level benchmark factories in smart manufacturing, utilizing technologies such as AI and digital twins.

Industry insiders highlighted that the costs of large models have dropped sharply over the past year, creating favorable conditions for the application of AI technologies. Ruan Yu, vice president of Baidu, noted that as costs continue to fall, large AI models are becoming a core productivity tool for an increasing number of enterprises.

According to Zhang Di, vice president of Kuaishou Technology

and head of Kling AI, AI video generator technology will continue to evolve. By providing interactive and lifelike environments, it will further boost the development of the industrial internet and accelerate the digital transformation of manufacturing and other traditional industries, Zhang said.

In recent years, the Chinese government has introduced a wide range of measures to accelerate AI innovation and promote its application, intending to support new industrialization and the development of the industrial sector.

"The industrial sector is a cornerstone of China's economy, characterized by its large scale, wide scope and diverse scenarios. It is a primary arena for AI applications," said Zhao Chaofan, an official with the Ministry of Industry and Information Technology. Zhao added that the ministry will continue to actively advance AI adoption, organize regular initiatives to integrate AI with new industrialization, and promote model solutions for AI applications. These efforts aim to ensure that the technology more effec-

tively supports the real economy, Zhao said.

Looking ahead, Gu Weixi, researcher at the China Academy of Industrial Internet, noted that several challenges remain for AI applications in the industrial sector. For instance, AI service providers lack sufficient channels to reach customers, while manufacturing companies have limited knowledge of cutting-edge AI technologies.

To address these challenges, several analysts have called for better alignment between supply and demand, which would help AI products enhance performance while reducing costs and increasing efficiency in the industrial sector.

"China is equipped with a comprehensive range of industrial categories, which provide access to diverse application scenarios and abundant data," said Mao Shengbo, partner at MiraclePlus, a startup incubator. "By fully leveraging China's strengths in its industrial chain, application scenarios and market size, we can create an entirely new AI supply chain and ecosystem."



Public Authority for Sports backs initiative blending athletics with cancer awareness

Kuwait's CAN launches 2025 Summer Haido – CAN Olympics



A shot of the teams participating in Summer Haido - CAN Olympics. KUNA photo

KUWAIT CITY, July 5, (KUNA): The Cancer Aware Nation (CAN) launched on Saturday the first activities of the 2025 Summer Haido - CAN Olympics, in co-operation with the Public Authority for Sports, under the slogan “Sports is Prevention.”

In a press statement on Saturday, CAN’s Chairman, Dr. Khaled Al-Saleh, said that the Olympics, which will last a month and a half, include a series of tournaments, competitions, and various sporting activities targeting different age groups, with the participation of 16 teams

and more than 120 players.

Al-Saleh emphasized the importance of sports in strengthening human immunity, saying a regular exercise would reduce the risk of many types of cancer.

Director of Haido Academy, Abdul-lah Khaled, expressed his hope that the Olympics will be a distinguished sports and health platform for youth and society, linking physical activity with the prevention of chronic diseases, most notably cancer.

Khaled pointed out that the events are being held in a strategic partnership be-

tween CAN and Haido Academy, in co-operation with the Public Authority for Sports.

He explained that the program will include tournaments in various sports, including football, volleyball, bowling, an athletics challenge, a tug-of-war competition, and an American penalty shootout.

These events will also include awareness and health workshops and community initiatives, he added.

He said that the first event was the padel tournament, with the participation of several sports teams.

Association conducts ‘Message of Hijrah’ program

IMA Kuwait honors Islamic New Year with educational outreach

KUWAIT CITY, July 5: Indian Muslim Association (IMA) Kuwait, under the distinguished patronage of the Ministry of Awqaf & Islamic Affairs – Foreign Relations Department, organized a series of impactful public programs titled “Message of Hijrah” across its various units in Kuwait. The programs were held to commemorate the Islamic New Year and the significant Islamic event of Hijrah – the migration of Prophet Muhammad from Makkah to Madinah – and to draw timeless lessons from this pivotal moment in Islamic history.

Salmiya Units & English Unit Program – 23rd June 2025

In collaboration with the English Unit, IMA Salmiya Unit 1 & 2 conducted a highly engaging Urdu program at Masjid Hayya Ibrahim, Salmiya. The keynote speaker, Janab Masood Shahab Sahab, eloquently presented the historical and spiritual relevance of Hijrah, drawing powerful lessons of sacrifice, strategic planning, patience, and unwavering faith in Allah (SWT).

Abu Halifa Unit & Youth Wing (Fahaheel Zone) Program – 26th June 2025

IMA’s Abu Halifa Unit & Youth Wing – Fahaheel Zone organized a parallel Urdu-language program at Masjid Mariyam, Mahboula, on Thursday, 26th June 2025, after Isha prayers. Mr. Shamvil Parvez Sahab, former IMA President and respected speaker, addressed the audience with insights on the broader significance of Hijrah – not only as a physical migration but as a spiritual journey from falsehood to truth, from injustice to justice, and from darkness to light.

Kuwait City Unit Program – 26th June 2025

Simultaneously, on the same evening, the City Unit of IMA Kuwait hosted a well-received event at Deewaniya, Kaza Bella Saloon, Reggae, featuring the distinguished speaker and Khateeb, Mr. Nisar Ahmed Sahab, who spoke on the moral and ethical transformation symbolized by Hijrah. He emphasized that the Hijrah of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ embodies timeless principles that continue to guide believers today, including strategic planning, team-

work, and trust in Allah.

Farwaniya Unit Program – 26th June 2025

IMA’s Farwaniya Unit organized a grassroots-level public program in Farwaniya. Mr. Dawood Absami, the session’s speaker, focused on the inner dimensions of Hijrah and emphasized that true Hijrah today is not only about geographic movement, but about sincere inner transformation, supported by the Qur’anic verse:

“Indeed, Allah will not change the condition of a people until they change what is in themselves.” – Surah Ar-Ra’d (13:11)

Abbasiya & Khaitan Unit – Jalsa Youm-e-Hijrah – 26th June 2025

The Abbasiya & Khaitan Unit of IMA Kuwait held a special event titled “Jalsa Youm-e-Hijrah” at Masjid Bilqees, Abbasiya, on Thursday, 26th June 2025, soon after Salat al-Isha. Mr. Masood Shahab Sahab once again captivated the audience with his passionate message about Hijrah as a symbol of divine purpose, prophetic wisdom, and timeless courage.

All the above programs drew large audiences, including families, youth, and professionals. The events concluded with the distribution of dinner packets to all attendees.

Special Q&A sessions were held at the end of each program to engage the audience and clarify their understanding of the contemporary application of Hijrah’s teachings.

IMA Kuwait extends its sincere gratitude to the Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs, Kuwait, for its patronage and continued support in organizing these meaningful events.

IMA Kuwait is an Indian socio-religious organization operating under the patronage of the Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs, Kuwait. It is dedicated to enhancing the spiritual and social well-being of expatriates in Kuwait by organizing various educational programs, spiritual gatherings, and community outreach events. IMA looks forward to continuing these efforts with future programs that cater to the needs of the wider expatriate population, particularly the Indian community.

For updates and upcoming programs, follow IMA Kuwait on social media or visit [www.imakuwait.org](http://www.imakuwait.org).



Large audiences attended programs focused on the spiritual and strategic legacy of the Prophet's migration.

Engineers pledge support for training programs

Bangladesh Community Kuwait drives skill development for diaspora workers

KUWAIT CITY, July 5: Bangladesh Community Kuwait is a non-political, humanitarian and social organization. It has been working continuously for the welfare of helpless Bangladeshis in the diaspora. With the aim of developing the diaspora community and increasing unity and awareness among Bangladeshis, they recently organized a special exchange of views and cultural program.

The program, held at the hall of Rajdhani Palace Hotel in Khaitan on Thursday night, was presided over by the organization’s president, Engineer Md. Farid Uddin. The program was attended by Engineers Institution, Bangladesh (IEB) Chairman Engineer Abdul Quddus Mallick, Secretary General Mohammad Atahar Ali, Senior Citizen Engineer MI Alam, Engineer Abdus

Salam, Engineer Md. Mizanur Rahman, Engineer Humayun Soleman Kabir, Engineer Md. Nazrul Islam, Engineer Md. Zulfikar Ali Khan,

Captain Aftab Ahmed, Pharmaceutical Lab Expert Mohammad Saleh Uzzaman, President of Bangladesh Press Club Kuwait Senior Journalist Moin Uddin Sarker Sumon, General Secretary Journalist A.H. Jubed, President of Remittance Fighter Society A.K.M. Azad, along with numerous Bangladeshi engineers, journalists, organizers and their families living in Kuwait.

In the main discussion, the engineers said that converting unskilled workers in the diaspora into skilled manpower is the need of the hour. They assured all-out cooperation in conducting necessary technical

training and awareness activities for this purpose. They also called on the Bangladesh Community Kuwait to organize a regular training workshop, where along with the general workers, the new generation will also be made skilled in technology, safety and language education. At the end of the program, the diaspora participated in the cultural program.

The guests present highly appreciated this arrangement and urged the Bangladesh Community Kuwait to further accelerate such initiatives. The leaders of the organization said that their goal is to build a strong community of those working in different professions abroad. They said that through this organization, they have been, are and will continue to be by the side of the expatriates.



Photo during discussion chaired by Bangladesh Press Club President and Somoy TV’s Kuwait correspondent, Senior Journalist Moin Uddin Sarker Sumon. Joint Editor of the Press Club and Jamuna TV’s representative, Md. Hebjui Mia, served as the moderator.

Ethical journalism for expat welfare

Bangladesh Press Club Kuwait calls for fact-based journalism

KUWAIT CITY, July 5: Bangladesh Press Club Kuwait organized a discussion meeting on Friday afternoon to address the role of expatriate journalists in preventing the spread of fake information and fraud. The press workers of the Bangladesh Press Club are consistently working for the welfare of expatriate Bangladeshis. As part of these efforts, the meeting emphasized the crucial role journalists play in safeguarding the rights of expatriates and combating misinformation.

The discussion was chaired by Bangladesh Press Club President and Somoy TV’s Kuwait correspondent, Senior Journalist Moin Uddin Sarker Sumon. Joint Editor of the Press Club and Jamuna TV’s representative, Md. Hebjui Mia, served as the moderator.

In his address, Moin Sumon stated, “As a journalist, I strive to publish fact-based reports for the welfare of expatriate Bangladeshis, in line with Kuwait’s laws, and I encourage my colleagues to stand with me.” He added that many expatriates fall victim to deception due to widespread fake information and misleading advertisements on social media.

