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# Kuwait tightens grip on foreign property access

Cabinet nod pending

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

KUWAIT CITY, July 16: In a new regulatory move aimed at organizing the real estate market and improving the investment environment, Minister of Justice Counselor Nasser Al-Sumait announced that a draft decree has been submitted to the Fatwa and Legislation Department regarding controls on real estate ownership by foreigners through companies listed on the Boursa Kuwait and real estate funds.

Al-Sumait explained that the draft decree was prepared in accordance with the provisions of Decree-Law No. 7/2025, which regulates real estate ownership, and is now pending approval by the Council of Ministers. The objective is to strike a delicate balance between attracting organized real estate investment and protecting the demographic structure as well as preventing the exploitation of residential properties for purely commercial or investment purposes. The decree takes into account the legal frameworks specific to citizens of the Gulf Cooperation Council countries and preserves the privileges granted to them regarding real estate ownership in Kuwait.

The decree includes the following articles:

#### Article 1:

Companies listed on the stock exchange with non-Kuwaiti shareholders, as well as licensed real estate funds with non-Kuwaiti unit holders, may own real estate if their objectives include real estate dealings.

The provisions of this paragraph do not affect the right of units supervised by the Central Bank of Kuwait or others to own real estate, in accordance

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Minister of Justice Counselor Nasser Al-Sumait

- GCC rights protected
- Curbing housing speculation
- Balancing investment, demographics
- Listed firms restricted
- Residential market shielded
- Foreign funds limited
- Attracting organized investors
- New real estate controls



## HORIZON TALK

Ahmed Al-Jarallah

**King Hassan II about his son, 'Mohammed is an extension of my soul'**



I watched him grow before my eyes and prepared him to shoulder the responsibility of a nation.



I didn't teach him how to be a prince, but rather a servant of his country.



I know the crown is a heavy burden, but I saw in him the patience to bear it.



When he spoke, I felt as though Morocco was breathing.



In 1889, the Turkish Committee of Union and Progress was formed.



Their hidden aim was to weaken the state and diminish the power of Islam.



They succeeded and gained control of Parliament.



In 1908, they staged a coup against the Sultan.



They committed a massacre against the Armenians and pushed the Sultan into war.

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New e-visa portal opens

## Kuwait grants tourists 90 days, family visit 30

KUWAIT CITY, July 16: The Ministry of Interior on Wednesday launched the 'Kuwait Visa' platform for those wishing to visit Kuwait on legally approved tourist, commercial, family and government visas, in accordance with its regulations and the conditions issued by the Residency Affairs General Department.

In a press statement, the ministry confirmed that this move is in accordance with the instructions of First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousef and under the supervision of acting Undersecretary of the ministry Major General Ali Al-Adwani.

According to the ministry, the 'Kuwait Visa' portal – <https://kuwait-visa.moi.gov.kw> – is the official electronic platform that allows individuals to apply for different types of eVisas, track application status, verify visa information, and access other immigration-related services.

The ministry stated that the visa types available on the platform include tourist, family, commercial and government visas, along with details on the eligible beneficiaries and duration of stay for each visa. It emphasized that all visit visas are subject to full security checks and require all supporting documents for both the visitor and sponsor – individuals, companies or government agencies, in addition to the documents pertaining to the tourist.

It stressed that the law and penalties for violating all types of visit visas are strictly applied to those who violate the basic conditions of the visit, as well as those who violate the length of stay granted for each visa.

It affirmed that the launching of the visa platform is in line with the vision of the political leadership and the government to transform Kuwait into an economic and tourism hub, as well as with the State's public strategy on allowing expatriates to meet their families and participate in social events.

Following are the details about each visa, the beneficiaries and duration:

■ **Tourist Visa** – issued to individuals who wish to visit Kuwait for tourism and leisure purposes, and the duration of stay is up to 90 days from the date of entry.

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HH Amir's Paris talks highlighted

## Cabinet refers Kuwait Cultural Path initiative for further study

KUWAIT CITY, July 16, (KUNA): The Kuwaiti Cabinet on Tuesday was apprised of the gist of official talks held between His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah and French President Emmanuel Macron during the Amir's visit to Paris on July 13-14.

This was announced during the Cabinet's meeting held at Bayan Palace, under the leadership of His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs Shereeda Al-Mousherji said in a statement after the meeting.

The talks between the two leaders discussed deep-rooted historic relations between the two countries and their peoples, and means of backing and developing them in all fields in a way that contributes to achieving mutual benefits and interest, Al-Mousherji added.

They also covered consultation and coordination on the key issues of mutual interest, along with the latest developments on regional and international arenas.

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



2 **Al-Jarallah delves into Egyptian economy, challenges**



8 **In partnership with Zain, KON continues to instill a spirit of innovation in the next generation**

9 **KFH offers advanced banking experience through KFH Academy**

## Kuwait welcomes Sweida calm, condemns Israeli strikes in Syria

KUWAIT CITY, July 16, (Agencies): The Ministry of Foreign Affairs has welcomed the Syrian government's announcement of a ceasefire agreement that halted the fighting in Al-Sweida governorate, stressing the need to calm the situation and take all necessary measures to prevent further bloodshed.

The Ministry also condemned the Israeli attacks on Syrian territories, pointing out that these attacks represent a continuation of a series of repeated violations of international law and the UN Charter.

The International community and Security Council were also called on to assume their responsibilities to deter and put an end to these violations in order to preserve the security and stability

of the region.

The Ministry also assured the firm stance and support of Kuwait towards the Syrian Arab Republic and that it stand by their side in preserving its security and stability.

The Israeli military launched Wednesday rare airstrikes in the heart of Damascus, hitting the Syrian Defense Ministry headquarters as clashes in the southern Syrian city of Sweida continued to flare.

Israel's attack came hours after a drone strike on the same building. Syrian state media reported at least 13 people wounded. Another strike hit near the presidential palace in the hills outside of Damascus.

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In this photo released by the Syrian official news agency SANA, smoke rises from an Israeli airstrike that hit the Syrian Defense Ministry in Damascus, Syria, Wednesday, July 16, 2025. (AP)

## Muthanna Complex tenants face July 30 eviction deadline

KUWAIT CITY, July 16: The Ministry of Finance, through the company managing the Muthanna Complex, has requested all tenants to fully vacate the complex and hand over the leased premises by Wednesday, July 30, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

In a notice addressed to tenants, the company

called for cooperation and coordination with the complex's management to initiate the handover process within the specified deadline.

In the letter sent by the Ministry of Finance to the company concerning the eviction of the Muthanna Complex property, it was stated that the eviction is in

line with a decision issued by the Higher Committee for Public-Private Partnership Projects, approving the Muthanna Complex project for public auction in accordance with the Partnership Law provisions.

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Sorcery swindle

## Black magic hustler caught red-handed

KUWAIT CITY, July 16, (KUNA): A person deceiving people under pretenses of practicing black magic, sorcery, and divination in exchange for money was arrested by police, the Interior Ministry said on Wednesday.

This came as part of the ministry's ongoing efforts to combat fraud and illegal practices.

A statement by the ministry revealed that authorities had received reliable information on an individual engaging in fraud and deception against citizens and residents by claiming to be able to predict the future and solve family and financial problems through black magic rituals and sorcery, in exchange for large sums of money.

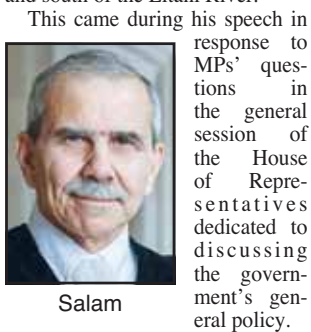
After verifying the information, the necessary legal authorization was obtained and an ambush was carried out, resulting in his arrest.

He was in possession of multiple incriminating items, including black magic books, paper talismans, unknown materials and liquids used in sorcery rituals, and a fundraising box.

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## Newswatch

BEIRUT: Lebanese Prime Minister Dr. Nawaf Salam affirmed on Wednesday his country's commitment on continuing its efforts to extend sovereignty over the north and south of the Litani River.



Salam

Everyone knows that the army has accomplished a lot in terms of extending the state's sovereignty over its lands south of the Litani, said Salam.

"We renew our commitment and insistence on reform and rescue, and we will spare no effort to mobilize Arab and international support to pressure Israel to withdraw from Lebanese territory and stop its attacks," he pointed out. (KUNA)

## Kuwait, India chart path for stronger civil aviation links

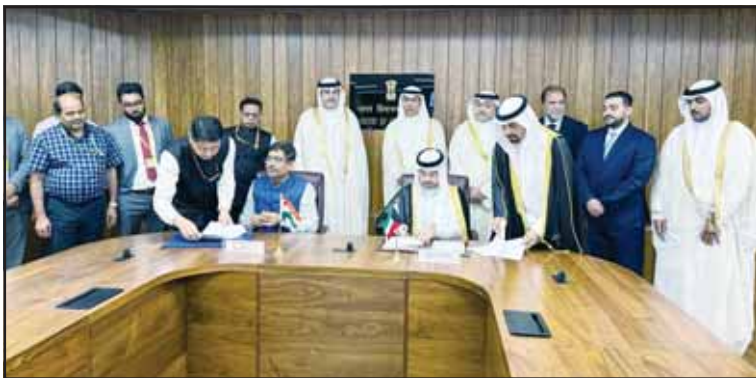
NEW DELHI, July 16, (KUNA): The Kuwait Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) headed by President Sheikh Humoud Mubarak Humoud Al-Sabah held talks on Tuesday with Indian civil aviation authorities led by Secretary at Ministry of Civil Aviation Samir Kumar in New Delhi.

The DGCA President told KUNA

that the meeting came within the framework of joint efforts to deepen bilateral cooperation in the aviation sector and was held in a friendly atmosphere that reflects the spirit of cooperation between the two sides.

During the bilateral talks, both sides hailed the historical relations between

Continued on Page 5



KUNA photo  
Officials from Kuwait and India sign a memorandum of understanding to strengthen bilateral cooperation in civil aviation during talks in New Delhi.



Prayer Timings			
Fajr .....	03:26	Asr .....	15:29
Sunrise ..	04:59	Maghrib ..	18:49
Zohr .....	11:54	Isha .....	20:19

# Local

Weather			
Expected weather for next 24 hrs:			
By Day: Very hot and relatively humid over coastal areas with light to moderate freshening at times northwesterly wind to light variable wind, with speeds of 10-40 km/h.			
By Night: Hot to rather hot with light to moderate northwesterly wind, with speeds of 12-35 km/h.			
Station	Max Exp	Min Rec	
Kuwait City	49	38	
Kuwait Airport	49	33	
Abdaly	50	35	
Jahra	50	35	
Salmiyah	45	34	
Ahmadi	46	33	
Nuwaisib	47	31	
Wafra	50	29	
Salmy	48	31	
Managish	50	33	

## AU students, staff on humanitarian mission

KUWAIT CITY, July 16: In line with its commitment to corporate social responsibility and environmental responsibility, the Australian University (AU) launched its "Beat the Heat with AU" initiative which aimed to support underprivileged gas station attendants. As part of the campaign, AU students and staff members visited numerous fuel stations across Kuwait to personally distribute durable and reusable water bottles to attendants, offering both immediate relief from the heat and a sustainable solution for hydration throughout the summer.

The initiative witnessed active participation from AU's students and staff, who came together to show appreciation for those who endure high heat during Kuwait's intense summer. The campaign not only provided practical support but also encouraged environmental awareness by replacing single-use plastics with durable, eco-friendly alternatives.

Commenting on the initiative, Ms. May Al Musallam, Senior Manager of Public Relations and Marketing at AU, said: "This campaign was more than just distributing water bottles; it was a humanitarian message that expressed compassion and empathy, and encouraged genuine giving. We are proud of our students who embodied the spirit of generosity and responsibility."



May Al-Musallam

## AOAD hails Kuwait food security efforts

CAIRO, July 16, (KUNA): Director General of the Arab Organization for Agricultural Development (AOAD) Ibrahim Al-Dukhairi welcomed on Wednesday the approval of an agreement with Kuwait to establish the Organization's Arabian Peninsula regional office in the Arab country.

He expressed deep appreciation for this support, saying it reflected Kuwait's wise leadership commitment to advancing agricultural development, bolstering regional food security, and strengthening Arab joint action for sustainable agricultural and food security.

Al-Dukhairi recalled Kuwait's call at the 31st Arab Summit in Algeria to activate a comprehensive, integrated Arab food security initiative.

He highlighted the importance of hosting the office in Kuwait amid economic and climate challenges facing Arab food producing and exporting countries; the Organization's 35th annual Arab Food Security report put the region's 2023 food gap at about USD 40.3 billion.

He added that choosing Kuwait aligns with its strategic location and central role in agricultural development, and complements AOAD's programs and strategies, including the Arab Sustainable Agricultural Development Strategy 2020-2030, the Arab Program for Sustainable Food Security, and the Arab Strategy for Sustainable Rangeland Resource Management 2020-2040, among others.



Ibrahim Al-Dukhairi

KUNA photo

Editor-in-Chief guest at 'Opportunity Makers' show

## Al-Jarallah delves into Egyptian economy, challenges



Editor-in-Chief of Al-Seyassah and Arab Times newspapers Ahmed Al-Jarallah talks to media personality Rabab El-Gohary during the interview.



Photos by Rizk Tawfik  
Editor-in-Chief of Al-Seyassah and Arab Times newspapers Ahmed Al-Jarallah to appear on Sada El Balad TV Channel in the first episode of the 'Opportunity Makers' program.

KUWAIT CITY, July 16: In an exceptional television episode, Dean of Kuwaiti journalism and Editor-in-Chief of Al-Seyassah and Arab Times newspapers Ahmed Al-Jarallah will appear on Sada El Balad TV Channel in the first episode of the "Opportunity Makers" program.

The program begins with a special interview that embodies Al-Jarallah's boldness in the journey of the program into the world of the Egyptian economy and its crucial issues.

The program, presented by media personality Rabab El-Gohary, hosts Al-Jarallah in its first episode for a rare and transparent interview; addressing key economic issues that have never been ex-

plored in such depth before.

Al-Jarallah speaks with his usual frankness, delving into the delicate junctures of the Egyptian economic experience -- from investment challenges and financial reforms to growth opportunities and regional and international challenges.

The episode will air on Sada El Balad TV at 5:00 pm on Friday, July 25, Cairo time. The interview is expected to captivate many of those interested in political and economic affairs in and outside Egypt.

"Opportunity Makers" not only presents the topic, but also seeks to be a platform for under-

standing, analysis and future exploration; especially in light of the regional and international variables shaping the new economy.

The program is produced by journalist Ali Omar, under the supervision of Editor-in-Chief Younsa Farag, and prepared by Mohamed Amr and Mohamed Wahsh.

The interview will be a turning point in media economic dialogue, given Al-Jarallah's experience in Gulf journalism, his profound Egyptian expertise, and his professional media approach.