He stressed the importance of raising awareness by presenting accurate and verified news to prevent such fraud and highlighted the need to inform the community about various laws and regulations in Kuwait.

Vice President of the Press Club and News Twenty Four TV representative Jahangir Khan Palash, General Secretary and Bangla TV representative A.H. Jubed, Probas Bangla Editor A.K.M. Azad, and Bangladesh Cricket Association Kuwait General Secretary Moazzem Hossain also shared guidelines during the meeting.

The attendees also prayed for the speedy recovery of Bangladesh Press Club International Editor Selim Howlader, currently in Kuwait. Special prayers were offered for the late journalists Sharif Mizan and Md. Yakub.

The event was attended by Bangladesh Journalists Union President Nasir Uddin Khokon, Gazi TV correspondent Alal Ahmed, Danik Sarejmin Barta correspondent A.H.M. Ershad, Sky Touch Travel Agency ticketing officer Mohsin, among others.



Participants pose for a group photo during the event.



## Czech Film Fest opens with honors for Sarsgaard, Krieps

## Hamilton warns against rushing an ‘F1’ movie sequel

SILVERSTONE, England, July 5, (AP): Lewis Hamilton says he just wants to enjoy the “F1” movie’s success as he warned Thursday that rushing a sequel would be “the worst thing we probably could do.”

The seven-time Formula 1 champion was an executive producer on the film, which stars Brad Pitt as a hard-bit-ten racer making a late-career comeback.

It became Apple’s biggest box-office hit yet when it debuted with \$55.6 million in North American theaters and \$144 million globally over the weekend, according to studio estimates Sunday.

“We literally just finished it, so I think the last thing we want right now is a sequel,” Hamilton said Thursday ahead of the British Grand Prix.

“It’s been four years in the making. It was a lot of work, particularly for (director Joseph Kosinski). It’s time away from your family, it’s time away from your kids, and also you need this to just simmer for a while, you know. Like, let’s enjoy it.

“I think the worst thing we probably could do is to rush into doing a sequel,” the Ferrari driver added. “Most se-

quels are way worse, and so we don’t need to rush it. I think if we do do a sequel, I would say let’s really, really take our time in getting it even better.”

Hamilton said he was bringing F1 race-track procedures to the movie business by asking for a “debrief” on the project, in the same way a team analyzes a race before heading to the next one.

“Let’s review what we did, what we could have done better,” he said. “I don’t know if they ever do that in the movie business, but it’s something obviously I’ve learned from here.”

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The Czech Karlovy Vary International Film Festival was kicking off its 59th edition on Friday with honors for American actor Peter Sarsgaard and actress Vicky Krieps from Luxembourg.

Sarsgaard and Krieps are both slated to receive the Festival President’s Award at the opening ceremony.

The festival will screen “Shattered Glass,” a 2003 movie directed by Billy Ray, for which Sarsgaard was nominat-

ed for a Golden Globe. To honor Krieps, who received a European Film Award for best actress for her role of the rebellious Empress Sisi in “Corsage” (2022), the movie “Love Me Tender” (2025) will be shown at the festival.

American actress Dakota Johnson, who will receive the same award on Sunday, was set to present her two latest movies, “Splitsville” and “Materialists.”

The festival will close on July 12 with an honor for Swedish actor Stellan Skarsgård recognising his outstanding contribution to world cinema. He will present his new movie, “Sentimental Value” directed by by Joachim Trier, that won the Grand Prix at this year’s Cannes Film Festival.

In an anticipated event, Hollywood actor Michael Douglas arrives at the festival present a newly restored print of the 1975 Oscar-winning movie “One Flew Over the Cuckoo’s Nest,” which was directed by the late Czech director Miloš Forman and which was produced by Douglas and Saul Zaentz.

The grand jury will consider 12 movies for the top prize, the Crystal Globe.



Ferrari driver Lewis Hamilton of Britain talks to the media at the Silverstone racetrack, ahead of the British Formula One Grand Prix, in Silverstone, England, Thursday, July 3. (AP)

## Variety

**WASHINGTON:** First lady **Melania Trump** visited with sick patients at Children’s National hospital in Washington on Thursday as the children made Fourth of July arts and crafts ahead of the holiday.

Trump, continuing a tradition of support by first ladies for the pediatric care center, also stopped by the hospital’s rooftop “healing” garden she dedicated during the first Trump administration to first ladies of the United States.

The first lady decorated rocks for the garden with the children, drawing a red heart on one. A few kids played with stretchy slime while Trump engaged them in questions.

“Wow, that’s a big slime!” she told one child that was more focused on stretching the sticky goo.

Trump gave each of the children gift bags with blankets and teddy bears that had shirts reading, “Be Best,” her campaign focused on children’s well-being.

She quizzed the kids on their favorite sports, what music they like and how they’re feeling. Trump also took an informal poll, asking the kids whether they like chocolate and ice cream.

Most of the hands shot up, including the first lady’s.

“I like it too,” she said.

She then took the children out to the Bunny Mellon Healing Garden, where they placed small American flags and patriotically-colored pin-wheels into the soil.

The garden, decked out in decorations for Independence Day on Friday, was named to honor Rachel “Bunny” Mellon, a friend of first lady Jacqueline Kennedy.

Mellon was a philanthropist and avid gardener who designed the Rose Garden and other White House gardens during the Kennedy administration.

The garden was dedicated to America’s first ladies because of their decades-long support for the hospital and its patients, including a traditional first lady visit at Christmastime that dates back to Bess Truman. (AP)

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**ROME:** The head of the Italian Culture Ministry’s film department resigned Thursday following revelations that an American film director accused in a double homicide had secured nearly \$1 million in tax credits from the ministry for a film he never made.

The Culture Ministry announced the resignation of Nicola Borrelli in a brief statement overnight, thanking him for his service.

It didn’t provide a reason. But the scandal over the “fantasy film” tax credits erupted soon after Greek authorities on the island of Skiathos arrested the California-born Francis Kaufman last month on a European arrest warrant issued by Italy.

Italian prosecutors have accused Kaufman in the deaths of an infant girl and her mother, whose bodies were found naked in Rome’s Villa Pamphili park on June 7. Kaufman, who was using the alias Rexal Ford, is currently awaiting extradition to Italy. State-run RAI television has said that he told Italian prosecutors via video call that he was innocent, but declined to answer further questions without a lawyer. (AP)

## Film



This image released by A24 shows Eva Victor in a scene from ‘Sorry, Baby.’ (AP)

‘Sinners,’ ‘Sorry Baby’ lead the best of 2025 so far

## 2025’s first half delivers quiet masterpieces

LOS ANGELES, July 5, (AP): Often the best movies of the second half of the year come almost preordained as the Oscars Industrial Complex revs into high gear. The first half, though, can offer more of a thrill of discovery.

The first six months of 2025 have offered plenty of that, including indie gems, comedy breakouts and sensational filmmaking debuts. Here are our 10 favorites from the year’s first half.

## ‘The Ballad of Wallis Island’

“The Ballad of Wallis Island” is the kind of charming gem that’s easy to recommend to any kind of movie lover. It is goofy and friendly, has an armful of lovely folk songs, an all-timer of a rambling character, in Tim Key’s eccentric and completely lovable Charles, Tom Basden’s grumpy, too-cool straight man, and the always delightful Carey Mulligan. “Wallis Island” is a film about letting go and moving on told with humor, wit and a big heart. Also hailing from the British Isles is the equally delightful “Wallace & Gromit: Vengeance Most Fowl.”

## ‘One of Them Days’

The big-screen comedy has been an almost extinct creature in recent years, but Lawrence Lamont’s “One of Them Days” gives me hope. Not only was this buddy comedy a surprise box-office hit, it is probably the exhibit A in the case of Keke Palmer Should Be in Everything. She and SZA, in her film debut, play Los Angeles housemates in a madcap race to make rent.

## ‘Sorry, Baby’

There’s a sequence in Eva Victor’s delicate, considered and disarmingly funny directorial debut, “Sorry, Baby” that kind of took my breath away. You know something bad is going to happen to Agnes, it’s literally the logline of the film. You sense that her charismatic thesis adviser is a bit too fixated on her. The incident itself isn’t seen, Victor places their camera outside of his home. Agnes goes inside, the day turns to evening and the evening turns to night, and Agnes comes out, changed. But we stay with her as she finds her way to her car, to her home and, most importantly to her friend, Lydie (Naomi Ackie). This is a film about what happens after the bad thing. And it’s a stunner.

## ‘Black Bag’

Arguably the best director-screenwriter tandem this decade has been Steven Soderbergh and David Koepp. They were behind the pandemic thriller “Kimi” and another standout of 2025, the ghost-POV “Presence.” But their spy thriller-marital drama “Black Bag,” starring Michael Fassbender and Cate Blanchett as married British intelligence agents, may be their best collaboration yet. It’s certainly the one with the most delicious dialogue. How has it taken the movies this long to make a dinner scene with spies dosed with truth serum?

## ‘Materialists’

Celine Song’s “Materialists” might not be the film people wanted it to be, but it’s the film they need in this land of high-end dating apps, designer dupes and everyone pretending to live like minor socialites on Instagram. A thoughtful meditation on money, worth, love and companionship, this is a film that upends everything we’ve come to think we want from the so-called romantic comedy (the idea of prince charming, the inexplicable wealth that’s supposed to coexist with middle class mores). Life-style porn will always have a place in the rom-com machine, but this is a populist film, both modern and timeless, that reminds us that love should be easy. It should feel like coming home. “Materialists” is simply the most purely romantic film of the year.

## ‘Sinners’

Not only does the wait go on for Ryan Coogler to make a bad movie, he seems to be still realizing his considerable talents. There are six months to go, still, in 2025, but I doubt we’ll have a big scale movie that so thrillingly doubles (see what I did there) as a personal expression for its filmmaker as “Sinners.” This exhilarating vampire saga is ambitiously packed with deep questions about community, Black entertainment, Christianity and, of course, Irish dancing.

## ‘Pavements’

In a world of woefully straightforward documentaries and bi-opsics about musicians, Alex Ross Perry decided to creatively, and a little chaotically, upend the form with his impossible-to-

categorize film about the 90s indie band Pavement. Blending fact, fiction, archive, performance, this winkingly rebellious piece is wholly original and captivating, and, not unlike Todd Haynes’s “I’m Not There,” the kind of movie to turn someone who’s maybe enjoyed a few Pavement and Stephen Malkmus songs into a fan.

## ‘April’

A rare and exquisite precision guides Dea Kulumbegashvili’s rigorous and despairing second feature. Beneath stormy spring skies in the European country of Georgia, a leading local obstetrician (Ia Sukhitashvili) pitilessly works to help women who are otherwise disregarded, vilified or worse. This is a movie coursing with dread, but its expression of a deep-down pain is piercing and unforgettable.

## ‘On Becoming a Guinea Fowl’

A visually, and thematically arresting marvel, Rungano Nyoni’s darkly comedic, stylish and hauntingly bizarre film about unspoken generational trauma takes audiences to a place, I’m guessing, many have never been: A Zambian family funeral. And yet its truths ring universal, as the elder generation turns their heads from the awful truth that the dead man, Fred, was a predator and pedophile, while the younger wonders if things must stay as they are.

## ‘Friendship’

On TV, Tim Robinson and Nathan Fielder have been doing genius-level comedy. Fielder hasn’t yet jumped into his own films, but, then again, it’s hard to get an epic of cringe comedy and aviation safety like season two of “The Rehearsal” into a feature-length movie. But in “Friendship,” writer and director Andrew DeYoung brings Robinson, star of “I Think You Should Leave,” into well-tailored, very funny and dementedly perceptive movie scenario. He plays a man who awkwardly befriends a cool neighbor (Paul Rudd). While their differences make for most of the comedy in the movie, “Friendship” - which culminates in a telling wink - is really about their similarities.

## Couple to focus on co-parenting their daughter

## Katy Perry, Orlando Bloom split 6 yrs after getting engaged

NEW YORK, July 5, (AP): Popstar Katy Perry and actor Orlando Bloom have split, multiple media outlets reported Thursday.

Outlets including People and USA Today cited a statement that said the pair “have been shifting their relationship over the past many months to focus on co-parenting” and would continue to be seen in public with their daughter. The statement, attributed to representatives for both stars, said their priority would be raising their daughter with “love, stability, and mutual respect.”

The statement came a week after reports of the couple’s breakup swirled ahead of the wedding of billionaire Jeff Bezos and Lauren Sánchez Bezos, which Bloom attended alone. Perry has been on a world tour.

Representatives for Perry and Bloom did not immediately respond to The Associated Press’ request for comment.

Perry, 40, and Bloom, 48, have been romantically linked since 2016. The pair split in 2017 but rekindled shortly thereafter, getting engaged on Valentine’s Day in 2019, as Perry revealed during an interview on “Jimmy Kimmel Live.”

In 2020, the pair welcomed a daughter named Daisy Dove Bloom. Perry and Bloom got UNICEF to announce the news on its Instagram account. Both are goodwill ambassadors for the United Nations agency that helps children.

Bloom and his former wife, Australian model Miranda Kerr, have a son, Flynn, who was born in 2011. Daisy is Perry’s only child.

Perry, born Kathryn Elizabeth Hudson, was previously married to comedian Russell Brand.

Born and raised in California, the 13-time Grammy Award nominee helped usher in the sound of ’00s pop, quickly becoming one of the bestselling artists of all time for her campy, big, belting anthems. She has released seven studio albums, most notably 2010’s sugar-sweet “Teenage Dream.” The album produced five No. 1s that tied a record set by Michael Jackson’s 1987 album “Bad.”

Bloom, who is from Canterbury, England, is best known for his roles as the elf Legolas in “The Lord of the Rings” and “The Hobbit” films as well as Will Turner in the “Pirates of the Caribbean” series.



Katy Perry and Orlando Bloom appear at the Vanity Fair Oscar Party in Beverly Hills, Calif., on March 2, 2025. (AP)





Vehicles drive over rumble strips that play Ludwig van Beethoven's Ninth Symphony on a highway in Fujairah, United Arab Emirates, Thursday, July 3. (AP)

Art meets asphalt on musical UAE highway

Classical drive: Rumble strips in UAE play Beethoven

FUJAIRAH, United Arab Emirates, July 5, (AP): The humble road rumble strip, used around the world to alert drifting drivers to potential hazards or lane departures, can play Beethoven on a mountain highway in the far reaches of the United Arab Emirates.

For nearly a kilometer (a half mile) along the E84 highway - also known as the Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Road - motorists in the right-hand lane coming into the city of Fujairah can play Ludwig van Beethoven's Ninth Symphony where the rubber meets the road.

"The 'Street of Music,' of course, is an art project that exists in some countries ... but we wanted this project to be in our country," said Ali Obaid Al Hefaiti, the director of Fujairah Fine Arts Academy, which recently wrapped up the project in collaboration with local authorities.

"I think that the project is focused on spreading the

art culture. The combination of music in our lives and our normal lives," he added.

For drivers coming into Fujairah, the rumble strip initially looks like a larger, rectangular version of the dash lines separating the three-lane highway. That's until you hit the first block, and the grooves of the road combine with the speed of the vehicle to make music.

Driving over each block sounds out the best-known parts of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony - the final movements known commonly as the tune "Ode to Joy," or in its more modern form, the official anthem of the European Union. Al Hefaiti recommended motorists hit the blocks at around 100 kph (60 mph) to get the tune just right.

The road has become a social media sensation, bringing visitors to one of the lesser-known emirates in the

UAE along its eastern coast with the Gulf of Oman.

Drivers have been spotted slowing down to experience the musical road as they come into the city. Passers-by can get the same effect from standing on the side of the road, though motorists often come in quickly.

The concept isn't new - there have been so-called "singing shoulders" deployed in other countries including across the Persian Gulf in Iran. But Al Hefaiti believes this is the first one in the Arab world. Beyond it going viral, Al Hefaiti thinks it will bring classical music into everyday life and "raise awareness about the importance of art culture."

As for why an Emirati fine arts school picked a European composer born in the 18th century to represent Fujairah, Al Hefaiti said that he always encourages his students to explore different cultures.

Music

Fans thrilled as long-awaited reunion tour starts

Oasis returns with 'Supersonic' energy

CARDIFF, Wales, July 5, (AP): Oasis ended a 16-year hiatus on Friday with a punchy, powerful trip through one of Britpop's greatest songbooks, kicking off a reunion tour in Cardiff, Wales to a crowd ecstatic for the band's 1990s hits.

And was there brotherly love between the famously feuding Gallagher siblings? Definitely maybe.

Fans traveled to the Welsh capital from around the world for a show that many thought would never happen. Guitarist-songwriter Noel Gallagher and his singer brother Liam, the heart of Oasis, had not performed together since their acrimonious split in 2009.

One fan banner summed it up: "The great wait is over."

After a montage of headlines about the sparring siblings was capped with the words "the guns have fallen silent," Oasis appeared on stage to a deafening roar, opening with the apt "Hello" and its refrain of "it's good to be back."

The brothers had a brief hand-in-hand moment but largely kept their distance onstage. Noel, 58, focused on his guitar while a parka-clad Liam, 52, snarled into the microphone with a swagger that has not dimmed in the 31 years since the band released its first album, "Definitely Maybe."

A crowd of more than 60,000 in the Principality Stadium was treated to a well-paced two-hour set that drew heavily on the first album and its 1995 followup, "(What's the Story) Morning Glory," alongside a smattering of later tracks and fan-favorite B-sides.

Songs like "Supersonic," "Roll With It" and "Rock 'n' Roll Star" sounded as thunderous as ever and sparked mass sing-alongs.

"Put your arms over each other like you love each other," a tambourine-clutching Liam exhorted the crowd before launching into "Cigarettes and Alcohol."



Liam Gallagher (above) and Noel Gallagher (below) from the band Oasis perform during their reunion concert on Friday, July 4, in Cardiff. (AP)



a show.

From the roar of response, it was.

"Absolutely incredible - best gig I've ever been to in my life," said Nathan Price-Gearey as fans poured out of the

stadium.

"It was massive," said Millie Anderson, another satisfied concertgoer.

"When they played 'Stand by Me,' I started sobbing my eyes out."

Tracks

There was poignancy on "Live Forever" when an image of Liverpool Football Club player Diogo Jota, who was killed in a car crash on Thursday, was projected above the band.

Noel took his turn on lead vocals for several songs, including the touching "Half the World Away," and the show ended with encores featuring some of Oasis' most enduring tracks: "Don't Look Back in Anger," "Wonderwall" and "Champagne Supernova." The brothers shared a half-hug as they ended the final song.

Multicolored, sometimes faintly psychedelic, projections formed the main technological accoutrement to a show where the focus was squarely on the songs. There was little banter, though Liam paused between songs to check the audience was having a good time.

"Was it worth the 40,000 pounds you paid for the ticket?" he quipped at one point, referring to the scramble for seats that saw some fans pay hundreds to see

World's largest Legoland resort opens in Shanghai

SHANGHAI, July 5, (Agencies): Visitors were welcomed by a giant Lego man over 26 meters (85 feet) tall named Dada as they arrived at the new Legoland resort in Shanghai.

The Legoland resort, which opened Saturday, is the first in China. It is the largest Legoland in the world and was built with 85 million Lego bricks.

The resort was developed in conjunction with the Shanghai government by Merlin Entertainments and the LEGO Group.

Among the main attractions in the resort is Miniland, which replicates well-known sights from across the world using Lego bricks. It features sights from across China like Beijing's Temple of Heaven and Shanghai's the Bund waterfront. There's also a boat tour through a historical Chinese water town built with Lego bricks.

Spanning 318,000 square meters, Legoland Shang-

hai Resort is the 11th Legoland Resort globally and the largest Legoland park at the time of its opening. It is a collaborative project between Shanghai Guoyi Investment Management Co., Ltd., KIRKBI, Merlin Entertainments, and the CMC Inc.

Designed specifically for children aged 2 to 12 and their families, the resort features eight themed areas, including "Legoland Creative World" and "LEGO Monkey King," offering over 75 interactive rides, shows and attractions.

Adekunle Adedeji from Nigeria had been eagerly awaiting its opening. He came with his wife and daughter for their very first experience at a LEGO resort. "The whole setting is amazing," he told Xinhua.

Having lived in Shanghai for over 20 years, Adedeji loves the city, describing it as "full of opportunities, super comfortable," which is why he has made it his

long-term home.

Dai Ruoyan, 25, traveled with two friends from the city of Hangzhou, a 45-minute trip by bullet train. They arrived a day early and are particularly excited to experience the dragon roller coaster and other recreation facilities.