The program airs at a time that holds many connotations...while the beginning is economics, ambition knows no bounds.

## 'Every dinar goes to the right man'

Charity transparent: Al-Mutairi

By Fares Ghaleb  
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, July 16: Official spokesperson of the Ministry of Social Affairs Yousef Saif Al-Mutairi confirmed that charitable work in Kuwait is subject to the highest standards of transparency and governance within an integrated framework that links donors, projects and beneficiaries ensuring that every Kuwaiti dinar reaches its intended recipient.

In an interview with Al-Akhbar Channel, Al-Mutairi indicated that the ministry relies on precise monitoring indicators to evaluate the performance of charitable organizations. He explained these indicators begin with the financial indicator; which includes audited budgets and financial reports detailing revenues and expenditures for each project, while controlling administrative expenses and transparently disseminating data to donors.

From an administrative perspective Al-Mutairi stressed the need for a clear organizational structure within the organizations, appointment of a general manager and an independent internal auditor, and documenting internal regulations and holding official meetings to ensure compliance and



Al-Mutairi

integrity.

Regarding monitoring activities, he emphasized the importance of measuring project completion rates and ensuring they are implemented according to plan.

He underscored the need for careful monitoring of external projects through reports that include photos and plans, as well as field visits to confirm implementation. He also emphasized the need to evaluate implementing agencies abroad in terms of efficiency and accreditation, focusing on a project's sustainability rather than temporary implementation. He asserted that charitable work in and outside Kuwait is left to the discretion of associations based on community needs and donors' desires, indicating the ministry is committed to achieving a balance that ensures the benefit of those in need in Kuwait as well.

He disclosed that the ministry has moved from prior oversight only to a combination of prior and subsequent oversight to overcome challenges and ensure complete transparency. He warned that any donation outside official platforms is a violation, even if the intention is good, and that no individual is allowed to collect donations under his name.

He pointed out that the 'Central Aid' platform, launched by the ministry to control and regulate donations, is a pivotal tool that connects donors with beneficiaries through associations, prevents duplication, and enables accurate assessment of cases through registration via the Kuwait Mobile app.

He affirmed that the ministry uses monthly reports to evaluate the performance of associations according to these indicators. "Compliant associations are granted broader powers to collect donations, while non-compliant associations are given development notes, with the possibility of taking strict measures, such as suspension, in the event of serious violations affecting donor funds," he clarified.



Farwaniya Governorate photo  
Farwaniya Governor Sheikh Athbi Nasser Al-Athbi Al-Sabah receives the Iraqi Ambassador to Kuwait, Al-Munhal Al-Safi.

## Kuwait, Iraq ties strong: Sheikh Athbi

KUWAIT CITY, July 16: Farwaniya Governor Sheikh Athbi Nasser Al-Athbi Al-Sabah received the Iraqi Ambassador to Kuwait, Al-Munhal Al-Safi, at his office in the governorate's headquarters on Wednesday.

According to a press release issued by Farwaniya Governorate, Sheikh Athbi welcomed Ambassador Al-Safi and praised the longstanding and strong ties between the two friendly countries and their peoples.

During the meeting, the two sides discussed issues of mutual interest, and affirmed the strength of bilateral relations between Kuwait and Iraq.

Meanwhile, Ambassador Al-Safi expressed his appreciation to Sheikh Athbi for the warm welcome and generous hospitality, and wished him continued success in his duties and Kuwait further progress and prosperity.

## PAM lifts suspension of 31 'house help' offices

KUWAIT CITY, July 16: The Public Authority for Manpower (PAM) has announced that the Department for Regulating Domestic Labor Recruitment received a total of 598 complaints from employers and domestic workers, according to the latest official statistics, reports Al-Anba daily.

In a press statement, the authority stated that 31 suspended licenses were reinstated following the correction of violations; while 25 licenses are currently suspended.

The department also reported issuing seven new professional licenses for the first time, renewing 19 licenses, and canceling one license.

With these updates, the total number of licensed domestic labor offices in the country now stands at 488.

The authority reaffirmed its commitment to monitor labor practices and ensure compliance with regulatory standards in the recruitment and employment of domestic workers.

### Other Voices

## The tragedy of Manushak and the cleric

By Ahmad alsarraf

In the late 1950s, the late Amir Abdullah Al-Salem learned that the British planned to request the allocation of Area G1 as a military base. He immediately ordered the Ministry of Defense to relocate from its original site in Sufa Square to Area G1, as it was then known on maps.

I was reminded of this while reading a letter from Iraqi-Armenian immigrant Manushak Dikran, who wrote, "We lived in Iraq in the city of K3, a small station established by the British to oversee the oil pipelines running from the north to the Mediterranean ports via Syria. Its residents were a diverse mix of Iraq's various communities. Omar was friends with Sargon, Ali was close to Ashur, Hussein was inseparable from Minas, Boutros, and Othman. They all shared games, daily life, studies, and even religious celebrations.

The city had two schools, one for girls and one for boys, separated by a single wall. It had only a mosque and a church. No one paid attention to each other's sect or questioned the presence of dif-



alsarraf

ferent faiths. All religious rituals took place either in the mosque or the church, which was attended by Chaldeans, Assyrians, Armenians, Syrians, Catholics, and Orthodox alike. Priests from each sect were rarely present, usually only on holidays or very special occasions. Muslim women, dressed in their black abayas, often arrived at the church before others, joining in prayers, weddings, and celebrations. Similarly, Christians would visit shrines to offer sacrifices and vows.

Despite the station's nearly 500 houses, everyone shopped at the same bakery, the same grocer, and the same butcher. No one paid attention to the concepts of halal or haram. There was only one hospital, and if Ahmad needed blood, Minas would donate for Mohammad, Omar for Ali, and so on.

We grew up and eventually left the station, whether in search of education, jobs, or to find a spouse. Wherever we went, we carried with us the unique values and morals of K3 that shaped us. It was no surprise that nearly all who emigrated achieved notable financial or professional success.

One day, Hormuz, a resident of K3 living abroad in America, decided to create a website to reconnect with his family and friends. With great effort, he succeeded in bringing them back together. He gathered news about nearly everyone, their addresses and thousands of family photos, after almost three decades of separation. This re-

union sparked lively and joyous gatherings, celebrations, and weddings attended by people from various countries. At one such event, Hormuz was elected as the station's mukhtar, for life."

\* \* \*

This is a true story... K3 still exists in Anbar Governorate. However, the situation has changed, as the original inhabitants have since been displaced.

My friend and reader Nizar Malak from Canada commented on Manushak's message, saying, "I was deeply moved by it and am familiar with K3. It is located near the Syrian border, and Kirkuk's oil, originating from northeastern Iraq, passes through it. Armenian billionaire Gulbankian played an instrumental role in facilitating the oil exploration agreement between the Iraqi government and Western oil companies there."

Manushak's story reminded him of his close lifelong friendship with Philip Bidavid. They had been more like brothers for 60 years. Their bond never broken, and neither had ever offended the other. Yet, neither had ever asked about the other's religion. Manushak wondered why such human relationships were now being destroyed.

I told him to look for those who benefit, perhaps a dictator or a religious leader.

□ □ □

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Sheikha Amthal Al Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah visits some old markets with government officials.



KUNA photos

## Two more heritage 'souks' planned

KUWAIT CITY, July 16, (KUNA): Sheikha Amthal Al Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, Voluntary Work Center chief, thanked His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah for directing the establishment of two Souq Al-Mubarakiya-style markets in Kuwait's north and south to serve residents and boost economic and cultural activity.

She told KUNA on Wednesday that His Highness the Amir tasked Minister of Information and Culture and Minister of

State for Youth Affairs Abdurrahman Al-Mutairi with studying and following up on the projects due to their heritage and national significance in buttressing Kuwait's cultural identity across the country.

She valued Minister Al-Mutairi's initiative to asking for the Center's contribution to this national effort, drawing on the Center's prior experience developing the original Souq Al-Mubarakiya in a modern spirit that honors the past and meets present needs.



HORIZON TALK

Ahmed Al-Jarallah



King Hassan II about his son, ‘Mohammed is an extension of my soul’

BUILDING nations begins with building capable leaders. Rather than delving deep into theory, I want to share a story about the late King Hassan II of Morocco (May God have mercy on him) and his vision for his son, King Mohammed VI. His words offer a valuable lesson on nurturing leaders who will succeed in ruling their countries.

King Hassan II spoke about his then Crown Prince, Mohammed VI, using simple yet profound words filled with pride, concern, and love.

The late King Hassan II said, “Mohammed is not only my son but he is the extension of my soul. I watched him grow before my eyes, but I was preparing him to carry the nation on his shoulders. I did not teach him how to be a prince, but rather how to be a servant of his country. I know that the crown is a heavy burden, but I saw in Mohammed the patience, wisdom, and quiet strength to understand more than to speak. He listens carefully for a long time, but when he does speak, I feel that Morocco breathes safely.

If I am absent, be assured that I have left you a king who resembles me, not only in blood and features but also in his deep love for this country.”

□ □ □

This is how a 600-year-old empire was brought down.

In 1889, a group of students at the Military Medical College in Turkiye founded the Committee of Union and Progress with the backing of Masonic networks. The group claimed its mission was to reform the Ottoman Empire, and improve its conditions. However, its true objectives were to undermine the state, weaken the influence of Islam and the authority of the Sultan, and abolish the Caliphate.

Many of the committee’s members were Freemason Dönmeh Jews. Their ideas quickly spread among intellectuals, public figures, and military officers.

The Committee of Union and Progress gained control over the Second, Third, and Fourth Ottoman Armies. In 1908, the committee staged a coup against Sultan Abdul Hamid II, claiming

I watched him grow before my eyes and prepared him to shoulder the responsibility of a nation.

I didn’t teach him how to be a prince, but rather a servant of his country.

I know the crown is a heavy burden, but I saw in him the patience to bear it.

When he spoke, I felt as though Morocco was breathing.

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Their hidden aim was to weaken the state and diminish the power of Islam.

They succeeded and gained control of Parliament.

In 1908, they staged a coup against the Sultan.

They committed a massacre against the Armenians and pushed the Sultan into war.

they sought to implement a European-style constitution and establish a parliamentary system similar to that of England, where the people would rule through elected deputies.

They succeeded in their mission and secured a majority in Parliament. However, their racist policies toward non-Turks led to major repercussions. Bulgaria and Hungary declared independence, Crete united with Greece, and the Armenians re-

volted. The blame for these events was placed on Sultan Abdul Hamid II, and Parliament announced his deposition.

A delegation, which included a Jewish member, was sent to deliver the decision to the Sultan. He was then exiled and replaced by Prince Mehmed V, who held the title of Sultan but lacked any real power, as the committee controlled all aspects of governance.

Under their rule, a horrific massacre was committed against the Armenians. They also forced the Ottoman Empire into World War I, which led to the empire’s defeat and collapse.

The Armistice of Mudros and the Treaty of Sèvres were signed, leading to the Ottoman Empire losing all its European territories. The Arab countries fell under French and British control. All that remained of the empire were Istanbul and a few island cities. Shortly afterward, the Sultan passed away.

Abdulmejid II was appointed Caliph in a symbolic capacity, while behind the scenes, a general from the Committee of Union and Progress, Mustafa Kemal, began to rise in power. He rejected the Treaty of Sèvres and declared a jihad to expel the occupying Greek, Italian, British, and French forces.

In 1923, Mustafa Kemal signed the Treaty of Lausanne, which established the modern borders of Turkey. Three months later, the secular Turkish Republic was officially declared, headed by Mustafa Kemal Atatürk.

Atatürk exiled all members of the Ottoman dynasty from the country, banned the hijab, the call to prayer, the Hajj pilgrimage, and the teaching of the Quran. He permanently abolished the position of the Caliphate, ending 600 years of Ottoman rule.

The history of the Ottoman Empire was filled with both achievements and failures, as it was ultimately a human endeavor. It had powerful rulers such as Osman I, Mehmed the Conqueror, and Murad I, as well as weak ones like Selim II and Mustafa I (known as “the Mad”), among others.

■ There is a widespread complaint about the high judicial fees, as if people are expected to avoid seeking justice, and that those who cannot afford it should simply give up their rights. Dear Minister of Justice, have you heard about this?

● ● ● ●

■ Dear God, I pray that You unite our children’s hearts in harmony, reconcile their differences, and bring them together in love. ■ Dear God, the Best of Guardians, grant us the joy of their righteousness and goodness, and protect them with Your care.

● ● ● ●

■ When harm piles up against you, do not give up. The moment you surrender, your fate and power are altered.

● ● ● ●

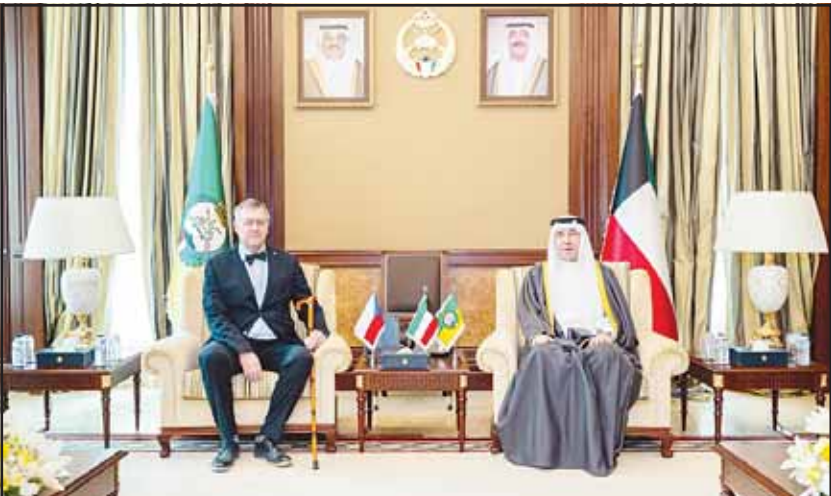
■ Satan always claims to be your faithful and loving advisor. Yet he is the most deceitful and dangerous of God’s creations, and our Lord has clearly warned us about his lies and deception.

● ● ● ●

■ It is said that time is the only currency we waste without knowing how much we have left, or checking the balance.

● ● ● ●

■ The words “I am sorry” mean little, until you hear them from a doctor. When a doctor says it, it is truly painful and deeply unsettling.



KUNA photo  
Chief of Kuwait National Guard, Sheikh Mubarak Homoud Al-Sabah receives Czech Ambassador to the country, Juraj Chmiel.

Kuwait, Czech eye boost in ties

KUWAIT CITY, July 16, (KUNA): Chief of Kuwait National Guard, Sheikh Mubarak Homoud Al-Sabah, discussed boosting bilateral ties with Czech Ambassador to the

country, Juraj Chmiel, on Wednesday. KNG mentioned in a statement that the Chief affirmed furthering coordination and cooperation between the two sides.

KD 1mn fraud suspect held

Liquor factory raided

KUWAIT CITY, July 16: Officers from the Capital Investigations Department arrested a citizen wanted by law in connection with four financial cases, in which the amount involved is about KD1 million, reports Al-Anba daily.