The idea of building a LEGO-themed park in China was conceived in 2015. The project's investors officially signed a preliminary investment cooperation agreement in 2019. Over 300 teams and more than 10,000 workers from more than 10 countries and regions participated in the construction process.

"From the first sketches to the final LEGO brick, this resort is the result of years of vision, collaboration, and passion, and is a testament to the dedication of our teams and the unwavering support of all our partners," said Fiona Eastwood, chief executive officer of Merlin Entertainments.



Shanghai Mayor Gong Zheng, (center), Fiona Eastwood, CEO of Merlin Entertainment, (center right), and Niels B. Christiansen, President and CEO of Lego Group, (center left), open Legoland Shanghai, in Shanghai, July 5. (AP)



LEGO bricks models are seen at the Legoland Shanghai Resort in Shanghai, east China, July 5. (Xinhua)

Obituary



Actor Michael Madsen appears at the premiere of 'The Hateful Eight' in Los Angeles on Dec. 7, 2015. (AP)

Tarantino favorite

Michael Madsen, star of 'Kill Bill,' dies at 67

LOS ANGELES, July 5, (AP): Michael Madsen, the actor best known for his coolly menacing, steely-eyed, often sadistic characters in the films of Quentin Tarantino including "Reservoir Dogs" and "Kill Bill: Vol. 2," has died.

Madsen was found unresponsive in his home in Malibu, California, on Thursday morning and pronounced dead, Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department Watch Commander Christopher Jauregui said. He is believed to have died of natural causes and authorities do not suspect any foul play was involved. Madsen's manager Ron Smith said cardiac arrest was the apparent cause. He was 67.

Madsen's career spanned more than 300 credits stretching back to the early 1980s, many in low-budget and independent films. He often played low-level thugs, gangsters and shady cops in small roles. Tarantino would use that identity, but make him a main character.

His torture of a captured police officer in Tarantino's 1992 directorial debut "Reservoir Dogs," in which Madsen's black-suited bank robber Vic "Mr. Blonde" Vega severs the man's ear while dancing to Stealers Wheel's "Stuck in the Middle with You" was an early career-defining moment for both director and actor.

Madsen told the Associated Press in 2012 that he hated having to do the scene, especially after the actor playing the officer, Kirk Baltz, ad-libbed a line where he begged for his life because he had children.

"I just said, 'Oh my God,' I couldn't do it, I didn't want to do it," Madsen said. "Acting is such a humiliating profession."

He would become a Tarantino regular. He had a small role as the cowboy-hatted desert dweller Budd, a member of the Deadly Viper Assassination Squad, in 2003's "Kill Bill: Vol. 1," then a starring role the following year in the sequel, in which he battles with Uma Thurman's protagonist The Bride and buries her alive.

Career

Madsen also appeared in Tarantino's "The Hateful Eight" and "Once Upon a Time... In Hollywood." He was an alternate choice to play the hit man role that revived John Travolta's career in 1994's "Pulp Fiction." The character, Vincent Vega, is the brother of Madsen's "Reservoir Dogs" robber in Tarantino's cinematic universe.

His sister, Oscar-nominated "Sideways" actor Virginia Madsen, was among those paying him tribute on Thursday.

"He was thunder and velvet. Mischief wrapped in tenderness. A poet disguised as an outlaw. A father, a son, a brother-etched in contradiction, tempered by love that left its mark," she said in a statement. "I'll miss our inside jokes, the sudden laughter, the sound of him. I'll miss the boy he was before the legend. I miss my big brother."

His "Hateful Eight" co-star and fellow Tarantino favorite Walton Goggins celebrated him on Instagram.

"Michael Madsen... this man... this artist... this poet... this ras-cal..." Goggins wrote. "Aura like no one else. Ain't enough words so I'll just say this... I love you buddy. A H8TER forever."

James Woods, Madsen's co-star in two films, wrote on X, "I was always touched by his sweet nature and generosity, the absolute opposite of the 'tough guys' he portrayed so brilliantly."

Madsen was born in Chicago to a family of three children.

He performed on stage with the city's Steppenwolf Theatre Company alongside actors including John Malkovich.

During a handprint ceremony at the TCL Chinese Theatre in November 2020, Madsen reflected on his first visit to Hollywood in the early 1980s.

"I got out and I walked around and I looked and I wondered if there were someday some way that that was going to be a part of me. And I didn't know because I didn't know what I was going to do at that point with myself," he said. "I could have been a bricklayer. I could have been an architect. I could have been a garbage man. I could have been nothing. But I got lucky. I got lucky as an actor."

His first film role of any significance was in the 1983 hacker thriller "WarGames" with Matthew Broderick. The following year he played pro baseball player Bump Bailey alongside Robert Redford in "The Natural."

Dramas

He spent much of the rest of the 1980s doing one-off guest roles on television dramas including "Miami Vice" and "Quantum Leap."

1991 would bring a career boost with roles in "The Doors," where he played a buddy of Val Kilmer's Jim Morrison, and "Thelma and Louise" where he played the boyfriend of Susan Sarandon's Louise.

Then would come "Reservoir Dogs."

In 1995, he played a black ops mercenary in the sci-fi thriller "Species" and in 1997 he was third billed after Al Pacino and Johnny Depp as a member of a crew of gangsters in "Donnie Brasco."

He occasionally played against type. In the 1993 family orca adventure "Free Willy" he was the foster father to the orphan protagonist.

Madsen would return to smaller roles but worked constantly in the final two decades of his career.

Madsen had six children. He had struggled in recent years after the 2022 death of one of his sons, Hudson.

"Losing a child is the hardest and most painful experience that can happen in this world," Madsen said in an Instagram post last year.

He said the loss put a strain on his marriage to third wife, DeAnna Madsen. He was arrested on suspicion of domestic battery last year, but was not charged. He filed for divorce, but asked that the filing be dismissed just weeks later.

He had previously been arrested twice on suspicion of DUI, most recently in 2019, when he pleaded no contest to a misdemeanor.

"In the last two years Michael Madsen has been doing some incredible work with independent film including upcoming feature films 'Resurrection Road,' 'Concessions and 'Cookbook for Southern Housewives,' and was really looking forward to this next chapter in his life," his managers Smith and Susan Ferris and publicist Liz Rodriguez said in a statement.

"Michael was also preparing to release a new book called 'Tears For My Father: Outlaw Thoughts and Poems' currently being edited."



UN warns of water system collapse in Khan Younis

Hospital in Gaza faces medical supply shortages, rising trauma cases: WHO

GENEVA, July 5, (Xinhua): A large number of wounded people are admitted daily to Nasser Hospital in the Gaza Strip, most of whom come from areas near aid distribution points run by the non-UN Gaza Humanitarian Foundation (GHF), a World Health Organization (WHO) official said on Friday.

Speaking via video link at a press briefing in Geneva, Rik Peepkorn, the WHO representative in the occupied Palestinian territory, said Nasser Hospital was originally a general hospital. However, due to the growing number of casualties and an acute shortage of medical supplies, it has been forced to make "a difficult choice."

The hospital now prioritizes trauma patients and has suspended outpatient services for those with chronic illnesses. It has effectively become "one massive trauma ward," he said.

Peepkorn stressed that information from the wounded themselves, their families and friends, as well as medical staff, indicates that the majority of casualties are indeed from areas near the aid distribution points operated by the GHF.

The GHF is operated by US security contractors and is approved by the Israeli government. For the past month, GHF has operated only four militarized distribution sites in all of Gaza -- as opposed to the traditional UN-led 400 community-located aid hubs.

GHF has faced mounting criticism for poor management and operational chaos. Speaking at the briefing, Ravina Shamdasani, spokesperson for the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), said that as of June 27, at least 613 people had been killed in attacks near aid distribution points in Gaza. Of those, 509 died in the vicinity of distribution sites operated by the GHF.

Meanwhile, the latest Israeli displacement order isolates a key Gaza reservoir, prompting UN humanitarian groups on Wednesday to warn that any damage could collapse the Khan Younis water system.

The UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) said the new displacement order for two neighborhoods in Khan Younis, following reported Palestinian rocket fire, covers almost 80,000 people.



Rida Abu Hadayed, 32, uses water to cool off her 2-year-old daughter Azhar inside their tent at a camp for displaced people in Khan Younis, southern Gaza Strip, Tuesday, July 1. (AP)

"Our colleagues working on water, sanitation and hygiene also tell us that Al Satar, a key water reservoir, has become inaccessible as a result of the order," OCHA said. "The facility serves as the main water distribution hub for Khan Younis and a critical supply point for water coming through the Israeli pipeline in the area. Any damage to the reservoir could lead to a collapse of the city's water distribution system, with grave humanitarian consequences."

OCHA said the displacement orders continue to strain vital services and push people into increasingly smaller swaths of Gaza's territory. Since the breakdown of the ceasefire in March, as of Tuesday, 714,000 people had been forcibly displaced once more across the strip, with nearly 29,000 displaced in just the 24 hours between Sunday and Monday.

The office said that approximately 85 percent of Gaza's territory is either under displacement orders or located within militarized zones, severely hampering people's access to essential humanitarian support and the ability of aid workers to reach those in need.

"Many existing shelters are severely overcrowded, with poor hygiene conditions, posing severe risks for public health," OCHA said. "Our partners working on health, water, sanitation and hygiene report that across Gaza, rates of acute watery diarrhea have reached 39 percent among patients receiving health consultations."

The humanitarian aid workers said the increase is being driven by insufficient clean drinking and domestic water reaching shelters, worsening the dire hygiene and sanitation conditions. The governorates of Gaza and Khan Younis have the worst levels of acute watery diarrhea due to severe overcrowding in sites and shelters.

The office said that no shelter assistance has entered Gaza in four months, despite the hundreds of thousands of newly displaced people.

"Our shelter partners say that 97 percent of the sites surveyed reported displaced people sleeping in the open," OCHA said. "An unrestricted flow of supplies through multiple crossing points over a sustained period of time is critical to address people's needs and prevent the already desperate situation from worsening."

The office said the depletion of fuel stocks continues to wreak havoc on aid operations, constraining the United Nations and humanitarian partners' ability to respond.

An attempt to deliver some of the remaining fuel stocks to the north was denied on Wednesday by Israeli authorities. The denial follows a successful delivery on Tuesday of diesel from the World Health Organization's remaining stock to Al Shifa Hospital in Gaza City to prevent further shutdown of critical services, said OCHA.