The arrest was executed through a carefully planned entrapment that left the suspect no opportunity to resist. According to a security source, investigators received information that the suspect was hiding at the diwaniya of a relative in Farwaniya Governorate. A team was quickly mobilized and located the vehicle of the suspect.

To carry out the arrest discreetly, a Capital Investigations patrol staged a scenario in which their vehicle appeared stuck behind the suspect’s car. When the wanted individual stepped out to assist, officers moved in and arrested him on the spot.

The suspect was referred to the Enforcement General Department for legal proceedings.

□ □ □

**Liquor factory raided:** The Ministry of Interior has announced that security personnel uncovered a large illegal alcohol manufacturing factory in an abandoned house Sabah Al-Salem after receiving information on the suspicious activities of Asians frequenting the place, reports Al-Rai daily.

In a press statement, the ministry confirmed that patrols were immediately dispatched to the area to monitor the site. During surveillance, the officers noticed a vehicle driven by an Indian leaving the house under suspicious circumstances. Security personnel stopped the vehicle and detected a strong, foul odor coming from inside.

A search of the vehicle revealed about 1,160 plastic bottles containing alcoholic beverages ready for sale.

When the suspect was escorted back to the house, the officers discovered a fully equipped facility for manufacturing alcohol; including three distillation devices, 210 barrels containing alcoholic beverage and 20 empty barrels.

The accused and all seized items were referred to the competent authorities for legal measures.

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**Expat swindled:** An investigator at the Jahra Police Station has asked officers in Jahra Investigation Unit to apprehend and question two Bedouns accused of defrauding an expatriate in a bogus livestock investment, reports Al-Anba daily.

According to case details, the victim – an expatriate born in 1980 -- filed a complaint stating he has been friends with the accused for a long time. He said they persuaded him to invest in a business -- buy and sell of ‘halal’ camels, promising good profits once the animals are resold.

The complainant disclosed that he transferred KD2,400 to the accused in four installments through WAMD service: KD10 initially, KD390 in the second payment and KD 1,000 each in the third and fourth transactions.

After receiving the funds, the suspects allegedly evaded communication, ignored repeated calls, and eventually told him, “There is no halal,” refusing to return the money without any explanation.

He stated that the incident took place on March 28 in front of a well-known market in Jahra.

Investigators plan to confront the accused with the pieces of evidence submitted by the complainant, including bank records and transaction documents confirming the transfers.

Many shops selling fake goods

KUWAIT CITY, July 16: The Ministry of Commerce and Industry ( MoCI) announced the seizure of 1,625 counterfeit items from several mobile phone accessory stores, including earphones, charging cables, and other related products, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

In a statement, the ministry revealed that inspection campaigns carried out by emergency teams led to the issuance of violations against the offending stores, with legal action

taken accordingly. Meanwhile, Hawally detectives referred a case of alleged threat and attempted arson to the Public Prosecution after both parties insisted on their conflicting statements during the investigation, reports Al-Anba daily. Details of the case -- classified as a ‘misdemeanor’ -- revealed that a citizen born in 1989 filed a report accusing another citizen, born in 1970, of attempting to set him on fire on May 27.

Crime Briefs

KFF, PAAET courses for women

KUWAIT CITY, July 16: Kuwait Fire Force (KFF), in cooperation with the Public Authority for Applied Education and Training (PAAET), has announced the start of registration for the first training semester of 2025/2026 for the “Fire Sergeant - Female” course, which will be available from July 20 to July 29, reports Al-Anba daily.

In a press statement, KFF explained that registration and completion of the application form for the course will be done through the official website <http://paaet.edu.kw>. The announced course for “Fire Sergeant - Female” includes Military Administration, Radio Operator, and Public Relations & Media.

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**Panel to review appeals:** Chair of the Supreme Judicial Council, Counselor Dr. Adel Boursely has issued a decision to form a specialized committee to review all appeals submitted to the Court of Cassation, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

According to the decision, the committee will classify appeals by type - criminal, administrative, civil, commercial, labor, personal status and family matters, as well as requests submitted by judicial personnel. The committee is tasked with completing its work within one month from the

start date.



Dr. Boursely

case allocation and hearing schedules based on priority.

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**Wanted expat nabbed:** The Ahmadi Security Directorate patrol officers arrested an expatriate wanted by law for involvement in a criminal case and evading a prison sentence, reports Al-Anba daily.

The officers were conducting routine patrol in Mahboula at night recently when they noticed a suspicious vehicle whose driver attempted to flee upon noticing police presence.

The officers pursued the car, forced the driver to stop and questioned him. They discovered that he is an expatriate wanted by law.

He was referred to the Sentences Enforcement General Department.

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# Municipal Council reshapes rules on housing, names and urban planning

Capital Governorate processes 117 permits

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

**KUWAIT CITY, July 16: The Municipal Council, chaired by Abdullah Al-Mahri, held its third regular session for the fourth term on Tuesday, during which it approved the final amendments to Table Two detailing the requirements and specifications for investment housing buildings. The council also approved the following:**

- Request of Public Authority for Youth to determine the location of the Kuwait Technology Entrepreneurship Complex (formerly known as the Technology Business City) and to modify some of the project's components in Mubarak Al-Abdullah Al-Jaber (Block Four);
- Two proposals of council member Alia Al-Farsi regarding parking spaces for investment housing and allocating an emergency lane on main roads;
- Letter of the Ministry of Health regarding health supervision of waste landfills;
- Donation of Kuwait International Bank for the beautification and development of Abdul Razzaq Gate;
- Request of the Ministry of Social Affairs to allocate a ground-level connecting walkway between the central market building of Qadisiya Cooperative Society and its vegetable branch and administration building;
- Request of the Public Authority for Sports to increase the height of the football stadium building of Kuwait Sports Club in Kaifan;
- Request of the Kuwait Municipality to amend

Articles Four and Five of the Municipal Council's decision dated Sept 18, 2023 regarding the rules and regulations for naming cities, suburbs, areas and streets to align with the two Cabinet decisions.

The approved amendments include prohibiting naming cities, suburbs and areas after people except those who assumed the position of Amir or Crown Prince in the State of Kuwait. Naming roads, streets and squares after people shall be for the rulers of the State of Kuwait, kings, sultans, princes, heads of sisterly and friendly countries, historical figures, and some members of the ruling family. Naming roads after countries, cities and capitals is also permissible, based on the principle of reciprocity. Some streets, avenues and squares that do not bear the names of people shall retain their current names; while committing to stopping the naming of roads, streets and squares and moving towards numbering them instead.

Meanwhile, the Municipal Council returned to the Hawally Governorate Committee the request of the Environment Public Authority (EPA) to add a coffee shop activity to the Environmental Pollutants Building in Salmiya (Block One).

Member Fahad Al-Abduljader stressed that the recently approved regulations for investment housing buildings in and outside Kuwait City are considered a qualitative leap in organizing and developing this vital sector in line with the requirements of urban growth. He pointed out the most prominent aspects like raising the percentage of construction in and outside the city, and allowing the establishment of commercial stores on the ground floor at a specific percentage. He also affirmed the municipal approval to add the activity of charitable associations and charities among the uses permitted to exploit the entire property with special technical specifications.

Member Alia Al-Farsi stated that adding some

articles in the investment housing regulations that encourage the investor to establish parking spaces within the investment building, for example, but not limited to the percentages for building parking floors are not calculated within the total building ratios, while maintaining the heights, aims to limit the random spread of cars around investment housing buildings, which disrupts the quality of life and traffic safety, hinders the mechanism for accessing buildings, and causes visual pollution. "We encourage the investor to build parking spaces," she asserted.

In addition, the Technical Committee in the Municipal Council, chaired by Munira Al-Amir, approved the regulatory plots project in Al-Qibla during its meeting on Tuesday.

The committee decided to return to the executive branch the request to reorganize a number of plots and public facilities in the same area in accordance with the rules and conditions for regulatory plots. This request will be made in coordination with the ministries of Interior and Public Works, as well as other relevant service agencies. The committee will be provided with the final study on the regulatory project.

It rejected the proposal of members Abdul Latif Al-Da'i and Sharifa Al-Shalfan regarding the identification of medium-density housing sites in the existing urban area.

On the other hand, statistics from the Public Relations Department at Kuwait Municipality revealed that the Engineering Licensing Department in the Capital Governorate Municipality branch completed 117 transactions in June. These transactions included the issuance of licenses for private, investment, industrial, commercial and other housing types.

The department also issued 79 letters, including outgoing letters and letters in response to the Ministry of Commerce and Industry.

## AACSB renews KU accreditation

### MoE urges district directors to address audit remarks swiftly

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

KUWAIT CITY, July 16: The Public Education Sector at the Ministry of Education urged the directors of educational districts to quickly respond to the observations included in the report of the State Audit Bureau (SAB) on the audit, inspection and review results for fiscal 2024/2025.



Al-Dhafiri

The newspaper obtained a copy of the official letter of acting Assistant Undersecretary for Public Education Mansour Al-Dhafiri in this regard; stating that a number of observations were identified in the report of SAB, requiring documented responses from the concerned educational districts.

The letter included tables detailing the observations and identifying the responsible parties. Some of these observations relate to the accounting operations in the bank statements of some educational districts; as well as observations related to internal oversight of the grants and donations received by their affiliated entities,

the breakdown of invoices in some schools and other observations.

Al-Dhafiri stressed the importance of dealing with these comments urgently, and the necessity of providing supporting documents for the required responses, in order to ensure that the requirements of financial and administrative oversight of the ministry's performance are met.

Meanwhile, the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB) has approved the recommendation of the audit team it assigned to review the file of the College of Business Administration at Kuwait University to renew its academic accreditation for a period of six years.

With this step, the college maintains its position as one of the distinguished academic institutions in this field worldwide.

Acting Dean of the college Dr. Talaa Al-Daihani stated that the academic accreditation was renewed after the team's visit in April 2025.

He explained that the success of the college in renewing its accreditation is the culmination of the efforts and well-thought-out plans made over the years by all of its members, and a declaration of the success of its plans for continuous development and modernization.

## Kuwait Municipality launches 4th construction safety drive

KUWAIT CITY, July 16: Kuwait Municipality has announced that it will carry out the fourth campaign of safety departments in its branches on Thursday, reports Al-Jarida daily.

The campaign will be led by the supervisory team at the Safety Department in the Hawally branch, as part of a series of field inspections planned by safety teams in each governorate.

According to the Municipality, the campaign will focus on monitoring safety practices at construction sites and evaluating the extent to which contractors are complying with safety regulations.

The campaign underscores the ongoing efforts of the Municipality to ensure that construction activities adhere to safety standards and to promote a secure working environment in all projects.

## DDI represents Kuwait at 85th ADA conference

KUWAIT CITY, July 16, (KUNA): Dasman Diabetes Institute (DDI) participated in the 85th annual Scientific Session of the American Diabetes Association (ADA), held in Chicago, representing Kuwait in one of the world's leading events on diabetes research.

DDI Acting Director General Dr. Faisal Al-Refaei stated that the institute's participation was the largest of its kind from the Arab region, featuring several scientific presentations and research posters from the institute's research team.

Al-Rifai added that many research projects of common interest were also discussed during the meetings held on the sidelines of the conference between the institute - affiliated to the Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sciences (KFAS) - and some of the prestigious international bodies and universities participating.

The initiative is part of the institute's broader strategy to expand international collaboration in advanced diabetes research, in line with efforts to combat the disease and its complications through scientific studies.



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Ahmadi Governor receives Turkish Ambassador to Kuwait Tubi Nur Sonmez, the Head of the UN-Habitat Mission in Kuwait Dr. Amira Al-Hassan, and Mohammed Bilal, Third Secretary at the Turkish Embassy.

## Ahmadi Governor meets Turkish Ambassador & UN-Habitat Head

KUWAIT CITY, July 16: Ahmadi Governor Sheikh Hamoud Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah received at his office in the Ahmadi Governorate's General Diwan the Turkish Ambassador to Kuwait Tubi Nur Sonmez, the Head of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) Mission in Kuwait and the Arabian Gulf Dr. Amira Al-Hassan, and the Third Secretary at the Turkish Embassy, Mohammed Bilal.

According to a press release issued by Ahmadi Governorate, the governor warmly welcomed Ambassador Sonmez, wishing her success and continued progress in strengthening relations between the two

countries.

The meeting focused on bilateral relations between the two countries, and explored ways to enhance cooperation in various fields.

Ambassador Sonmez expressed her gratitude for the warm reception, and praised the exceptional care provided to the diplomatic mission and Turkish citizens at both official and popular levels in Kuwait. During the meeting, the governor discussed the Kuwaiti-Turkish Friendship Park initiative with Ambassador Sonmez and Dr. Amira Al-Hassan, and commended all development efforts aimed at benefiting society.

## Kuwaiti Lulwa Al-Jawhar nominated to Arab Girl Guides Regional Committee

KUWAIT CITY, July 16: Kuwait is participating in the 24th Arab Regional Conference for Girl Guides, scheduled to take place in Algeria from August 9 to 11, with girl guide leaders attending from various Arab countries, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The Kuwait Girl Guides Association has nominated Lulwa Al-Jawhar for membership in the Arab Regional Committee for the 2025-2028 term, along with eight other candidates from the Arab world.

Al-Jawhar presented a vision titled "Step by Step... Hand in Hand with Girl Guides." As the youngest candidate on the list, under the age of 30, she represents the empowerment of young leaders and amplifies the voices of the new generation within the guiding movement.

The conference aims to strengthen girls' participation in leadership roles, review strategies to develop guiding work in the region, and elect a new committee to lead the next phase.



Al-Seyassah photo  
Lulwa Al-Jawhar

## Court refers ex-MP case for panel change

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

KUWAIT CITY, July 16: The Criminal Court referred the case of former MP Mohammad Al-Mutair, who has been accused of insulting HH the Amir, to the head of the Court of First Instance to take the appropriate action regarding designating another panel to hear the case.

This decision was taken after the lawyer of Al-Mutair submitted a request to change the panel for the second time.

Last week, Al-Mutair sent a letter to the Court of Appeals; requesting that the court panel recuse from hearing his other case, in which he is accused of insulting HH the Amir and the judiciary. The court then decided to suspend consideration of the case, pending a decision on the recusal request.



Kuwaiti medical team makes history with robotic surgery innovation

Amir congratulates doctors on global medical achievement

KUWAIT CITY, July 16, (KUNA): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah sent congratulatory cables on Wednesday to Minister of Health Dr. Ahmad Al-Awadhi, along with Dr. Saad Al-Dossari on the global medical accomplishment of performing nine remote robotic surgeries.

In the cables, His Highness the Amir expressed sincere congratulations for the specialized medical team, praising the “historic” achievement, which reflects the

national medical cadres’ capabilities and Kuwait’s health system’s ability to keep pace with latest developments in the field.