MoH achieves TMJ surgery milestone

Kuwait performs first ever dual jaw joint surgery using 3D virtual tech

KUWAIT CITY, July 5: The Ministry of Health has confirmed that a medical team at the Farwaniya Specialized Dental Center succeeded in performing a complicated surgical procedure -- the first of its kind in Kuwait -- to treat severe atrophy of the temporomandibular joint on both sides, reports Al-Jarida daily.

In a press statement, the ministry disclosed that maxillofacial surgeon Dr. Ahmad Al-Kandari performed the surgery, along with a medical team from the Maxillofacial Surgery Unit at the center. This is considered a qualitative leap in the field of maxillofacial surgery using the most advanced medical technology.

The ministry stated that 3D virtual surgery technology was used, allowing the team to plan the surgical intervention with extreme precision and design a fully custom-made artificial joint to fit the patient's facial anatomical structure and functional needs.

It revealed that the jaw atrophy was accompanied by jaw asymmetry in a female patient, in her 30s; making it extremely difficult for her to open her mouth, breathe, chew and speak.

It affirmed that the successful surgery is the result of an advanced level of specialized healthcare in the State of Kuwait, as well as the competence of national medical professionals and their ability to perform complex surgeries according to the highest international standards.

Experts breed 'super corals' to survive warming

Scientists transplant crossbred corals to help save reefs from climate change

KEY BISCAYNE, Fla., July 5, (AP): A team of scientists from the University of Miami, the Florida Aquarium and Tela Marine in Honduras is working together to transplant crossbred coral fragments onto a reef off Miami's coastline that was devastated by coral bleaching two years ago.

They're looking for ways to help reefs survive increased ocean temperatures caused by global warming and climate change.

"It's the end of a very long process," Andrew Baker, professor of marine biology and ecology at the University of Miami's Rosenstiel School and director of the Coral Reef Futures Lab, said Tuesday as divers planted the corals off Miami.

The plan of introducing corals from the Caribbean evolved over the past few years.

"We had this idea that we really needed to try to help Florida's coral reef by introducing more diversity from around the Caribbean, recognizing that some of the biggest threats to corals, like climate change, are really global phenomena and if you try to have Florida's reefs save themselves on their own, we could give them some outside help," Baker said.

Coral breeding has also been done in Hawaii, where in 2021, scientists were working to speed up the coral's evolutionary clock to breed "super corals" that can better withstand the impacts of global warming.

Baker's group teamed with the Florida Aquarium and Tela Marine, bringing in fragments of corals from a warm reef off of Tela, Honduras, which spawned in tanks at the aquarium.

"We were able to cross the spawn from those corals, the sperm and the eggs, to produce babies. One parent from Florida, one parent from Honduras," Baker said.

They chose the reef off of Tela because the water is about 2 degrees Celsius (3.6 degrees Fahrenheit) warmer than the water off the coast of Florida.

"And yet the corals in those environments, and especially the Elkhorn



This image provided by the University of Miami Rosenstiel School shows a diver planting a crossbred coral species from Honduras on Tuesday, July 1, off the coast of Miami to help Florida's coral reefs become more resilient to climate change. (AP)

corals, are really thriving," Baker said.

He noted that there are extensive beds that are hundreds of meters long, full of flourishing Elkhorn.

"And yet they survive there despite really warm conditions and also quite nutrient-polluted waters," Baker said.

The conditions are similar to those Florida will face over the next century, Baker said.

It's also the first time international crossbreeding of corals has been permitted for planting onto wild reefs.

"So we're really excited to see how these do," he said.

The hope is the corals will be more "thermally tolerant," which Baker and the team will be testing throughout the summer.

Elkhorn corals are some of Florida's most iconic species and are valuable because they form the crest of the reef, Baker said.

"And the reef is what protects shorelines from storms and flooding. So if you have healthy Elkhorn coral populations, you have a great reef that is acting almost like a speed bump over which waves and storms pass and dissipate their energy before they hit the coast," he said.

Elkhorn corals are in serious decline, thanks in part to the coral bleaching in 2023 and warming sea temperatures, Baker said.

While coral gets their bright colors from the colorful algae that live inside them, prolonged warmth causes the algae to release toxic compounds. The coral ejects them, and a stark white skeleton - referred to as coral bleaching - is left behind, and the weakened coral is at risk of dying.

"We've lost maybe more than 95% of the Elkhorn corals that were on Florida's reefs at that point," Baker said.

Some of the corals spawned in the Florida Aquarium's laboratory arrived there in 2020, said Keri O'Neil, director and senior scientist with the aquarium's Coral Conservation Program.

She said more fragments from Honduras and Florida will continue to live at the center. "We hope that every year in the future we can make more and more crosses and continue to figure out which parents produce the best offspring," O'Neil said.

Dr. Giordano hero of 1981 Reagan shooting

Surgeon who helped save Reagan's life after assassination attempt has died

WASHINGTON, July 5, (AP): Dr. Joseph Giordano, a surgeon who played a central role in saving President Ronald Reagan's life after an assassination attempt in 1981, has died. He was 84.

He died on June 24 at a hospital in Washington, D.C. from an infection related to a lengthy illness, his family said.

Giordano was in charge of The George Washington University Hospital's trauma teams that treated Reagan after the president had been shot and badly wounded on March 30, 1981. Over the course of several dramatic hours, doctors stabilized Reagan, retrieved a bullet an inch from his heart and stanching massive internal bleeding.

"Dr. Giordano and the doctors at GW, without them, Ronald Reagan would have died," said Jerry Parr, the president's lead Secret Service agent at the time, in a 2010 interview for the book "Rawhide Down."

Giordano, the grandson of Italian immigrants, was born and raised



Dr. Joseph Giordano poses for a photo in 2006, in Washington. (AP)

in New Jersey. He graduated from Georgetown University in 1961 and six years later obtained a medical degree from Jefferson Medical College in Philadelphia.

After a stint in the U.S. Army, he joined GW as a vascular surgeon. A few weeks before he started in 1976, GW's chief of surgery told Giordano that he would have another job - fixing and managing the emergency room.

"The handling of trauma patients down there is a real mess," his boss said.

Giordano quickly discovered that assessment was correct. Inexperienced doctors were leading inefficient medical teams. Care was haphazard. Giordano watched as at least one patient died because treatment was rendered too slowly.

Seeking out experts, he spent a month working at what would become the R Adams Cowley Shock Trauma Center at the University of Maryland. The teams at Shock Trauma operated with speed and precision. They were methodical. He brought the approach to GW. Soon, the hospital's trauma center was regarded as among the best in the country. "We had everything going like clockwork," said Dr. David Gens, who helped treat Reagan and went on to a long career in trauma surgery. "Joe had us properly trained. We had the right protocols. Everyone had a job. Organization and time are essential. So that when something happened, when the president came in, we were well organized. Thanks in part to Joe's foresight, we saved the president's life."

US expands RSV shot to some in their 50s

NEW YORK, July 5, (AP): The Trump administration appears to be expanding RSV vaccinations to some adults starting at age 50, down from 60, following the advice of a recently fired panel of government vaccine advisers.

The decision appears on a Centers for Disease Control and Prevention webpage but as of Wednesday wasn't on the agency's official adult immunization schedule.

RSV, or respiratory syncytial virus, typically is a coldlike nuisance, but it can be severe, even life-threatening, for infants and older adults. The CDC recommends vaccination for certain pregnant women and a one-time shot for everyone

75 or older. But people as young as 60 with health problems that increase their risk can also get it.

In April, the CDC's influential Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices recommended expanding RSV vaccination to high-risk adults as young as 50, too. But the CDC lacks a director to decide whether to adopt that recommendation and Health Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr. didn't immediately act.

Last month, Kennedy fired all 17 members of that panel and handpicked seven replacements that include several vaccine skeptics.

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Pulskamp helps Sporting KC beat Rapids

# Paintsil scores 2 Galaxy dominates Whitecaps to snap winless streak

CARSON, Calif., July 5, (AP): Joseph Paintsil converted from the penalty spot in the 77th minute for his first career multi-goal game. The 27-year-old forward has three goals and one assist this season after he finished with 10 goals and 10 assists last season, his first in MLS.

LA (2-13-6), the defending MLS Cup champion, won for the first time since it beat Real Salt Lake 2-0 on May 31 to snap a 16-game winless streak to open the season. The Galaxy went into the game with 13 points, fewest in all of MLS.

The Whitecaps (11-4-5) have lost three of their last four. Vancouver is second in the Western Conference with 38 points, behind San Diego (39).

Edwin Cerrillo flicked a shot from 30 yards outs that was deflected by goalkeeper Yohei Takaoka and Nascimento put away the rebound with a first-touch finish to open the scoring in the second minute.

Paintsil made it 2-0 in the 60th. Gabriel Pec played an long arcing ball to the top of the penalty box, where Marco Reus tapped a first-touch pass to a wide-open Paintsil, who calmly flicked a shot inside the back post from the left side of the area.

Paintsil converted from the penalty spot in the 77th minute for his first career multi-goal game. The 27-year-old forward has three goals and one assist this season after he finished with 10 goals and 10 assists last season, his first in MLS.

Erik Thommy had a goal and an assist, Dejan Joveljic also scored a goal and John Pulskamp had eight saves to help Sporting Kansas City beat the Colorado Rapids 2-1.

Kansas City (6-10-5) beat the Rapids on the road for the first time since a 3-2 victory on March 29, 2014. Sporting is 6-20-13 all time in road games against Colorado.

The Rapids (7-9-5) had 62% possession and outshot Kansas City 25-5.

Thommy stole a misplayed pass played by goalkeeper Nico Hansen and rolled a pass to Joveljic at the left corner of the 6-yard box for a first-touch finish to open the scoring in the fourth minute.

Thommy won a ball from Keegan Rosenberry at the edge of the attacking third, raced toward goal before he cut inside and slipped a low shot from just outside the penalty box inside the

right post to make it 2-0 in the 53rd. The 30-year-old Thommy, who scored a goal in a 1-1 tie with Real Salt Lake on Saturday, has a goal in back-to-back games for the first time this season and the second time in his career.

Carlos Harvey and Anthony Markanich each scored a goal, Dayne St. Clair had five saves and Minnesota United snapped a four-game winless streak against FC Dallas with 2-1 win.

Minnesota (10-4-7) took a 1-0 lead in the 35th minute when Julian Gressel played a free kick from the left side to the back post and Harvey - left unchecked - was there for the finish.

Markanich casually tapped a header into a wide-open net to give Minnesota a 2-0 lead in the 58th. Michael Boxall's inbounds throw from the right side to the near post was deflected to back post where Markanich scored from point-blank range.

Dallas (5-9-6) has lost three straight. Markanich has scored in back-to-back games and has a career-high four goals this season. The 25-year-old defender in his fourth MLS season scored one goal in his first three seasons combined.



Los Angeles Galaxy forward Matheus Nascimento, left, controls the ball during the second half of an MLS soccer match against the Vancouver Whitecaps in Carson, Calif. (AP)

# NZ edges spirited France in error-filled test opener



Jordie Barrett of New Zealand and Theo Attissogbe, right, of France compete for the ball during their rugby test against France in Dunedin, New Zealand. (AP)

Wales losing streak up to 18 tests after losing to Japan

DUNEDIN, New Zealand, July 5, (AP): A French team lacking most of the leading players from its recent Six Nations victory fully stretched New Zealand before succumbing 31-27 in the first test on Saturday to trail 1-0 in the three-test series.

France was a massive underdog with eight new caps in its lineup against the proven combinations of the three-time world champions.

But France scored the first 10 points of the match, including the opening try through Mickael Gillard, and stuck with the All Blacks throughout, counter-punching every time New Zealand scored.

Critics had angrily condemned France's decision to leave most of its top players at home because the tour of New Zealand conflicted with the end of the French club season.

A mostly young and inexperienced French team fully answered those criticisms on Saturday.

"There was a lot of outside noise saying we'd come out, we'd take 50, we didn't have the strength to play against a team like that," France's Canada-born lock Tyler



New Zealand's Will Jordan scores a try during their rugby test against France in Dunedin, New Zealand. (AP)

Duguid said. "We showed a lot of spirit tonight. We knew we'd come out with a lot of intensity and come out all together and what we lack in experience we can bring out with some spirit."

France won most of the mini battles within the match: in the air, at the breakdown and in the collisions, while the All Blacks produced another spiritless performance under head coach Scott Robertson.

The All Blacks looked best when they were able to lift the tempo, as they did to score tries through full-back Will Jordan and backrower Tu-

pua Vaa'i to take their first lead in the match at 14-10.

But they were unable to keep that up through the match because of frequent errors and the resilience of the French defense.

Wales lost again.

The longest losing streak by a major test rugby team in the professional era was extended to 18 matches when Wales lost to Japan 24-19.

Wales held its 19-7 halftime lead until the start of the last quarter when Japan hatched tries by uncapped backs Ichigo Hakasusu and

Halatua Vailea - both converted from wide out by Seungsin Lee - and led a scrappy match for the first time from the 70th minute.

Japan deliberately picked a 2 p.m. kickoff in the day's worst heat and humidity and Wales waned in the second half - it couldn't score a point - as Japan's undying intent to play at a high tempo clicked at just the right time.

Japan beat Wales for only the second time ever; the last was in 2013.

Wales' nightmare run since the 2023 Rugby World Cup means it will fall behind Japan in the test rankings for the first time since the rankings were introduced two decades ago. They meet again next weekend in Kobe.

Scotland conceded a try after only 40 seconds but rallied to score four tries including a double to scrum-half George Horne to hold out the New Zealand Maori 29-26 in the opening match of its South Pacific tour.

The tourists led 29-12 early in the second half but gave up two tries and had to survive 29 phases of attack, two penalties and a yellow card before sealing their win in the 87th minute.

It was Scotland's first win over the New Zealand Maori in their first match in New Zealand in 25 years.

The Maori had Scotland on the back foot when they scored off their first possession which came from a poor Scotland clearance.

One win in eight games

## Márquez quits as India coach amid 2027 Asian Cup crisis

NEW DELHI, July 5, (AP): Manolo Márquez has left his position by mutual consent as head coach of India's soccer team after just one win in eight games and less than a year in the job.

The Spanish coach's only victory was in a 3-0 friendly over the Maldives in March.

More important is qualification for the 2027 Asian Cup but a draw with Singapore and a 1-0 loss in Hong Kong in June has put India's chances of a third successive appearance at the tournament in doubt.

"After careful evaluation, both coach Márquez and the federation recognized that the objectives we had set out to achieve a year ago were not progressing as intended," Kalyan Chaubey, president of the All India Football Federation (AIFF), told The Associated Press on Saturday.

"Out of mutual respect and understanding, we agreed it was best to part ways. This decision was taken in the larger interest of Indian football."

As well as being in charge of the national team, Márquez is also head coach of FC Goa, a leading club in the Indian Super League (ISL), and signed off with a Super Cup win with the club in May.

Although there has been criticism of Márquez holding both jobs, Chaubey said the situation was not without precedent.

"I understand why that perception exists, but globally coaches like Alex Ferguson, Guus Hiddink, Dick Advocaat, and many others have held club and national roles simultaneously," Chaubey said.

Shaji Prabhakaran, former general secretary of the AIFF, said that if India does not qualify for the Asian Cup, "it would be catastrophic for the development of Indian football."

India, ranked 127th by FIFA,



Márquez

is at the bottom of its group behind Singapore, Hong Kong, and Bangladesh.

"We are the highest-ranked team of the four, but we are last and need to win all four of the games left," Prabhakaran said.

Prabhakaran disagreed with Chaubey and said Márquez should not have held both national and FC Goa jobs.

"The responsibility for this situation lies with the people who took the decision to hire a coach with dual responsibilities," Prabhakaran said. "No coach can do two jobs at the same time, he has to work for the national team all the time and for the future of Indian football."

That immediate future in India is looking uncertain at club level, too. The ISL, the top tier of the country's domestic system, was set to start its 12th season in September, but that has been put on hold.

The 15-year contract between AIFF and commercial partner Football Sports Development Limited, which runs the ISL, is due to expire at the end of 2025, but there has, as yet, been no agreement on a new deal.

India's Supreme Court is expected to issue a ruling on the AIFF's constitution later in July and has instructed the federation not to enter into negotiations until then.

Amid such uncertainty, only six of the 13 ISL teams have confirmed participation in the upcoming Durand Cup, Asia's oldest knockout competition, that starts later this month.

"Most of the ISL teams have declined to play because they are not ready," Arshad Shawl, chief executive of Real Kashmir FC, a club in the second-tier I-League, said. "There is no clarity about next season, and it is affecting the entire ecosystem."

Prabhakaran believes that the ISL deal should not have been allowed to reach this point.

"This should have been sorted a year ago," he said. "Why wasn't it concluded? I don't know a country can be in a situation where we don't know if the league will happen."

Best of the Rest

**Gabigol cleared by CAS in doping case:** Brazilian striker Gabriel Barbosa has won an appeal against a two-year ban in a doping rules case, the Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS) said.

Barbosa, known as Gabigol, was suspended by a Brazilian sports tribunal in March 2024, when he was playing for Flamengo. The CAS allowed him to continue playing pending the appeal's outcome.

"Two of the toughest years of my life, being unfairly accused of something I never did," Barbosa said in a statement.

"No prohibited substance was found, but they still wanted to punish me for an alleged attitude. Justice was done. But the wound stays," he said.

The 28-year-old allegedly ignored an initial request to present a urine sample during a random visit by testers to Flamengo's Rio de Janeiro training grounds in April 2023.

He eventually took the test hours after his teammates, but is accused of disrespecting the officers and failing to comply with their instructions.

CAS, sport's highest court, said that although Barbosa's behavior was completely uncooperative, it could not be considered 'tampering' under the World Anti-Doping Code. (Xinhua)

**David signs 5-year deal with Juventus:** Canada forward Jonathan David signed a five-year contract with Juventus.

After his five-year contract at Lille expired, David joined the record 36-time Italian champion on a free transfer.

The deal is worth 6 million euros (\$7 million) per season, with up to 2 million euros (\$2.4 million) in bonuses, the Gazzetta dello Sport reported.

It's the first big market move by new Juventus general manager Damien Comolli, who confirmed last month that Igor Tudor will stay on as coach.

Juventus needs firepower up front with Dusan Vlahovic having fallen out of favor and likely to leave the club.

The 25-year-old David scored 25 goals and provided 12 assists in 49 matches across all competitions for Lille last season.

David is also Canada's all-time leading scorer with 36 goals in 67 appearances. (AP)

# Hong Kong China qualifies for World Cup for first time

INCHEON, South Korea, July 5, (AP): Hong Kong China qualified for its first men's Rugby World Cup after beating host South Korea 70-22 to win the Asia Championship on Saturday.

Hong Kong China is only the second Asian nation after Japan to reach the World Cup in tournament history.

It booked a spot in the 2027 tournament in

Australia, expanded to 24 teams for the first time.

"It is pretty overwhelming, and I am super proud of our group, our management and coaches and everyone involved," captain John Hrstich said.

Hong Kong China just missed out on the 2019 and 2023 World Cups after reaching the final

qualifying tournaments.

On Saturday, Hong Kong China was too good for South Korea even through a 20-minute red card to center Ben Axten-Burrett just before halftime for head-on-head contact.

It also swept aside Sri Lanka and the United Arab Emirates to win the Asia Championship for a sixth straight time.



# VAR drama as Sweden continues dominance over Denmark

Germany makes winning Euros start

**GENEVA, July 5, (AP): Sweden swept past Denmark yet again, winning 1-0 at the Women's Euro-  
pean Championship for a third victory this year over its near neighbor.**

One month after a 6-1 rout in Stockholm, Filippa Angeldahl's smart finish of a neat passing attack in the 55th minute was enough on another hot evening in Switzerland for another impressive Swedish effort. At the 2023 Women's World Cup, Sweden eliminated the defending champion United States in the round of 16.

Angeldahl severely tested Denmark goalkeeper Maja Bay Ostergaard to save a long-range free kick in the first half and beat her with more power in the second.

The midfielder exchanged passes with captain Kosovare Asllani - making her 200th appearance for Sweden - before striding on to shoot low past



Germany's Lea Schueller celebrates after scoring her side's second goal during the Euro 2025, group C, soccer match between Germany and Poland at Arena St. Gallen in St. Gallen, Switzerland. (AP)

Ostergaard's dive. Denmark star forward Pernille Harder's shot from distance rattled the Sweden crossbar in the 81st. Sweden was later joined by Germany on three points in Group C when the record eight-time champion beat Poland 2-0. It was the third time Sweden and Denmark opened a Women's Euros facing each other and it ended 1-1 in both 2005 and 2013.