His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah sent congratulatory cables on Wednesday to Minister of Health Dr. Ahmad Al-Awadhi and to Dr. Saad Al-Dossari on the global medical accomplishment of performing nine remote robotic surgeries.

In the cables, His Highness wished them and the medical team continued success in serving their country.

His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah sent congratulatory cables on Wednesday to Minister of Health Dr. Ahmad Al-Awadhi and to Dr. Saad Al-Dossari’s team on the global medical accomplishment of performing nine remote robotic surgeries.

Calls grow to overhaul Kuwait’s family laws



Panelists at the symposium.



Symposium attendees, legal and social experts present.

Photos by Samer Shaqair

Experts cite outdated provisions, urge urgent legislative reform

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

KUWAIT CITY, July 16: In a serious call for reform of the legal system related to the family, participants in a symposium organized by the Kuwaiti Society for the Prevention of Family Disintegration under the slogan, “Stable Families... Stable Society”, agreed on the necessity of amending Personal Status Law No. 51/1984, along with the related laws, such as the Law on Protection from Domestic Violence, Child Rights Law and Family Court Law.

The participants pointed out that the reality has revealed legislative shortcomings, which threaten the stability of Kuwaiti families.

Ibrahim Al-Kandari called for total abolition of the current Personal Status Law; arguing that it is inconsistent with the customs and traditions of Kuwaiti society. He said that those who drafted the law derived majority of its provisions -- around 70 percent -- from the Hanafi school, not the Maliki school, as some have claimed. He cited the imposition of a ‘breastfeeding fee’ as one example, which is applied only in the Hanafi school.

He added “the current law cannot achieve family stability, as it contains burdensome provisions for the husband and does not take into account the specificities of the Kuwaiti society. The provisions on visitation and custody of the divorced husband are incomplete, because he is not allowed to spend time with his children in his residence. The legislator did not address the issue of children spending the night with the father, and limited visitation to visitation centers without taking into account the geographical and social reality in Kuwait.”

He stated that the Court of Cassa-



One of the speakers at the forum.

tion once ruled that visitation aims to connect the child to his family and maintain kinship ties, but the practical application undermined this goal. He also confirmed the issuance of court rulings that revoked the custody of mothers who refused to allow fathers to see their children.

He talked about a loophole in determining the age of custody, indicating that “the law does not specify when custody ends. A girl’s custody ends with marriage and consummation, and a boy’s upon reaching puberty, without clarifying what happens after that. The result is that the father is exempted from alimony without having the right to reside with his children.”

Moreover, Attorney Hawra Al-Habib asserted that current laws suffer from legislative shortcomings that do not keep pace with societal changes. She said the vision in practical application is severely flawed, which negatively affected the children. She clarified that the Family Court Law lacks regulation of “children’s overnight stays,” leaving a legislative vacuum that has been filled through some court rulings. She added both parties in divorce cases face two major shortcomings: the man’s right to see the children and the woman’s right to alimony, without clear controls or unified criteria for rulings.

She presented an important proposal -- mandatory pre-divorce

courses for spouses, which include explaining their rights and the legal and social consequences of divorce that may contribute to preventing disputes.

On the controversy surrounding the Child Protection Law, she stressed that the law does not encourage children to rebel against their parents, and that disciplinary beatings are not criminalized unless they reach the level of violence. Despite some shortcomings, she considers the law one of the best and most protective of children’s rights.

She also disclosed that the Child Center of the Lawyers Association submitted recommendations to the Legislative Committee formed by the justice minister; including amendments to the Personal Status Law, Domestic Violence Law and Child Law.

She called for the issuance of effective executive regulations that ensure the implementation of the provisions, particularly the protection of the family and children.

She confirmed that the right to visitation is the right of the child first, before being the right of the father or mother, and that restricting this right to a few hours in visitation centers undermines the child’s best interests. She attributed the impact of these practices to the increase of cases involving juveniles and psychological problems.

Continued from Page 1

Kuwait tightens

with the law of the Central Bank of Kuwait or any other applicable legislation.

**Article 2:**

Persons licensed by the Capital Markets Authority (CMA) to practice the activity of investment portfolio managers may open and manage investment portfolios for non-Kuwaiti clients. These portfolios may include securities issued by companies listed on the stock exchange whose objectives include real estate dealings or units of real estate funds.

**Article 3:**

Listed companies, real estate funds, and investment portfolios licensed by the relevant regulatory authorities in Kuwait are prohibited from engaging in any transactions involving real estate, plots, or land designated for private residential purposes, whether by sale, purchase, mortgage, transfer of rights, authorization to dispose of the property to a third party, or acceptance of such authorization on behalf of a third party, except for the exceptions granted to units supervised by the Central Bank of Kuwait or any other exceptions specified by law.

**Article 4:**

Ownership of any real estate shares in kind may not be transferred to non-Kuwaitis in the event of the liquidation of a listed company or real estate fund, without prejudice to their right to receive an amount equivalent to their share of the liquidation proceeds, unless they have legal grounds permitting such ownership in accordance with the applicable laws.

**Article 5:**

The provisions of this decree shall not affect the treatment of Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) citizens as Kuwaitis, in accordance with the relevant regulations. Nor shall they affect any provisions regulating real estate ownership contained in other laws. Such cases shall remain subject to the provisions of the laws, regulations, and decisions governing them.

**Article 6:**

Each minister, within their respective jurisdiction, shall implement this decree, which shall take effect from the date of its publication in the official gazette “Kuwait Al-Youm”.

Kuwait grants

■ **Family Visit Visa** - issued to individuals who wish to visit family members residing in Kuwait for family gatherings or social occasions. The eligible applicants are relatives of

residents. The application must be submitted by a family member residing in Kuwait and the duration of stay is 30 days from the date of entry.

■ **Government Visit Visa** - issued to government officials visiting Kuwait for official purposes, such as participating in international conferences or bilateral governmental meetings. The eligible applicants are government entities. It must be based on an official invitation from the hosting government agency and subject to specific diplomatic protocols. The duration of stay is 30 days from the date of entry

■ **Commercial Visit Visa** - issued to individuals traveling to Kuwait for business purposes, such as attending meetings, conferences or establishing partnerships with local companies. The eligible applicants are local companies hosting businesspersons, organizing meetings or conducting contract signings. This includes businesspeople, representatives of foreign companies and institutions, major companies and hotels. The duration of stay is 30 days from the date of entry.

Cabinet refers

The ministers also were informed about the signing of the declaration of content between Kuwait and France, in the presence of His Highness the Amir and President Macron.

The declaration aims to boost collaboration in culture and mark the 65th anniversary of diplomatic relations between the two countries in 2026.

In addition, the Cabinet was briefed on the results of His Highness the Amir’s meeting with French Minister Delegate for Foreign Trade and French Nationals Abroad Laurent Saint-Martin on the importance of backing investment opportunities in some vital sectors, along other results of the meetings the Amir held with French officials.

The ministers were informed about the letters sent to His Highness the Amir from the heads of sisterly and friendly countries on enhancing bilateral relations and activating cooperation between Kuwait and these states.

Afterward, the Cabinet saw a visual presentation delivered by Sheikh Ahmad Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, President of the Government Performance Follow-Up Agency, and several officials, on the 2024 annual report, which included some points such as monitoring ministerial decisions, government projects, and the adherence of

government entities to Cabinet Resolution No. 713 of 2024.

The ministers also saw a presentation by Minister of Commerce and Industry Khalifa Al-Ajail on the launch of the second phase of the third stage of the Capital Market Authority (CMA) system development project. This project is considered one of CMA’s most significant strategic projects as part of the country’s development plan.

Al-Ajail affirmed CMA’s commitment to fully implementing Law No. 7 /2010 and advancing its operations in a way that enhances Kuwait’s economic and financial standing.

In addition, the Cabinet saw a presentation by the Minister of Information and Culture and Minister of State for Youth Affairs Abdulrahman Al-Mutairi on the Kuwait Cultural Path Project. The project aims to provide a rich cultural and tourism experience that reflects Kuwait’s identity, strengthens national awareness, and preserves the nation’s historical memory for future generations.

Al-Mutairi emphasized that the project is a main pillar of the national development plan and the New Kuwait 2035 vision, positioning it as a distinctive cultural and tourism destination.

The Cabinet decided to refer the Cultural Path Project to the relevant ministerial committee for further study. It then proceeded to discuss and approve several other items listed on the agenda.

Muthanna Complex

The letter emphasized the necessity of vacating the entire complex, including all commercial and residential units, within a maximum period of 30 days from the date of the letter.

However, legal experts confirmed that this procedure is illegal, as eviction can only be carried out following a demolition permit, with tenants granted a six-month grace period. In cases of renovations, eviction and evacuation of the leased property are not required.

In a related development, the Public-Private Partnership Authority announced an invitation to submit bids for public auction No. 2/2025 concerning the modernization, development, repair, radical maintenance, management, operation, and periodic maintenance of the Muthanna Complex project.

Black magic

He had previously been arrested approximately 20 years ago by the Anti-Financial Crimes Department on the same charges, legal action was taken against him at the time, and he was required to pledge not to repeat such practices.

The accused and the seized items were referred to the specialized authorities for legal action.

The Interior Ministry affirmed that it would not tolerate such illegal practices, which harm society and exploit people’s needs and vulnerability, and advised everyone to refrain from dealing with such individuals and to report them immediately through official channels. All forms of black magic are criminalized in Kuwait, as they are strictly prohibited in Islam.

Kuwait, India

the two friendly countries, exchanged views and technical expertise in the field of civil aviation in general, and discussed the latest developments in the air transport market.

Both sides also evaluated efforts to develop civil aviation sector in tune with the passengers’ aspirations and the requirements of the next stage.

The talks were attended by Kuwaiti Ambassador to India Mishal Mustafa Al-Shemali, Chairman of the Board of Directors of Kuwait Airways Abdulmohsen Al-Faqan, Chairman of the Board of Directors of Jazeera Airways Marwan Boodai, a delegation from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and technical team from the Directorate General of Civil Aviation.

These talks resulted in the signing of a new memorandum of understanding that includes provisions to serve the air transport market in both countries.

Kuwait welcomes

As clashes have raged for days in the southern Syrian city of Sweida between government forces and Druze armed groups, Israel has launched dozens of strikes targeting government troops and convoys, which it says are in support of the religious minority group, and has vowed to escalate its involvement.

The escalating violence appears to be the most serious threat yet to the ability of Syria’s new rulers to consolidate control of the country after a rebel offensive led by Islamist insurgent groups ousted longtime despotic leader, Bashar Assad, in December, bringing an end to a nearly 14-year civil war.

Decision restores dignity: defence

Acquitted man ‘vindicated’ as court orders clean digital slate

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

KUWAIT CITY, July 16: The Court of Appeals overturned the decision of the ministries of Interior and Justice to refrain from deleting the data of a citizen acquitted of indecent assault from their automated systems despite the issuance of a final ruling on the acquittal of the accused and the restoration of his reputation.

The court affirmed that the failure of the administrative authorities to take the necessary technical and legal measures to erase the case data is a negative decision that violates the law and causes material and moral harm to citizens, threatens their reputation and disrupts their daily transactions. The court pointed out that judicial intervention is necessary to remove it.

The case dates back to 2019, when the citizen was referred for trial on indecent assault charges. The court issued a final acquittal in 2020. The verdict was upheld on appeal and not appealed before the Court of Cassation, giving it final status. Despite this, the case data remained visible in the electronic systems of the ministries of Interior and Justice, prompting the citizen to submit a request for restoration of his reputation in 2024. This request was later rejected, so he filed a lawsuit, which was rejected as well. He then appealed the ruling before the Court of Appeals, which ruled in his favor.

The Court of Appeals explained that keeping the case data in the systems of the two ministries despite the acquittal of the accused is an unlawful failure to take a necessary decision, in accordance with Article 244 of the Code of

Criminal Procedure and Trials, stipulating that rehabilitation nullifies the conviction and all its effects, including the complete blocking of data from non-competent authorities. The court responded to the administrative authorities’ arguments that the data was kept confidential within the systems, deeming this confidentiality “formal” if the information was accessible to unauthorized employees and impacted the citizen’s daily rights, even though the case did not appear in the criminal record.

The court accepted the appeal in form and in substance, overturned the initial ruling, and rescinded the negative decision and all its consequences. It also ordered the ministries of Interior and Justice to delete the case data from their systems and to bear legal expenses including attorneys’ fees.

The defense in the case was undertaken by Attorney Fahd Al-Shammari, who explained that the ruling is a victory for the proper application of the law. He asserted in a press statement that the ruling restores the dignity of his client and establishes the principle that acquittal must be followed by the erasure of effects, which could hinder a person’s life, especially in daily dealings.

Al-Shammari added that the court established an important legal rule, which balances the requirements of security and the rights of individuals to regain their legal and social status. “We welcome this ruling, which does justice to the citizen and grants him the right to open a new page, free of legal restrictions. It is an actual application of the philosophy of restoring dignity as intended by the Kuwaiti legislator,” he concluded.





California National Guard are positioned at the Federal Building on June 10, in downtown Los Angeles. (AP)

# Pentagon ends deployment of 2,000 National Guard troops in Los Angeles

LOS ANGELES, July 16, (AP): The Pentagon said Tuesday it is ending the deployment of 2,000 National Guard troops in Los Angeles, accounting for nearly half of the soldiers sent to the city to deal with protests over the Trump administration’s immigration crackdown.

Roughly 4,000 National Guard soldiers and 700 Marines have been in the city since early June. It wasn’t immediately clear what prompted the 60-day deployment to end suddenly, nor was it immediately clear how long the rest of the troops would stay in the region.

In late June, the top military commander in charge of troops deployed to LA had asked Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth for 200 of them to be returned to wildfire fighting duty amid warnings from California Gov. Gavin Newsom that the Guard was understaffed as California entered peak wildfire season.

The end of the deployment comes a week after federal authorities and National Guard troops arrived at MacArthur Park with guns and horses in an operation that ended abruptly. Although the U.S. Department of Homeland Security wouldn’t explain the purpose of the operation or whether anyone had been arrested, local officials said it seemed designed to sow fear.

“Thanks to our troops who stepped up to answer the call, the lawlessness in Los Angeles is subsiding.” Chief Pentagon spokesman Sean Parnell said in a statement in announcing the decision.

On June 8, thousands of protesters took to the streets in response to Trump’s deployment of the Guard, blocking off a major freeway as law enforcement used tear gas, rubber bullets and flash bangs to control the crowd. Photos captured several Waymo robotaxis set on fire.

A day later, police officers used flash bangs and shot projectiles as they pushed protesters through Little Tokyo, where bystanders and restaurant workers rushed to get out of their way.

Mayor Karen Bass set a curfew in place for about a week that she said had successfully protected businesses and helped restore order. Demonstrations in the city and the region in recent weeks have been largely small impromptu protests around arrests.

Bass applauded the troops’ departure.