Sweden beat Denmark twice in a Nations League group this year, starting with 2-1 in Odense in February. That time, Harder was marked toughly by veteran Sweden defender Magdalena Eriksson who has been her partner since 2014.

Eriksson was a surprise absence from the lineup on Friday due to a muscle strain lingering since a warmup game. She was ably replaced by 38-year-old Linda Sembrant, playing her 157th game for Sweden.

Playing in 86-degree heat (30 C) at the 6 p.m. kickoff, both teams took breaks for drinks several times in each half.

The playing surface was mostly shaded by the stadium roof though fans along one length of the field were bathed in direct sunshine for the entire match.

Gerhardsson declined to blame the weather, though added he "wouldn't mind a bit more of a breeze" when his team plays Poland on Tuesday. That has a later 9 p.m. local time start in Lucerne.

The drinks delays helped to add up to 16 minutes of total stoppage time, including a delay of more than four minutes for a video review early in the game.

Denmark thought it might be getting a penalty kick for a foul on Harder. The free kick was eventually awarded to Sweden by Brazilian referee Edina Alves because winger Madelen Janogy was tripped by a Denmark player before falling into Harder.

Before kickoff the stadium observed a period of silence in memory of Portugal and Liverpool forward Diogo Jota who died this week aged 28 in a car crash in Spain.

Denmark coach Andr e Jeglertz said



Denmark's Stine Ballisager, left, jumps for a header with Sweden's Linda Sembrant during the Euro 2025, group C, soccer match between Denmark and Sweden at Stade de Geneve in Geneva, Switzerland. (AP)

his players were not distracted by confirmation Thursday evening he will join the Manchester City women's team after Euro 2025.

Jule Brand scored one goal and set up the other to lead Germany to a 2-0 win over debutant Poland.

Germany, the eight-time champion, needed patience against the hard-tackling and committed Poland players, but Brand made the most of a lapse in concentration when she cut inside two defenders to break the deadlock with a brilliant shot inside the far corner in the 52nd minute. The young Germany winger then

sent in a cross for Lea Sch ller to seal the result with a header in the 66th.

"It was an expensive victory for us," Germany coach Christian W ck said, referring to a suspected serious knee injury for captain Giulia Gwinn.

Gwinn was injured late in the first half after she made a desperate challenge to stop Ewa Pajor from scoring.

"We went directly into the locker room and we all hugged her," W ck told German broadcaster ARD. "The MRI scan is tomorrow. It's the knee. She stopped us conceding a goal. We're all keeping our fingers crossed that it's not so bad."

Pajor, the Poland captain, was her team's biggest threat and might have leveled the score in the 64th after she sent a German defender flying, only for Germany goalkeeper Ann-Katrin Berger to stand firm against her centrally placed shot.

Berger later produced a brilliant reflex save to stop Pajor's header.

Like Poland, Berger was making her competition debut. The 34-year-old Germany goalkeeper missed the previous tournament and later said she was diagnosed with cancer for the second time. On Friday she became Germany's oldest player at a European Championship.

Berger was the busier of the two goalkeepers as Poland's central defensive partnership of Paulina Dudek and Emilia Szymczak kept the pacy German forwards in check.

Dudek did not reemerge for the second half, however, presumably because of an injury, and Brand took it as an invitation to steer her team to a winning start.

Germany is looking for its first major title since winning its eighth European Championship in 2013. It went close at the last edition, losing to host England 2-1 after extra time in the 2022 final.

## Abdulhadi officially signed

## Qadsia targets three foreign signings for handball season

By Khaled Al-Enezi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, July 5: In a proactive move to prepare thoroughly for the upcoming 2025-2026 handball season, expected to start in mid or late September, Qadsia Club has initiated early signings to strengthen its squad. The team has officially signed Ahmed Abdulhadi and goalkeeper Mishaal Al-Shatti, reinforcing key positions ahead of their Premier League campaign.

Under the leadership of coach Baqer Khuraibat, the team is actively reviewing profiles of international professionals, aiming to sign three foreign players for the new season - two for the court and one as a substitute. This strategy comes in light of the team's impressive performance last season, which saw them win the First Division League title and secure promotion to the Premier League. Qadsia also reached the Federation Cup final, narrowly losing to Kuwait Club by one goal after defeating strong contenders like Al-Fahaheel, Burgan, and Kazma in the preliminary stages.

The club is also expected to renew the contract of Tunisian head coach Amen Al-Qafsi, whose leadership was instrumental in the team's suc-



Abdulhadi goes for a shot in this file photo.

cess last season. Meanwhile, Montenegrin professional Vladan, previously with Abnaa Hawally, has completed his contract and will join Kuwait Club next season.

In related news, Qadsia player Abdulwahab Al-Muzain underwent successful hamstring tendon surgery at Kuwait Hospital. He is currently in the recovery phase and will require time to return to full fitness.

GONDOMAR, Portugal, July 5, (AP): Players from Liverpool and Portugal's national team joined family and friends for the funeral of their teammate Diogo Jota and his brother on Saturday, two days after the siblings died in a car crash in Spain.

Liverpool captain Virgil Van Dijk arrived carrying a red floral arrangement in the shape of a soccer shirt with Jota's No. 20 in white. Liverpool teammate Andrew Robertson carried a similar arrangement with the No. 30, the number worn by Jota's brother, Andr  Silva, who played for Portuguese club Penafiel. Coach Arne Slot was part of the Liverpool contingent.

Portugal international R ben Neves served as a pallbearer for Jota a day after playing for at the Club World Cup in the United States. He and Jota were teammates at Wolverhampton earlier in their careers.

Neves and Jo o Cancelo attended the funeral after playing in Orlando on Friday, when their Al Hilal was eliminated by Fluminense. Both players had wept when a minute of silence was held before the quarterfinal match.

The service was held at Igreja Matriz church in the Portuguese town of Gondomar, where Jota had a home.

Church bells pealed at 10:00 a.m. lo-



Diogo Jota's wife Rute Cardoso reacts next to the coffin of her husband, during his funeral in Gondomar, near Porto, Portugal. (AP)

cal time as the funeral started. Pallbearers carried the caskets of both brothers from a chapel next door and into the church. Relatives and hundreds of friends and acquaintances, including players of the local Gondomar FC where Jota started playing at age 9, then followed.

Portugal's national team coach Roberto Martinez and several other top Por-

tuguese players also attended, including Manchester City duo Bernardo Silva and R ben Dias and Manchester United's Bruno Fern ndes.

"These are really, really sad days, as you can imagine," Martinez said. "But today we showed we are a large, close family. ... Their spirit will be with us forever." The bishop of Porto, Manuel Linda,

led the funeral mass. The church was filled to capacity and a couple of dozen people followed the service via loud-speaker from outside. Afterwards, the coffins were carried to the cemetery next to the church.

Jota, 28, and the 25-year-old Silva were found dead near Zamora in northwestern Spain early Thursday after the Lamborghini they were driving crashed on an isolated stretch of highway just after midnight and burst into flames.

The brothers were reportedly heading to catch a boat from northern Spain to go to England where Jota was to rejoin with Liverpool after a summer break.

Spanish police are investigating the cause of the crash, which did not involve another vehicle, they said. They said they believe it could have been caused by a blown tire.

Their bodies were repatriated to Portugal after being identified by the family. A wake was held for them on Friday.

Jota's death occurred two weeks after he married long-time partner Rute Cardoso while on vacation from a long season where he helped Liverpool win the Premier League. The couple had three children, the youngest born last year.

Their loss led to an outpouring of condolences from the soccer world and Portuguese officials.

## Al-Qadsiya close to signing Jouini

## Al-Arabi targets Egyptian striker in \$300,000 loan move

By Hassan Mosa

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, July 5: Al-Arabi launched its recruitment campaign ahead of the new season by targeting Egyptian striker Marawan Hamdi. The club has formally approached Egypt's Pyramids FC to secure the player on a one-season loan deal valued at \$300,000, according to sources.

Hamdi, born November 15, 1996, has represented prominent Egyptian clubs including Zamalek, Al-Masry, Smouha, and Misr El-Makkasa, and has also featured for the Egyptian national team.

Al-Arabi has so far renewed the contracts of its two Nigerian professionals, Emmanuel Iwala and Christopher John. However, the club has opted not to extend the contracts of Algerian defender Sofiane Bouchar, Moroccan forward Hamza Khaba, and Bahraini midfielder Kamil Laaswad. The Green Falcons are also awaiting the announcement of a new head coach following the departure of national coach Nasser Al-Shatti after contract



In this file photo, Egyptian striker Hamdi celebrates after scoring a goal.

renewal negotiations reached a deadlock.

Meanwhile, Al-Qadsiya is close to finalizing a deal with former Tunisian international Haythem Jouini. The 32-year-old striker, who most recently played for Dibba Al-Hisn in the UAE, is expected to sign soon after reaching advanced

stages of negotiations.

Under the guidance of Tunisian coach Nabil Maaloul, Al-Qadsiya is undergoing a significant foreign player overhaul. The club has already parted ways with Moroccan Ismail Khafi, Nigerian Daniel Jibola, and Algerian Hussein Dhiri. Maaloul will soon decide the

future of Libyan Mohamed Soula and Moroccan Mehdi Berrahma, who remain under contract for one more season.

Additionally, Al-Qadsiya is in talks with other foreign prospects, including 25-year-old Algerian midfielder Ghilas Kenaoui, who played for ES S tif and Egypt's Port Said, and 32-year-old defender Ayoub Abdellaoui, formerly of MC Alger, USM Alger, and Saudi Arabia's Al-Ettifaq.

The team will resume training on July 16, ahead of an external preseason camp, in preparation for the Zain Premier League's kickoff on September 12.

Fahaheel continues its preparations for the new season with key signings under the leadership of Syrian coach Firas Al-Khatib. The club has announced the arrival of Brazilian defender Brendon Lucas, who will join fellow countryman Vitor da Silva in the squad.

Fahaheel has also bolstered its local talent by signing first-division top scorer Ali Al-Dokhi and former Al-Qadsiya midfielder Salman Al-Boos, signaling its intent to compete strongly in the upcoming campaign.