“This happened because the people of Los Angeles stood united and stood strong. We organized peaceful protests, we came together at rallies, we took the Trump administration to court

- all of this led to today’s retreat,” she said in a statement, adding that “We will not stop making our voices heard until this ends, not just here in LA, but throughout our country.”

Bass said in a press conference that the National Guard’s primary mission has been to guard two buildings that “frankly didn’t need to be guarded.”

“I am hoping that this experiment with the lives of people ends here,” she said.

On Tuesday afternoon, there was no visible military presence outside the federal complex downtown that had been the center of early protests and where National Guard troops first stood guard before the Marines were assigned to protect federal buildings. Hundreds of the soldiers have been accompanying agents on immigration operations.

President Donald Trump ordered the deployment against the wishes of Newsom, who sued to stop it.

Newsom argued that Trump violated the law when he deployed the California National Guard troops despite his opposition. He also argued that the National Guard troops were likely violating the Posse Comitatus Act, which prohibits troops from conducting civilian law enforcement on U.S. soil.

## VP Vance breaks the tie

# US Senate votes to move ahead with Trump’s request for \$9 bln in spending cuts

WASHINGTON, July 16, (AP): Senate Republicans on Tuesday advanced President Donald Trump’s request to cancel some \$9 billion in previously approved spending, overcoming concerns from some lawmakers about what the rescissions could mean for impoverished people around the globe and for public radio and television stations in their home states.

The Senate vote was 50-50, with Vice President JD Vance breaking the tie.

A final vote in the Senate could occur as early as Wednesday. The bill would then return to the House for another vote before it would go to Trump’s desk for his signature before a Friday deadline.

Republicans winnowed down the president’s request by taking out his proposed \$400 million cut to a program known as PEPFAR. That change increased the prospects for the bill’s passage. The politically popular program is credited with saving millions of lives since its creation under then-President George W. Bush to combat HIV/AIDS.

The president is also looking to claw back money for foreign aid programs

targeted by his Department of Government Efficiency and for the Corporation for Public Broadcasting.

“When you’ve got a \$36 trillion debt, we have to do something to get spending under control,” said Senate Majority Leader John Thune, R-S.D.

Republicans met with Russ Vought, the director of the White House Office of Management and Budget, during their weekly conference luncheon as the White House worked to address their concerns. He fielded about 20 questions from senators.

The White House campaign to win over potential holdouts had some success. Sen. Mike Rounds, R-S.D., tweeted that he would vote to support the measure after working with the administration to “find Green New Deal money that could be reallocated to continue grants to tribal radio stations without interruption.”

Some senators worried that the cuts to public media could decimate many of the 1,500 local radio and television stations around the country that rely on some federal funding to operate. The Corporation for Public Broadcasting distributes more than 70% of its funding to those stations.



US Senate Majority Leader John Thune (center), joined at left by Sen John Barrasso, the GOP whip, as Senate Republicans are exploring changes to President Donald Trump’s request to cancel \$9.4 billion in previously approved spending targeted by DOGE, at the Capitol in Washington on July 15. (AP)

Maine Sen. Susan Collins, the Republican chair of the Senate Appropriations Committee, said she was particularly concerned about a lack of specifics from the White House.

problem is that OMB has never provided the details that would normally be part of this process.”

Sen. Lisa Murkowski, R-Alaska, said she didn’t want the Senate to be going through numerous rounds of rescissions.

“We are lawmakers. We should be legislating,” Murkowski said. “What we’re getting now is a direction from the White House and being told: ‘This is the priority and we want you to execute on it. We’ll be back with you with another round.’ I don’t accept that.”

Sen. Mitch McConnell, R-Ky., Collins and Murkowski joined with Democrats in voting against the Senate taking up the measure.

McConnell said he wanted to make clear he didn’t have any problem with reducing spending, but agreed with Collins that lawmakers didn’t have enough details from the White House.

“They would like a blank check is what they would like. And I don’t think that’s appropriate,” McConnell said.

But the large majority of Republicans were supportive of Trump’s request.

“This bill is a first step in a long but necessary fight to put our nation’s fiscal house in order,” said Sen. Eric Schmitt, R-Mo.

Democrats warned that it’s absurd to expect them to work with Republicans on bipartisan spending measures if Republicans turn around a few months later and use their majority to cut the parts they don’t like.

“It shreds the appropriations process,” said Sen. Angus King, an independent from Maine who caucuses with Democrats. “The Appropriations Committee, and indeed this body, becomes a rubber stamp for whatever the administration wants.”

Democratic leader Chuck Schumer, D-N.Y., said that tens of millions of Americans rely on local public radio and television stations for local news, weather alerts and educational programs. He warned that many could lose access to that information because of the rescissions.

“And these cuts couldn’t come at a worse time,” Schumer said. “The floods in Texas remind us that speedy alerts and up-to-the-minute forecasts can mean the difference between life and death.”

## America

**Heavy rains kill two in New Jersey:** Two people in New Jersey were killed after their vehicle was swept up in floodwaters during a storm that moved across the U.S. Northeast overnight, authorities said Tuesday.

Gov **Phil Murphy**, a Democrat, noted the deaths occurred in the northern New Jersey city of Plainfield, where there were two storm-related deaths July 3. A third person was killed in North Plainfield during that previous storm.



Murphy

“We’re not unique, but we’re in one of these sort of high humidity, high temperature, high storm intensity patterns right now,” Murphy told reporters after touring storm damage in Berkeley Heights. “Everybody needs to stay alert.”

The names of the two latest victims were not immediately released Tuesday. Local officials said the vehicle they were riding in was swept into a brook during the height of the storm.

“Emergency personnel responded quickly, but tragically, both individuals were pronounced dead at the scene,” according to a statement the city posted online.

The heavy rains also caused flash floods in New York and south-central Pennsylvania on Monday night into early Tuesday, prompting road closures and snarling some service on the New York City subway. It was the second-highest one-hour rainfall ever recorded in Central Park at more than 2 inches (5 centimeters), surpassed only by the remnants of Hurricane Ida in 2021, according to local officials.

Viral videos posted online showed water flooding down into one Manhattan subway station, submerging the platform while passengers inside a train watched on. Janno Lieber, chair and CEO of the Metropolitan Transportation Authority, told ABC 7 in New York the city’s sewer system got overwhelmed by the rain and backed up into the subway tunnels and to the stations. In several cases, he said, the backup “popped a manhole,” creating the dramatic “geyser” seen in some videos. (AP)

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**Florida puts man to death:** A man convicted of fatally shooting two people outside a Florida bar in 1993 as part of an attempted revenge killing was executed Tuesday evening, the 26th person put to death in the US this year.

Michael Bernard Bell, 54, was pronounced dead at 6:25 pm after receiving a lethal injection at Florida State Prison near Starke, said Bryan Griffin, a spokesperson for Gov. Ron DeSantis. Bell was convicted in 1995 and sentenced to death for the murders of Jimmy West and Tamecka Smith.

When the team warden asked Bell if he had any final words, he responded, “Thank you for not letting me spend the rest of my life in prison.”

Strapped to a gurney, Bell was alert and looking around the death chamber as the drugs began to flow into his outstretched left arm. After about 2 minutes, he closed his eyes and stopped moving. His breathing became more labored for about a minute and then slowed.

At 6:15 pm, the team warden checked Bell’s eyes and shouted his name, but there was no response. The color began to drain from Bell’s face about 6:20 p.m. A medical worker entered the chamber at 6:24 pm and declared Bell dead a minute later. (AP)

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**4 rescued in plane crash:** Residents in a Miami suburb used an ax, fire extinguisher and garden hose to rescue four people from a small plane that crashed into a tree in yet another mishap near a busy South Florida airport.

“It was nothing short of heroic,” Angelo Castillo, the mayor of Pembroke Pines in Broward County, said Tuesday.

But Castillo is frustrated. He said there have been more than 30 crashes in the past five years on or around North Perry Airport, which serves small planes, though the airport disputes that figure. A local street is named for 4-year-old Taylor Bishop, one of three people who died when a plane crashed into an SUV in 2021.

“We need better assurances that these planes are not going to keep falling out of the sky,” Castillo said. “The airport was a dairy farm before World War II. Now it’s the busiest general aviation airport in Florida. But within a five-mile radius, there are approximately half a million people.”

A pilot and three passengers were approaching the airport in a Cessna T337G when the aircraft crashed into a tree in the Pines Village neighborhood around 8 p.m. Sunday, authorities said. (AP)

# Russia rejects Trump’s ultimatum on Ukraine as US steps up arms support

MOSCOW, July 16, (Agencies): Russia has rejected US President Donald Trump’s 50-day ultimatum to agree to an Ukraine ceasefire, dismissing the threat of “severe tariffs” as unacceptable.

Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Sergey Ryabkov emphasized that Moscow favors a diplomatic resolution to the Ukraine conflict and is ready to negotiate.

“However, if this is not met with a proper response, if we cannot reach our set goals through diplomacy, then the special military operation will go on,” he continued.

He said Moscow’s position is unshakable. “We expect Washington and NATO to take this seriously.”

Trump on Tuesday denied earlier allegations that he encouraged Kiev to strike deep into Russian territory, saying that he isn’t taking sides in the conflict and advised Ukraine “shouldn’t target Moscow” with long-range weapons.

Just one day before the clarification, Trump said at the Oval Office that the United States will send weapons to Ukraine through NATO, and threatened “severe tariffs” targeting Russia if a ceasefire deal is not reached in 50 days.

He said some of the first Patriot missile systems could arrive in Ukraine “within days.”

The Russian Foreign Ministry condemned the weapon deliveries as evidence that NATO countries are not interested in peace.

US Commerce Secretary Howard Lutnick said Trump’s reference to 100 percent secondary tariffs meant “economic sanctions.”

Meanwhile, Ukraine’s parliament on Tuesday voted to extend the country’s wartime status and military mobilization for another 90 days, through



In this photo provided by Ukraine’s 65th Mechanized Brigade press service, a local resident rides a bike along the street under an anti-drone net in Orikhiv, Zaporizhzhia region, Ukraine on July 15. (AP)

Nov. 5. Lawmakers also approved a temporary withdrawal from the Ottawa Convention, an international treaty that prohibits the use of anti-personnel landmines.

In another development, Russian weapons pounded four Ukrainian cities overnight from Tuesday to Wednesday, injuring at least 15 people in an attack that mostly targeted energy infrastructure, officials said.

The latest bombardment in Russia’s escalating aerial campaign against civilian areas came ahead of a Sept. 2 deadline set by Trump for the Kremlin to reach a peace deal in the three-year war, under the threat of possible severe Washington sanctions if it doesn’t.

No date has yet been publicly set for a possible third round of direct peace talks between delegations from Russia and Ukraine. Two previous rounds delivered no progress apart from prisoner

swaps.

Russia launched 400 Shahed and decoy drones, as well as one ballistic missile, during the night, the Ukrainian air force said. The strikes targeted northeastern Kharkiv, which is Ukraine’s second-largest city, President Volodymyr Zelenskyy’s hometown of Kryvyi Rih in central Ukraine, Vinnytsia in the west and Odesa in the south.

“Russia does not change its strategy,” Zelenskyy said. “To effectively counter this terror, we need a systemic strengthening of defense: more air defense, more interceptors, and more resolve so that Russia feels our response.”

Some US lawmakers and European government officials expressed misgivings that the 50-day deadline handed Putin the opportunity to capture more Ukrainian territory before any settlement to end the fighting.

## ‘Save money for indebted economy’

# French PM wants to cut 2 public holidays

PARIS, July 16, (AP): France’s prime minister has proposed the elimination of two public holidays from the country’s annual calendar - possibly Easter Monday and the day marking the Allied victory over the Nazis - to save money in next year’s budget.

That’s among a raft of spending cuts laid out by Prime Minister Francois Bayrou in a sweeping, and potentially doomed, budget plan. He argued that removing two state holidays would bring in tax revenues generated from economic activity, contributing to around 44 billion euros (\$51.3 billion) in overall savings.

President Emmanuel Macron tasked Bayrou with crafting a budget that shaves costs to bring down France’s staggering debt and deficit - while also adding billions in new defense spending to face what Macron says are resurgent threats from Russia and beyond.

Bayrou questioned the religious importance of Easter Monday. And Victory Day, celebrated on May 8, comes in a month that has become a “veritable Gruyere,” or holey cheese, of days off



French Prime Minister Francois Bayrou unveils plans for next year’s budget on July 15 in Paris. (AP)

that includes May Day and the Catholic holiday of Ascension, he said.

He said that those holidays were just suggestions, and that he was open to other ideas. France currently has 11 of-

ficial holidays per year.

With no parliamentary majority, Macron’s centrist grouping must win support from adversaries on the left and right to pass the budget this fall.

## Europe

**‘Czech Republic focusing on other projects’:** The Czech Republic will not join the purchase of US weapons for Ukraine at this time, Czech Prime Minister **Petr Fiala** said on Tuesday.

US President Donald Trump announced on Monday an agreement with the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) regarding weapons to assist Ukraine. Under the agreement, governments of Germany, Finland, Denmark, Sweden, Norway, the United Kingdom, the Netherlands and Canada will finance bulk purchases from US manufacturers and ship the equipment directly to Kiev.

“The Czech Republic is focusing on other projects and ways to help Ukraine,” Fiala told local media on Tuesday.

The Ministry of Defense confirmed to the Czech News

Agency later on Tuesday that it shares the prime minister’s position and has no plans to participate in the weapons purchase. (Xinhua)

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**Wildfires continue to rage in BiH:** Wildfires continue to burn in several areas of Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH), with firefighters struggling to contain multiple blazes near southern BiH’s Trebinje and Mostar.

Authorities in Trebinje said on Tuesday that the wildfire near the village of Dobromani remains active, with flames approaching populated areas. A helicopter from the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Republika Srpska, one of the two entities of BiH, has been deployed to assist, but the rugged terrain is complicating ground efforts. The priority remains the protection of local homes.

Meanwhile, a separate wildfire broke out in Mostar’s mountainous areas on Sunday, blanketing the area in smoke. Firefighters battled the flames for three consecutive days, aided by aerial support.

Local fire services confirmed that the fire is now under control, but teams remain on the ground, monitoring the situation. The helicopter of the Armed Forces of Bosnia and Herzegovina has returned to base. (Xinhua)



Fiala



Asia

**Chinese FM meets Kazakh deputy PM:** Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi met with Kazakh Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Murat Nurtleu in north China’s Tianjin on Tuesday.

Wang, also a member of the Political Bureau of the Communist Party of China Central Committee, said that under the guidance of the heads of state of the two countries, China-Kazakhstan relations are at their best in history.

China has always placed Kazakhstan in an important position in its neighborhood diplomacy and is willing to work with Kazakhstan to firmly support each other, consolidate political mutual trust and create more new highlights of cooperation, Wang said.

Noting that Kazakhstan is a founding member of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, Wang said that China looks forward to making joint efforts with Kazakhstan and other member states to ensure the complete success of the Tianjin summit.

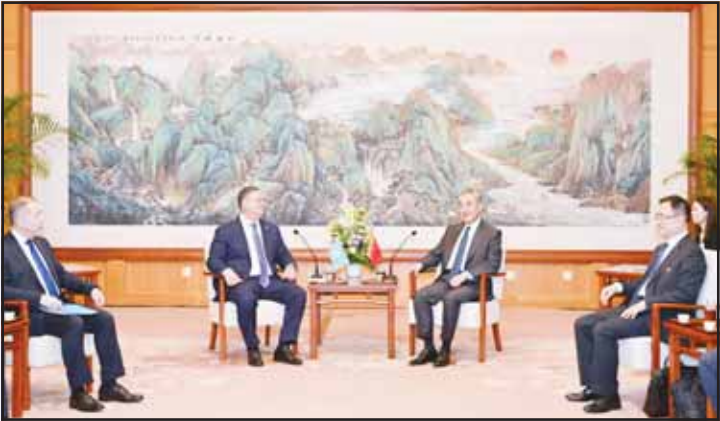
Nurtleu said that Kazakhstan fully supports all the cooperation initiatives proposed by China and is willing to make positive contributions to the holding of the Tianjin summit.

Kazakhstan is willing to work with China to implement the consensus reached by the two heads of state, prepare for high-level exchanges, deepen mutually beneficial cooperation on economy and trade, investment, energy, railways, and industrial park construction, enhance people-to-people and cultural exchanges, and promote the continuous development of bilateral relations, he said. (Xinhua)

**Torrential rain expected to hit Japan:** Japan’s weather agency warned Wednesday that torrential rain could hit eastern and western regions of the country, especially along the Pacific coast, through Thursday.

Warm and moist air flowing along the edge of a high-pressure system stretching around Japan has led to extremely unstable atmospheric conditions in areas along the Pacific, according to the Japan Meteorological Agency (JMA).

The agency said rain clouds are developing in parts of the Tokai, Kinki, Kanto-Koshin, and other regions, urging people to be on the alert for landslides and flooding in low-lying areas.



Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi, also a member of the Political Bureau of the Communist Party of China Central Committee, meets with Kazakh Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Murat Nurtleu in north China’s Tianjin, July 15. (Xinhua)

The JMA said that the high-pressure system will stretch westward through Thursday, bringing localized torrential rain in some areas as moist air flows into eastern and western Japan.

In the 24 hours through Thursday noon, up to 250 millimeters of rain is forecast in Shizuoka Prefecture, with up to 200 millimeters expected in other parts of the Tokai region. Up to 180 millimeters of rain is likely in the Kanto-Koshin region, and 120 millimeters in the Shikoku region. (Xinhua)

**2 killed after truck accident in Philippines:** Two people were killed after

their delivery truck crashed into a roadside tree in Quezon province, southeast of Manila, on Tuesday, local police said.

Police said the crash happened along a highway in Tagkawayan town while the truck was traveling southeast to deliver goods to Bicol region.

The truck driver and his assistant were pronounced dead at the scene. (Xinhua)

**West Australian woman charged with murder:** Police in Australia’s state of Western Australia (WA) have charged a woman with the murder of her infant son, Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC) reported on Tuesday.

The seven-month-old boy was found with stab wounds and declared deceased by emergency services at a home in the northern suburbs of Perth shortly after 3 a.m. local time on Monday.

His mother, a 31-year-old woman, was taken to the hospital under police guard and was on Tuesday night charged with murder.

Speaking at a press conference earlier on Tuesday, WA Police Commissioner Col Blanch said that the incident was being treated as a domestic violence homicide.

He said that other family members were home at the time of the baby’s death and that it was a confronting scene for first responders.

“There would be very few cases where you would have a crime scene of such a horrific nature for our officers and for first responders involved,” Blanch said. (Xinhua)

**‘Outback Killer’ Murdoch dies:** Bradley John Murdoch, known as the “Outback Killer” and convicted of murdering British backpacker Peter Falconio who vanished in arid central Australia 24 years ago, has died, authorities said Wednesday. He was 67.

Murdoch died on Tuesday night in the palliative care unit of the Alice Springs Hospital, according to a statement from the Northern Territory Department of Corrections. He was diagnosed with terminal throat cancer in 2019 and was recently transferred to the hospital from the Alice Springs prison.

His death leaves the mystery of the whereabouts of Falconio’s body unsolved. The territory’s police did not immediately respond to queries from The Associated Press whether Murdoch had provided any clues before he died. (Xinhua)

Cambodian PM Hun Manet orders authorities to stamp out online scams

PHNOM PENH, July 16, (Xinhua): Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Manet has ordered authorities to root out all online scam centers across the country, warning that any officials who obstruct crackdown operations could be fired.

In an order signed on Monday and publicized Tuesday night, Hun Manet said some foreign criminal groups have used Cambodia as a base for operating their illegal online activities.

He said the leaders of all cities and provinces, as well as police, “must be responsible for wiping out all online scam centers in their geographical and jurisdictional boundaries in accordance with law and regulations.”

The prime minister ordered the armed forces to get ready to provide support to the crackdown operations.

He also instructed authorities to prevent foreigners from illegally entering Cambodia and to deport anyone who has entered illegally, lives illegally, or engages in illegal activities in the Southeast Asian country.

“This order must be implemented

strictly and responsibly,” he said. “Failure to comply with the order or failure to cooperate in any case will be subject to evaluation in appointing, removing, or terminating a position.”

Hun Manet said the move aimed at maintaining and protecting security, public order, and social safety.

In the latest online scam suppression on Monday at an apartment building in the capital Phnom Penh’s Tuol Kork district, the authorities detained 149 Vietnamese nationals and 85 Cambodians, according to a City Hall’s report.

**Also:**

**VIENTIANE:** Officials from Laos and Cambodia gathered here for the first Laos-Cambodia Prosecutors’ Office Meeting on Cooperation in Combating Transnational Crime, with a particular focus on drug trafficking.

The meeting took place on Tuesday and brought together senior prosecutors from both countries to deepen cooperation, Lao News Agency reported on Wednesday.

In his speech, President of the Supreme People’s Prosecutor Office of Laos, Xaysana Khotphouthone, said that the meeting marked a significant milestone in strengthening bilateral judicial cooperation, noting that it reflects the deepening strategic partnership between the two nations and aims to reinforce collaboration in criminal prosecution, particularly in the fight against transnational and drug-related crimes.

Xaysana highlighted that the drug crisis has severely impacted all sectors of Lao society, from students and youth to rural communities, and warned that if left unaddressed, it could become a root cause of various crimes and a serious threat to national stability.

In response, the Lao government has declared drug control a national agenda, implementing stricter policies and targeted law enforcement strategies. In 2024, authorities recorded 5,012 drug-related cases, with an additional 1,422 cases reported in the first five months of 2025.



Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Manet, (second from left), visits a photo exhibition during an official inauguration of the Ream Naval Base in Sihanoukville, southwestern of Phnom Penh, Cambodia on April 5. (AP)



Refugees wait for food distribution at the Tine transit camp in Chad’s Wadi Fara province on May 3. (AP)

United Nations voices concern over escalating violence in Sudan

UNITED NATIONS, July 16, (Xinhua): UN humanitarianists said Tuesday they are gravely concerned by escalating fighting in Sudan, mainly attacks in North Kordofan State.

The UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) said attacks from Thursday through Sunday on villages near Bara in North Kordofan reportedly killed at least 300 people, including children and pregnant women. Many more were injured, with homes looted and burned, and people displaced.

OCHA said disrupted communication links are hindering efforts to confirm the number of casualties.

The office also said it was alarmed by reports of renewed shelling in El-Obeid, the state capital. The attack is deepening fears and insecurity.

OCHA said that in West Kordofan State, assaults on the villages of Al-Fulah and Abu Zabad reportedly killed more than 20 people. The violence included an airstrike on a school sheltering displaced families. Humanitarian

operations were also affected.

“These incidents are yet another tragic reminder of the relentless toll the conflict is taking on civilians across Sudan,” the office said. OCHA emphasized that civilians and civilian infrastructure, including schools, homes, shelters and humanitarian assets, must never be targeted, and called on all parties to the conflict to respect their obligations under international humanitarian law fully.

The humanitarianists said that people fleeing North Kordofan and the El Fasher siege in North Darfur State head into other parts of the country, including Northern State, in search of safety.

OCHA said that its humanitarian partners in Northern State reported that more than 3,000 displaced people have arrived in the Ad-Dabbah locality since June. While some have received food assistance, the steady influx of newly displaced families is putting more pressure on already stretched resources.

Humanitarians warn that the rainy season is bringing further hardship.

OCHA said that in eastern Sudan, heavy rain and strong winds on Sunday destroyed or damaged shelters and food supplies for about 2,700 displaced people at two sites in Gedaref. A rapid assessment conducted by OCHA and its partners on Monday found that most of the affected families wish to return to their areas of origin but need support to do so.

The office said the International Organization for Migration reported that across Sudan, more than 1.3 million people have returned to their home areas since November 2024. The vast majority returned to the states of Aj Jazirah, Sennar and Khartoum, but they face worsening living conditions and shortages of basic services.

OCHA continues to appeal for urgent and increased support to reach millions of vulnerable people across Sudan, noting that this year’s Sudan humanitarian response plan is only 23 percent funded.

Subcontinent

**Pakistan attack kills 2 officers, 1 militant:** At least two policemen and an attacker were killed on Wednesday in a “terrorist” attack in Pakistan’s northern Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK) province bordering Afghanistan, said police.

The spokesperson for the district police, Yaqoob Khan in a statement to media said that the two police personnel were on their way to buy food when the terrorists opened fire on them in Kulachi area of KPK’s Dera Ismail Khan district.

Following the attack, police and Counter Terrorism Department (CTD) personnel tracked down the terrorists and killed one of them during an operation.

The two other militants were injured in the operation but managed to flee.

“Weapons and ammunition have been recovered from the slain terrorist, while a search operation is underway for the terrorists at large,” said the spokesperson. (KUNA)

**Monsoon rains kill 116 across Pakistan:** Torrential monsoon rains and flash floods have killed at least 116 people and injured 253 others across Pakistan since June 26, the country’s National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) said Tuesday.

According to the NDMA’s latest report, five more deaths and 41 injuries were recorded in the past 24 hours due to rain-related incidents.

The eastern Punjab province recorded the highest number of fatalities with 44, followed by the northwestern Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province with 37, the southern Sindh province with 18, and the southwestern Balochistan province with 16.

One death and five injuries were reported in Pakistan-controlled Kashmir, while no casualties were recorded in Gilgit-Baltistan and the Islamabad Capital Territory, said the NDMA.

The agency has issued a weather alert, warning of potential flash floods in parts of Punjab, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, and Balochistan provinces, as heavy rainfall is forecast to continue through Thursday. (Xinhua)

**11 killed in Afghanistan highway accident:** At least 11 people were killed and four others critically injured in a highway accident in southern Afghanistan’s Helmand province, according to a statement released by the provincial police on Wednesday.



Motorists drive through a flooded road caused by heavy rain in Lahore, Pakistan on July 16. (AP)

The tragedy occurred in the Kariz region of Washir district, along the highway linking Herat to the capital, Kabul. A passenger bus collided head-on with another vehicle, killing 11 commuters on the spot and injuring four others.

Preliminary investigations indicated reckless driving as the cause of the crash. All injured individuals were shifted to nearby health centers, where medical staff described their conditions as critical.

Fatal road accidents are common in Afghanistan due to poor road conditions, reckless driving, difficult terrains, overloading, overtaking and overspeeding. (Xinhua)

**15 dead in different accidents in India:** Fifteen people died and several others were injured in two separate road accidents in northern India on Tuesday, confirmed official sources.

In the first accident reported from the northern hilly state of Uttarakhand, eight persons, including four women and three children, died and five were injured when the vehicle carrying them fell into a river.

The mishap occurred in the state’s Pithoragarh district. All the victims belonged to the same village. The injured were admitted to a local hospital.

The other road mishap took place in the Doda district of Indian-controlled Jammu and Kashmir area, in which seven persons died and 17 were injured. The vehicle carrying the victims veered off a hilly road and fell into a deep gorge. (Xinhua)

US sends third-country deportees to Eswatini

CAPE TOWN, South Africa, July 16, (AP): The United States has sent five men to the small African nation of Eswatini in an expansion of the Trump administration’s third-country deportation program, the US Department of Homeland Security said Tuesday.

The US has already deported eight men to another African nation, South Sudan, after the Supreme Court lifted restrictions on sending people to countries where they have no ties.

In a late-night post on X, Homeland Security Assistant Secretary Tricia McLaughlin said the men, who are citizens of Vietnam, Jamaica, Cuba, Yemen and Laos, had arrived in Eswatini on a plane. She said they were all convicted criminals and “individuals so uniquely barbaric that their home countries refused to take them back.”

There was no immediate comment from Eswatini authorities over any deal to accept third-country deportees or what would happen to them in that country.

The Trump administration has said it is seeking more deals with African nations to take deportees from the US. Some have pushed back, with Nigeria saying it is rejecting pressure from the U.S. to take deportees who are citizens of other countries.



Eswatini’s King Mswati III addresses the Climate Action Summit in the United Nations General Assembly at UN headquarters on Sept. 23, 2019. (AP)

Lat/Am

**Cuban labor minister resigns:** A Cuban minister who sparked criticism after saying that there are no beggars in Cuba, only people disguised as such, resigned Tuesday.

Cuba’s Presidency said in a post on X that Minister of Labor and Social Security **Marta Elena Feit6 Cabrera** “acknowledged her errors and submitted her resignation.”

Feit6 made the comments Monday before deputies in a National Assembly committee. The comments went viral, prompting calls for Feit6’s impeachment and a wave of criticism in a country experiencing a tough economic situation in recent years.

Even Cuban President Miguel Diaz-Canel was critical. Without mentioning her by name, but referring to the meeting at the National Assembly committee where Feit6 participated, Diaz-Canel said on his X account: “the lack of sensitivity in addressing vulnerability is highly questionable. The revolution cannot leave anyone behind; that is our motto, our militant responsibility.”

The economic crisis in Cuba has increased social vulnerability and led to unusual scenes for the island, such as people



Cabrera

ple - especially the elderly - begging or scavenging through garbage, or some cleaning windshields at corners. (AP)

**Drug seizure in Haiti kills 3:** Three suspected drug traffickers were killed in an exchange of fire as police in Haiti confiscated more than 2,300 pounds (1,000 kilograms) of cocaine aboard a boat, officials said Tuesday, in a rare drug seizure in the troubled Caribbean country.

The police raid took place off the coast of northern Haiti near Tortue Island where traffickers are suspected of transferring drugs, Port-de-Paix prosecutor Jeir Pierre told Radio Caraibes on Tuesday.

Pierre said police have long postponed any action at that location because of a lack of resources, but noted that a regional police director recently requested a boat to use around Tortue Island.

“We have had this area in our sights for a long time,” Pierre said.