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NEWS





Red Bull driver Max Verstappen of the Netherlands in action during the qualifying for the British Formula One Grand Prix in Silverstone, England. Verstappen showed he had the pace when it mattered most as he beat Formula 1 title rivals Oscar Piastri and Lando Norris to claim pole position Saturday for the British Grand Prix. (AP)

# Sports

## Kuwaiti bowlers shine with triple gold at ‘prestigious’ 48th Hong Kong Open

HONG KONG, July 5: Kuwait’s national bowling teams delivered a stellar performance at the 48th Hong Kong Open Bowling Championship, held from June 26 to July 5, securing three gold medals and clinching first place overall in one of the most prestigious international bowling tournaments after the World Championship.

The tournament featured elite participation from some of the strongest bowling nations in the world, but Kuwait’s athletes rose to the occasion with determination and excellence.

In the junior category, Adel Abel claimed the gold medal after a highly competitive showing. In the youth division, Nasser Al-Kandari secured gold before going on to dominate the general category, earning a second individual gold medal and further so-



Double gold medalist Al-Kandari. Solidifying Kuwait’s lead atop the medal table.

President of the Kuwait and International Bowling Federations, Sheikh Talal Al-Mohammad Al-Sabah, expressed great pride in the national team’s success, attributing the achievement to the athletes’ hard work and the strategic planning of the federation.

“This accomplishment reflects the spirit and determination of our players,” Sheikh Talal said. “It comes in line with the support and directives of Kuwait’s wise political leadership, and the federation remains committed to advancing the sport through a comprehensive and well-defined plan.”

He also extended congratulations to the players, coaches, administrative staff, and the parents of the athletes, recognizing their vital role in providing moral and logistical support.

## Kuwait drawn into tough group for the first West Asian Volleyball Champ’ship

By Khaled Al-Enezi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, July 5: The Kuwait national men’s volleyball team has been drawn into the highly competitive Group B—dubbed the “Fiery Group”—for the first West Asian Men’s Volleyball Championship, alongside regional powerhouses Saudi Arabia, Qatar, and Oman. Group A features Bahrain, Jordan, the UAE, and Lebanon.

The draw took place via video conference and was attended by Nayef Al-Khamili, Assistant Secretary-General of the Kuwait Volleyball Association, who extended his best wishes to the team. He emphasized the importance of this regional competition in showcasing the development of Kuwait’s volleyball talent.

The team will depart for Tunisia tomorrow (Monday) for a training camp running through July 17, ahead of the championship’s kickoff in Manama, Bahrain, on July 19. The camp will include four friendly matches, providing valuable experience, particularly for younger squad members.

Al-Khamili, who also heads the delegation, stated, “The Tunisia camp will



The volleyball team is preparing for the West Asian Championship.

play a crucial role in building team chemistry and match readiness, especially for our young and promising talents.”

The Kuwaiti delegation includes administrator Mohammed Malallah, Argentine head coach Julian Alvarez, national assistant coach Zaid Al-Kazemi, physiotherapist Mohammed Al-Yamam, referee Hussein Abdul-Ali, and 14 players.

Assistant coach Zaid Al-Kazemi acknowledged the difficulty of the draw, saying, “We’ve landed in a very strong group, but we will treat every match like a final. If we want top results, we must fight for every point.”

Al-Kazemi added that the team’s foundation is built on youthful energy and ambition, supported by a core of experienced players. He stressed the importance of long-term planning and continued support, noting that these young athletes, with proper development, have the potential to shape Kuwait’s volleyball future.

He also highlighted the team’s preparations, which began in June, with an emphasis on physical fitness and individual skill development. The Tunisia camp will further refine the tactical and technical aspects, ensuring the players are fully ready for the challenges ahead.

## Kuwait U-14 ice hockey team wraps up Al Ain training camp

ABU DHABI, July 5: The Kuwait Under-14 Ice Hockey team has successfully concluded its training camp in Al Ain, United Arab Emirates.

The camp, organized by the Kuwait Winter Games Club in coordination with the UAE Winter Sports Federation, aimed to prepare the young athletes for upcoming competitions.

Head of the delegation, Ahmed Al-Ajmi, stated that the junior team engaged in intensive training sessions held twice daily at the ice rink, alongside strength and conditioning workouts in the gym.

As part of their development, the team played three friendly matches against Emirati clubs,

gaining valuable experience by competing with squads that featured a significant number of foreign players. Al-Ajmi praised the team’s solid technical performance during these games, noting their importance in helping players enhance their skills and match-readiness.

He also commended the players’ dedication and enthusiasm throughout the camp, highlighting their discipline and commitment in both training and matches. Al-Ajmi reaffirmed the club’s ongoing support for youth development in ice hockey, stressing that nurturing young talent is essential to the future success of the sport in Kuwait.



The players pose for a team photo after wrapping up training camp in Al Ain.

KUNA photo

### Rybakina falls

## Sinner rolls into round of 16

LONDON, July 5, (AP): As well as Jannik Sinner is playing at Wimbledon, he doesn’t appear to need much in the way of help. Still, he got some Saturday when his opponent, Pedro Martinez, was dealing with a problematic shoulder and often put in first serves at so-so speeds.

The No. 1-ranked Sinner has dropped a total of 17 games so far, made his way to the fourth round for the seventh consecutive Grand Slam tournament - he’s collected three such trophies in that span - and never was truly in trouble during a 6-1, 6-3, 6-1 victory over No. 52 Martinez.

“We all saw that he was struggling,” Sinner said, then noted about his own form: “First week couldn’t have gone better.”

There’s been zero sign of any sort of inability to move past last month’s French Open final, which Sinner lost to Carlos Alcaraz in five sets despite taking the first two and holding three championship points.

Against Martinez, Sinner - who returned in May from a three-month doping suspension - went up 5-0 after 20 minutes. During that stretch of 29 points, Martinez managed just one winner, while Sinner accumulated 10.

That’s when Martinez took a medical timeout, and a trainer massaged the back of his right shoulder. The Spaniard was delivering first serves as slow as 76 mph, compared with Sinner’s high of 133 mph.

That aspect of Martinez’s game improved incrementally, but the only, ever-so-brief, moment of intrigue at Centre Court came in the second set, about 75 minutes in, with Sinner up a break and serving at 4-3. That’s where Martinez managed to accrue his first four break points of the match.

Sinner stayed as calm as can be - “I don’t think Sinner’s changed expressions once in this match,” John McEnroe observed on BBC’s telecast - and erased all four of those



Jannik Sinner of Italy celebrates after beating Pedro Martinez of Spain during a third round men’s singles match at the Wimbledon Tennis Championships in London. (AP)

chances, held for 5-3, then broke to end the set.

No. 11 Elena Rybakina, the 2022 champion, was ousted in the third round by No. 23 Clara Tauson by a 7-6 (6), 6-3 score, yet another exit from a high seed. No. 7 Mirra Andreeva, an 18-year-old Russian, moved into Week 2 with a 6-1, 6-3 victory over Hailey Baptiste of the United States.

Andreeva will face defending champion Barbora Krejickova or Emma Navarro next. Another fourth-round matchup was set up when No. 19 Liudmila Samsonova and Jessica Bouzas Maneiro advanced. Bouzas Maneiro, who defeated 2023 champion Marketa Vondrousova in last year’s first round, was a 6-1, 2-6, 6-3 winner over Dayana Yastremska, who eliminated No. 2 Coco Gauff in this year’s first round. No. 22 Flavio Cobolli earned his debut trip to a major’s round of 16 by defeating No. 15 Jakub Mensik 6-2, 6-4, 6-2.

## Chelsea advances to semifinals

### Fluminense ends Al Hilal’s run

NEW YORK, July 5, (Xinhua): Chelsea and Fluminense advanced to the FIFA Club World Cup semifinals with narrow quarterfinal wins over Palmeiras and Al Hilal, respectively.

In Philadelphia, Palmeiras goalkeeper Weverton netted a late own goal as Chelsea edged the Brazilian side 2-1.

Cole Palmer gave Chelsea the lead with a 16th-minute strike before teenager Estevao, who is set to join the Premier League club later this month, equalized from an acute angle shortly after halftime.

The decisive moment came seven minutes from time when a deflection off Weverton sent the ball into his own net as Chelsea set up a clash with Fluminense next Tuesday for a place in the final.

Chelsea manager Enzo Maresca praised Estevao, whom the club signed last year in an advanced deal reportedly worth an initial 37 million U.S. dollars plus performance-related additions.

“Happy because we won and also happy because Estevao scored, the perfect night,” Maresca said.

“He is very good, a huge talent, a fantastic player. The only thing is that when you come from South America or another part of the world, you need to adapt. We are going to help him adapt, be happy and enjoy football. We have no doubt he will be an important player for Chelsea.” Estevao fought back tears as he reflected on his last match for Palmeiras.

“My heart is broken because



Al Hilal's Renan Lodi, left, and Fluminense's German Cano challenge for the ball during the Club World Cup quarterfinal soccer match between Fluminense and Al Hilal in Orlando, Fla. (AP)



Palmeiras' Emiliano Martinez, left, falls challenged by Chelsea's Joao Pedro during the Club World Cup quarterfinal soccer match between Palmeiras and Chelsea in Philadelphia. (AP)

we know how hard we work to give our all on the field,” he said.

“I’m very proud to be part of this team. I thank Palmeiras, and I’m

very grateful to the Palmeiras fans. They will always be in my heart.” In Orlando, midfielder Hercules struck a second-half winner as Fluminense overcame Al Hilal 2-1 in their quarterfinal.

Martinelli gave Fluminense the lead with a rising effort into the far corner, spinning away from his marker following Gabriel Fuentes’ cross.

The Saudi Pro League club equalized when Kalidou Koulibaly’s header landed at the feet of Marcos Leonardo, who took a touch before firing home from point-blank range.

Hercules restored Fluminense’s advantage as he ran onto Samuel Xavier’s headed pass and lashed a low 12-yard shot past goalkeeper Yassine Bounou.

“We played a great match, especially considering the strength of our opponents,” Fluminense manager Renato Gauchao said.

“They [Al Hilal] got to this stage on merit. Not many teams can beat Manchester City by scoring four goals against them. But I’ve always trusted my team, and I told them that this match would be decided on the pitch.” The former Brazil international forward dedicated the result to the Rio de Janeiro club’s fans.

“This victory belongs to our fans and to my team. I hope that Fluminense supporters are wearing the club’s shirt with pride for what we have achieved here. We hope there is more to come.” Al Hilal manager Simone Inzaghi said he could not fault his players’ commitment on the day and throughout the tournament.

“I really want to congratulate my squad for the way that they played; they poured their hearts out on the pitch today,” he said. “And of course we are sorry, but we need to be proud.”