Police approached a suspected drug trafficking boat on Sunday and ordered the suspects aboard to raise their hands, but they did not comply and instead opened fire at the officers, Pierre said.

Officers returned fire, with two suspected drug traffickers jumping into the ocean and later dying. A third suspected drug trafficker died on shore while a fourth one, from the Bahamas, was injured and later arrested, Pierre said. (AP)



In this photo released by the Nigeria State House, Nigeria President Bola Ahmed Tinubu, (second from left), Yusuf Buhari, (third, left), the son of Nigeria, Late Former President Muhammadu Buhari, upon arrival at the airport in Katsina, Nigeria on July 15. (AP)

Nigeria’s ex-prez buried

Muhammadu Buhari, Nigeria’s former president, was laid to rest on Tuesday at his private residence in Daura, his hometown in the northern state of Katsina, in a solemn ceremony marked by full state honors.

Buhari, who served as Nigerian president from 2015 to 2023, died Sunday in a clinic in London where he had been receiving medical treatment. He was aged 82.

The late former president’s body, draped in the national colors, arrived in Katsina from London on Tuesday afternoon. His body was lowered into the grave at 5:50 pm local time, preceded by a military parade and a 21-gun salute by the armed forces.

The atmosphere in Daura was a mix of sorrow and reverence as thousands paid their last respects to a leader who significantly shaped Nigeria’s contemporary history. Security was exceptionally tight, with a heavy presence of military and police personnel ensuring a smooth and dignified proceeding. (Xinhua)



Kuwait oil price drops \$2.16 to \$70.63 pb

KUWAIT CITY, July 16, (KUNA): Kuwait oil price dropped USD 2.16 to USD 70.63 per barrel on Tuesday, compared to Monday's USD 72.79 pb according to Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) on Wednesday.

On a global level, Brent Crude decreased 50 cents to USD 68.71 pb as West Texas Intermediate also dropped 46 cents to USD 66.52 pb.

Business

Company joins launch of the 10th season in strategic collaboration with LOYAC

In partnership with Zain, KON continues to instill a spirit of innovation in the next generation

KUWAIT CITY, July 16: Zain took part in the opening ceremony of the 10th season of the KON Social Entrepreneurship Program, held at the American University of Kuwait (AUK), celebrating a decade of achievements and initiatives that have empowered thousands of young people under the long-standing strategic partnership between Zain and the non-profit organization LOYAC, which spans over 21 years.

This special occasion shed light on the accomplishments of the program since its inception 10 years ago, as part of the collaboration between LOYAC and Babson College, one of the world's most prestigious academic institutions in business and entrepreneurship. Zain played an active role in the initiative as a key supporter of youth empowerment and entrepreneurship.

The ceremony featured a welcome speech by Faisal Al-Duwaihees, Youth Empowerment and Community Partnerships Specialist at Zain Kuwait, alongside remarks from LOYAC and Babson officials and



Al-Duwaihees delivering Zain's opening speech.

strategic partner representatives. The event also showcased inspiring presentations and testimonials from KON alumni, with a wide audience including current participants, past graduates, trainers, mentors, and entrepreneurs.

KON is one of the most impactful

youth initiatives that Zain proudly supports every year, given its tangible impact in nurturing the skills of participants aged 12 to 16. The program includes interactive workshops, training and mentoring sessions, and field visits, through which participants gain exposure to key



Participants of the 10th season of the program.

concepts such as management, critical thinking, teamwork, and tackling social and environmental challenges.

Zain expressed its pride in the strategic partnership with LOYAC, which has yielded a series of high-impact programs that have empowered Kuwaiti youth and equipped

them with the tools to shape their futures. This aligns closely with Zain's sustainability strategy focused on supporting education and entrepreneurship.

In the weeks ahead, KON participants will continue their training journey, which will culminate

in presenting their startup projects to a specialized judges panel comprised of experts and professionals from Zain and leading private sector companies. The most outstanding teams will be selected and honored during the closing ceremony later this year.

Boursa Kuwait dips 0.92% as premier market slumps

Main market gains

KUWAIT CITY, July 16, (KUNA): Boursa Kuwait closed in negative territory on Wednesday as losses in the Premier Market dragged down the overall performance. The general index dropped 79.54 points, or 0.92 percent, to close at 8,528.00, with 901.8 million shares traded across 39,703 cash transactions, totaling 136 million Kuwaiti dinars (approximately \$444.7 million).

Despite the broader market decline, the Main Market Index recorded modest gains, rising 26.07 points,

or 0.35 percent, to finish at 7,399.51. The segment saw a trading volume of 737.4 million shares through 29,465 deals, with a turnover of 78.6 million dinars (about \$257 million).

In contrast, the Premier Market Index posted the day's sharpest drop, falling 109.84 points, or 1.18 percent, to settle at 9,230.98 points. Trading activity in this segment involved 164.4 million shares traded through 10,238 transactions, with a total value of 57.4 million dinars (around \$187.7 million).

Meanwhile, the Major 50 Index also edged lower, shedding 2.97 points, or 0.04 percent, to close at 7,424.11. A total of 520.4 million shares were traded through 17,791 transactions, amounting to 53 million dinars (approximately \$173.3 million).

Adding seventh Saudi destination

Jazeera Airways resumes flights to Abha

KUWAIT CITY, July 16: Jazeera Airways has resumed three weekly direct flights to Abha in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The relaunch was marked by a ribbon-cutting ceremony attended by Bandar Bin Aboud, Counselor at the Saudi Embassy, alongside Jazeera Airways CEO Barathan Pasupathi and Chief Executive Government Affairs Naser Fahad Alobaid.

Abha is Jazeera Airways' seventh destination in Saudi Arabia, offering travelers easy access to one of the Kingdom's most scenic and culturally rich cities.



Jazeera relaunches weekly flights to Abha with ribbon-cutting ceremony.

CEO emphasizes innovation and national talent

Duqm refinery strengthens Kuwait-Oman strategic ties, says new CEO

MUSCAT, July 16, (KUNA): The Duqm Refinery and Petrochemical Industries Company (OQ8) is one of the most important strategic industrial projects in the region, and a unique exemplar of integration between Kuwait and Oman, said CEO of Duqm Refinery Abdullah Al-Ajmi on Tuesday.

Speaking to KUNA in a statement, he expressed his pride for being appointed as the new CEO of the facility, saying the move came at a time when the company continues to boost its status as a leading one in the region.

He affirmed continuing progress

with confidence to enhance operational efficiency and adopt flexible action methods as well as empower national talents for leadership.

All staff is working within the spirit of a teamwork, driven by permanent development, collaboration, innovation and deep commitment to sustainability as a main path for a long-term value, he noted.

The refinery goes on cementing its location as an international facility since it brings together flexibility and distinguished efficiency, he stated.

It benefits from the latest techniques

and innovations, he said.

The refinery is the largest investment project between Kuwait and Oman in Duqm area, south of the Sultanate.

The facility whose investment value is estimated at about USD nine billion is a precious addition to the global energy market.

His Highness the Amir of Kuwait Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and Oman's Sultan Haitham bin Tariq attended and sponsored the inauguration of the refinery in Oman in February 2024.

UNHCR and Agility Global partner to support refugee education in Egypt

CAIRO, July 16: UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency in Kuwait, signed an agreement with Agility Global to support refugee education in Egypt.

With the agreement, Agility Global's contribution will support UNHCR's initiative to enable more than 2,000 refugee students in Egypt to access education during the academic year 2025-2026 by enabling them to cover the costs of enrollment fees and other educational expenses. This support will ultimately enhance the refugees' personal development, community integration, social cohesion, and future opportunities.

"This partnership with Agility Global represents more than just financial support. It is an act of solidarity at a time when global displacement has reached a staggering 122.1 million forcibly displaced people," said Nisreen Rubaian, UNHCR's Representative in Kuwait. "The private sector has a vital role to play in transforming lives. Our strategic partnership with Agility Global's is a solid example of how meaningful partnerships can unlock opportunities for the most vulnerable people, especially through education. Together, we are turning the 'whole-of-society' approach into a powerful reality."

On his part, Agility Global Chairman, Tarek Sultan said: "Agility Global's contribution aims to address the challenges and support the displaced families impacted by conflict and persecution by facilitating the education of their children. We hope that we can help refugee students build a better future and empower them by gaining the knowledge and the skills needed to thrive and become positive contributors in the society that's hosting them. This will also allow them to contribute to rebuilding their home countries when they return in safety and dignity."

Egypt is a transit and destination



Agility Global Chairman, Tarek Sultan



Nisreen Rubaian, UNHCR representative in Kuwait



Egypt refugee and host community Instant Network School students participate in class.

country for refugees and asylum-seekers. Since the start of the Sudan conflict in April 2023, a large influx of Sudanese refugees has arrived in Egypt seeking safety (more than 1,200,000 according to the Government of Egypt). As of 4 February 2025, some 905,000 individuals (70% Sudanese; 16% Syrians; 5% South Sudanese, 4% Eritreans) are registered with UNHCR

in Egypt – more than triple the number registered at the start of the Sudan crisis. Of them, 572,000 are new arrivals from Sudan (three quarters are women and children).

Agility has been a long-standing partner of UNHCR, supporting programs in Lebanon, Jordan, Malaysia, Turkey, Ukraine and Uganda over the past 16 years.



AmCham hosts Roundtable on Kuwait's Energy Future.

Kuwait faces tripling energy demand

AmCham Kuwait hosts Energy Roundtable with US State Dept.

KUWAIT CITY, July 16: The American Business Council – (ABCK-AmCham Kuwait) hosted an Energy Roundtable Discussion in collaboration with the U.S. Department of State, bringing together key industry stakeholders, financial institutions, and policymakers to explore Kuwait's evolving energy landscape, challenges, and investment opportunities.

The roundtable focused on Kuwait's urgent need to reform its energy policies amid growing demand, rising production costs, and heavy subsidies that hinder private sector participation. With Kuwait recording the highest per capita energy consumption globally, and subsidizing electricity at just 1 cent per kilowatt-hour despite a production cost of 12 cents, the discussion emphasized the critical importance of developing a sustainable, market-based approach to energy pricing.

Participants highlighted that Kuwait's energy demand is expected to triple by 2035, reaching 32–35 megawatts, which will require massive infrastructure investment. Currently, 400,000 barrels of oil per day are burned for electricity, making up 40% of the energy mix, with the rest primarily dependent on natural gas imported from Qatar.

The roundtable also addressed Kuwait's ambition to increase oil production from just under 3 million to 4 million barrels per day, alongside a renewable energy goal of 15% by 2035, with 10% targeted from nuclear energy. The discussion introduced Small Modular Reactor (SMR) technology as a feasible solution to Kuwait's energy diversification, providing faster deployment, lower land use, and longer operational life cycles than conventional systems.

Justin Friedman, Snr. Advisor for Commercial Competitiveness in Nuclear Energy in the ISN from the U.S. Department of State, focused on the potential broad role that nuclear energy could play in Kuwait's energy security, providing reliable electricity and supporting a

wide range of industrial applications from petrochemical processing to water desalination. Anwar Almutlaq, Vice-President and Country Chairman Shell from Shell Kuwait and Alex Kronic, Snr. Advisor to the Chairman Commercial Bank (Tijari) Commercial Bank of Kuwait also showcased local efforts in reducing carbon emissions, expanding green bond portfolios, and scaling remote power solutions.

A key outcome of the discussion was the call for policy and regulatory reforms, particularly:

Establishing fixed offtake pricing frameworks to support private renewable energy investment; Reducing energy subsidies to reflect true production costs and promote efficiency; and Enabling SMR deployment for off-grid applications, desalination, and industrial hydrogen production.

Participants emphasized the potential of SMRs in supporting Kuwait's summer energy needs, powering data centers, and reducing land footprint compared to solar installations. With nuclear energy gaining traction globally, the World Bank's announcement of increased financing for nuclear programs marks a pivotal opportunity for Kuwait to diversify and secure its energy future.

AmCham Kuwait remains committed to supporting the country's energy transition by fostering strategic dialogue between public and private sectors and leveraging U.S. expertise and innovation in the region's energy ecosystem.

About ABCK-AmCham Kuwait

A non-profit organization operating since 1985, composed of Fortune 500 corporations, small and medium-sized companies, and prominent business leaders and entrepreneurs, both American and Kuwaiti. ABCK-AmCham Kuwait has acted as an advocate for American interests in Kuwait. For more information, please visit our website at [www.amchamkuwait.org](http://www.amchamkuwait.org) or follow us on our social media channel @abck1985.





Yousef Al-Ruwaieh, Tareq Al-Ajeel, Ayman Altabtabaei, Fahad AlSaad, and Nawaf Almishri with a group of students participating in KFH Academy.



Designed for university students and recent grads

# KFH offers advanced banking experience through KFH Academy

KUWAIT CITY, July 16: Kuwait Finance House (KFH) has launched the new edition of its KFH Academy program, designed to introduce university students and recent graduates to the fundamentals and functions of various sectors and departments within KFH. This initiative is part of KFH’s commitment to social responsibility, training excellence, youth development, and national talents empowerment.

KFH Academy offers students practical training within a professional banking environment at the largest bank in Kuwait by market cap. The program includes diverse learning areas such as public relations (PR) and media, general services, digital transformation and innovation. It enables students and recent graduates to gain a foundational understanding across these areas using the latest methods and highest standards of training quality, making the most of their summer break.

A total of 20 trainees were selected to join the academy after successfully passing all stages of assessment and evaluation.

The launch event of KFH Academy took place at the Bank headquarters with the attendance of Head of Public Relations and Media at KFH Group, Yousef Abdullah Al-Ruwaieh, Deputy General Manager Digital Transformation and Innovation, Eng. Tareq Al-Ajeel, Executive Manager General Services, Ayman Altabtabaei, Senior Manager PR and Event Management, Fahad AlSaad, and Manager Talent Acquisition, Nawaf Almishri, alongside a number of officials from the Bank.

**Eng. Tareq Al-Ajeel**

KFH Deputy General Manager Digital Transformation and Innovation, Eng. Tareq Al-Ajeel said that KFH Academy affirms the Bank’s commitment to preparing a technical and leadership-ready generation by offering students direct interaction with department teams and engaging them in digital initiatives aligned with KFH’s aspirations.

Al-Ajeel emphasized that hosting students through this program is crucial for building their innovation and digital transformation skills, laying the groundwork for their professional futures.

**Ayman Altabtabaei**

KFH Executive Manager General Services, Ayman Altabtabaei, said that the program offers participating students comprehensive experience, combining theoretical content supported by facts and practical training through site visits to KFH major projects, such as the reconstruction of the damaged area in Al Mubarakiya, in addition to the maintenance of the buildings network of KFH.



From right: Fahad AlSaad, Ayman Altabtabaei, Yousef Al-Ruwaieh, Tareq Al-Ajeel, and Nawaf Almishri

Al-Ajeel:

■ KFH committed to preparing tech-ready generation through digital projects

Altatbaaei:

■ KFH committed to supporting national talent development initiatives

AlSaad:

■ KFH Academy offers practical experience in PR & media, engineering, and digital transformation

AlMishri:

■ Academy prepares students for post-graduation job market

He emphasized KFH’s dedication to supporting initiatives that develop national talents, particularly among the youth, pointing out that KFH Academy provides a unique opportunity for students to explore various

career paths.

Altatbaaei explained that the General Services’ participation involves three key departments: Projects, Maintenance, and Service Contracts, ensuring added value for both students and the program.

**Fahad AlSaad**

Meanwhile, KFH Senior Manager PR and Event Management, Fahad AlSaad, said that KFH is pleased to welcome students seeking to enhance their skills and gain practical experience in areas of public relations, media, engineering projects, digital transformation and innovation. He noted that KFH is the first bank to introduce dedicated training for engineering students, catering to a wide range of academic disciplines.

AlSaad noted the program will feature visits to institutions such as Kuwait Times and CODED Academy. Additionally, as part of KFH’s “Keep it Green” environmental campaign, a specialized training course will be conducted with Kuwaiti environmental influencer, Alzainah Albabtain.

He also explained: “KFH Academy will teach students about KFH’s products, services, and Islamic banking. They’ll gain crucial knowledge on saving and investing through sessions with KFH Capital, a KFH Group subsidiary, which will also cover the stock market and trading.”

**Nawaf Almishri**

Manager Talent Acquisition at KFH, Nawaf Almishri said that KFH Academy runs for 4 weeks and is designed to prepare students for the job market after graduation. The program includes lectures, seminars, extensive workshops, and field visits to various official bodies. It enriches the trainees’ understanding of how public institutions operate, especially financial institutions, enhancing the program’s practical, comprehensive, and diversified nature.

**PR Academy by KFH Program**

It is worth noting that last year, KFH launched its inaugural PR Academy program. Designed to educate undergraduate students and recent graduates, the program focused on the foundational principles of public relations and media, and their practical application within KFH departments.

The program successfully trained students in public relations and media, culminating in presentations of their projects. Participants praised the program’s creative ideas, attention to detail, acquired knowledge, and beneficial workshops.

## US sanctions, EU price caps add uncertainty to oil market

# Oil prices recede on higher output, doubts on Russia sanctions

By KAMCO Invest

Crude oil prices declined to below the USD 70/b mark following two consecutive days of declines led by higher output from the OPEC+ coupled with doubts on the impact of US sanctions on Russian crude oil exports after the US announced a deadline of 50 days to end the war. This comes as geopolitical issues between Russia and Ukraine escalated recently that pushed the secondary sanctions on countries that are buying oil from Russia, that mainly targeted India and China. There were also discussions in the EU to impose a lower price-cap on Russian oil. On the other hand, the physical market for oil remained tight, especially for distillates as refinery runs have peaked to meet Northern-Hemisphere demand supporting spot prices and blunting the impact of OPEC+ hikes on future prices.

Geopolitical issues in the Middle East region also impacted the oil market with the attacks in the Red Sea leading to rising concerns about the transportation route. Nevertheless, the pause in the war in the Middle East after last month’s escalation resulted in a sharp decline in war risk premium on crude oil.

On the demand front, seasonal factors supported prices as the summer demand peaked during July-2025 and set to taper in coming months. There were reports that diesel inventory in the US were at the lowest level in two decades. Meanwhile, there is underlying confidence in the oil market related to demand revival in China by the end of the year, especially given the steep increase in refinery output last month. In addition, there were reports that China could add to its crude oil inventory towards year end, especially if prices remain subdued. However, the current uncertainty related to tariff wars and its impact oil demand capped gains. The recent GDP growth data from China also showed a marginal q-o-q decline of 20 bps with Q2-2025 GDP at 5.2% led by weak retail sales offset by stronger factory output. Also, analysts expect China to roll out reforms if there is an impact on local demand due to the tariffs. Expectations for 2H-2025 shows a slowdown in China as exports lose momentum due to the tariffs coupled with declining prices as seen in the recent inflation numbers and consumer confidence remains low.

In terms of supply, OPEC oil production witnessed a sharp increase during June-2025 to reach a multi-month high level of 27.2 mb/d, as per data from OPEC secondary sources. The increase came after OPEC+ announced the unwinding of existing production cuts adding more than 1.1 mb/d to announced production quotas until last month. Almost all countries in the OPEC recorded higher m-o-m production with Saudi Arabia recording the biggest monthly increase during the month. Meanwhile, oil production in the US showed consistent but marginal increase last month to reach an average weekly output of 13.43 mb/d followed by a decline in output during first week of July-2025. Oil rig count in the US has shown consistent decline over the last two months, also reflecting in the flattish production trend.

**Oil Prices**

Crude oil prices receded after gaining more than 30% in less than two months led by geopolitical concerns regarding the war in the Middle East last month. After the announcement of a pause in the war, crude oil prices gradually settled below the USD 70/b over the last few weeks as the market balanced higher crude oil output from the OPEC+ countries with tighter physical markets. In addition, while postponing the decision to impose tariffs until next month, the US government announced new tariffs on a number of its trading partners including European Union, Canada, Mexico, Japan and South Korea. Copper imports in the US are also expected to face a 50% tariff



starting next month. These factors have affected demand growth expectations in the US for the remainder of the year, pushing downward pressure on prices. Also, the latest CPI data for the month of June-2025 showed some signs of tariffs but headline CPI at 2.7% (slightly higher than the estimates) and core CPI at 2.9% (in line with the estimates) showed that the impact was largely subdued. The numbers have once again started speculations of a rate cut in the September-2025 Fed meeting, that would have a positive impact on economic growth and oil demand.

In terms of monthly price trend, average prices of all crude grades showed one of the biggest m-o-m growth during June-2025 led by the geopolitical situation in the region. The price increase followed four consecutive months of declines until May -2025. Average spot Brent crude oil price increased by 11.1%, the biggest monthly increase since March-2022, to reach USD 71.4/b during June-2025 as compared to an average at USD 64.3/b during May-2025. This was also the first time in three months when prices have averaged above the USD 70/b mark. Average OPEC reference basket price witnessed a slightly smaller increase of 9.6%, also the biggest in more than three years, to reach USD 69.7/b while Kuwait export grade crude prices witnessed a gain of 9.1% to average at USD 69.8/b during June-2025. Meanwhile, the consensus estimate for Brent crude showed minimal revisions for the next six quarters. The median consensus forecast for Brent crude grade for Q3-2025 stood at USD 66.0/b, according to data from Bloomberg.

**World Oil Demand**

Global oil demand growth forecast for 2025 was kept unchanged in the latest monthly report from OPEC at 1.3 mb/d with demand expected to reach 105.1 mb/d during the year. However, there were changes at the country level mainly reflecting actual data for Q1-2025 and Q2-2025. The revisions included lower-than-expected actual data for Q1-2025 for OECD and Other Asia regions that was offset by higher-than-expected actual data for Latin America, Africa and the Middle East. For Q2-2025, there were upward revisions to demand data for OECD Americas, Middle East and Africa regions that were slightly offset by downward revisions to demand data for China

and India. Total demand for the OECD region was slightly lowered from 45.83 mb/d to 45.8 mb/d while that for the non-OECD countries was revised upwards to 59.33 mb/d in 2025 vs. 59.31 in the earlier OPEC forecast. Recent data showed that oil imports in China in June-2025 increased to the highest level in almost two years as the country accelerated the pace of building stock. The country has significantly boosted refinery rates in order to meet the rising industrial fuel demand.

World oil demand growth forecast for 2026 was also kept broadly unchanged by the OPEC at 1.28 mb/d with demand expected to reach 106.42 mb/d during the year. There were, however, minor adjustments to forecasts for both OECD and non-OECD countries. The demand in from OECD countries was lowered from 45.91 mb/d in the earlier forecast to 45.88 in the latest OPEC forecasts while demand from the non-OECD countries are now expected to reach 60.53 mb/d with a growth of 1.2 mb/d as compared to previous forecast of a total demand of 60.51 mb/d.

Meanwhile, data from IEA’s recent monthly oil report predicted world oil demand growth to increase by 0.7 mb/d in 2025 to reach around 103.7mb/d. This is the smallest y-o-y growth rate since 2009, with the exception of the 2020 year of pandemic. As per the report, demand growth in Q1-2025 stood at 1.1 mb/d but saw a steep decline to reach 0.55 mb/d in Q2-2025. The decline was mainly led by subdued demand from the emerging market. As per the IEA, world oil demand is forecasted to grow by a marginally higher rate of 0.72 mb/d to reach 104.4 mb/d in 2026.

**World Oil Supply**

World oil supply witnessed a sharp increase during June-2025 reflecting the unwinding announced by the OPEC+ producer group. Total world oil supply increased by 0.95 mb/d m-o-m during June-2025 to reach 105.6 mb/d, according to data from the IEA, while the yearly increase stood at 2.9 mb/d. The increase was mainly led by higher output from OPEC+ producer while non-OPEC+ producers also supported the group. As per the IEA, OPEC+ accounted for 1.9 mb/d increase in output in June-2025 as compared to June-2024 while the remaining increase of around 1.0 mb/d was implemented by non-OPEC+ pro-

ducers, primarily the US.

Meanwhile, the OPEC kept its forecast for non-DoC liquids supply growth unchanged for 2025 in its latest monthly report. The supply from the group is expected to grow by 0.81 mb/d this year and average at 54.01 mb/d. There were revisions at the country level with marginal upward revision to supply forecast for Latin America that was partially offset by a slight downward revision to supply estimates for the Middle East and Africa regions. Data on oil production in the US showed flattish trend with total output averaging at around 13.4 mb/d. However, oil rig count has witnessed a steep decline over the last two months. Data from Baker Hughes showed nine consecutive weeks of decline in US oil rigs that reached 424 rigs last week, the lowest level since October-2021.

For 2026, non-DoC liquids supply growth forecast was also kept unchanged by the OPEC at 0.73 mb/d with average supply expected to come in at 54.74 mb/d. At the regional level, the forecasted supplies for OECD and non-OECD groups remained unchanged from OPEC’s previous report. However, at the country level upward revisions were made to supply forecast for Latin America and Middle East that was partially offset by and equal downward revision to supply forecast for Africa and the Other Eurasia group.

**OPEC Oil Production & Spare Capacity**

OPEC crude oil production increased for the fourth consecutive month during June-2025 led by the unwinding of production cuts announced by the OPEC+ group. Data from OPEC secondary sources showed average OPEC production reaching 27.2 mb/d during June-2025, the highest in 19 months. The increase was mainly led by higher production mainly in Saudi Arabia and the UAE that was partially offset by a fall in output in Iran due to the geopolitical situation in the Middle East. On the other hand, data from Bloomberg showed OPEC production breaching the 28.0 mb/d mark to reach 28.01 mb/d during June-2025, the highest in 18 months, also showing the biggest increases in production in Saudi Arabia and the UAE. Based on the data for June-2025, the spare capacity for OPEC producers stood at 5.66 mb/d or 16.8% of the total production capacity as per Bloomberg estimates.

Output from the broader DoC producers group showed a production growth of 249 tb/d to reach an average of 41.6 mb/d during June-2025 after output from the non-OPEC DoC countries also showed a healthy growth. This increase was mainly led by higher output from Kazakhstan, Russia and South Sudan that was partially offset by a fall in output from Mexico. Oil production in Russia declined by 41 tb/d to average at 9.03 mb/d, as per OPEC monthly report, below the country’s OPEC+ quota by around 25 tb/d.

Meanwhile, the OPEC+ once again announced to increase daily crude oil production for the fourth consecutive month by announcing to add even more barrels from August-2025. The producers decided to increase output by 548 tb/d starting next month, exceeding expectations and setting the stage for an earlier than expected full unwinding of output by the group. This along with the announced increases for the previous months would mean a total increase of 1.9 mb/d out of the 2.2 mb/d in pledged cuts and leaving the OPEC with one more installment of increase and full unwinding by September-2025. This would leave the remaining cuts at 1.6 mb/d.

Oil production in Saudi Arabia reached 9.4 mb/d during June-2025, the highest level in two years, reflecting unwinding of OPEC+ quotas. Oil production in Libya remained elevated but declined m-o-m to 1.3 mb/d. The country recently announced reopening the oil sector for foreign firms to boost output.



Transactions powered by KNET and ACI Worldwide up more than 12x since 2024

## Kuwait’s real-time payment scheme WAMD surpasses 1 mln accounts in first year

KUAWIT CITY, July 16: ACI Worldwide (NASDAQ: ACIW), an original innovator in global payments technology, and the Shared Electronic Banking Services Company “KNET”, the provider of electronic payment services in Kuwait, today announced that WAMD, Kuwait’s real-time payment system, recorded significant growth in the number of transactions executed since its launch in June of 2024, making WAMD one of the world’s most rapidly adopted real-time payment initiatives.

KNET utilized ACI’s Digital Central Infrastructure solution to build the central payment infrastructure of WAMD, an interoperable, countrywide scheme that enables account-to-account (A2A) payment transfers via a bank’s mobile app or internet banking service by using a phone number. WAMD was implemented in less than 15 months, redefining the pace for rapid digital transformation and innovation. Banks in Kuwait have lauded the scheme for delivering a seamless and user-friendly differentiated customer banking experience. With 100% of the country’s banks now on board with WAMD, this extraordinary growth in real-time payments is expected to continue.

“As real-time payments become ubiquitous in Kuwait, consumers have gravitated toward secure, real-time payment methods, reshaping habits around convenience and efficiency while reducing reliance on cash. KNET’s primary strategic focus is to provide a safe and reliable payment environment by enhancing existing infrastructure, developing innovative payment systems, and improving service efficiency domestically and regionally,” said Esam Alkheshtan, KNET’s Chief Executive Officer.

Alkheshtan added that “IPS in Kuwait was given the name ‘WAMD,’ which translates to lightning flash – an indication of the speed of the service. WAMD, which is available on the banking application of all local banks, has gained traction from the start with one million registered users during the first quarter of the launch of WAMD.

“As soon as we introduced the service to Kuwait, we began outlining the next phase of IPS in Kuwait, which will build on the success of phase one. Together with ACI Worldwide, being one of our strategic partners, KNET is committed to adopting state-of-the-art technologies in digital payments, adhering to the highest global standards.” Aligned with KNET’s mission of

supporting Kuwait’s national vision for digital transformation, longer-term strategic initiatives include the integration of Kuwait’s fintech players to WAMD and enabling A2A real-time payments in their Electronic Fund Transfer Point-of-Sale terminals using dynamic QR codes. KNET is also looking at implementing the “Request to Pay” service to streamline payment operations for web merchants and provide a safer, enhanced e-commerce shopping experience for Kuwaitis.

Kuwait’s evolution into a real-time payment powerhouse is set to further propel the Middle East’s position as a leader in payments modernization. According to ACI’s Prime Time for Real-Time 2024 report, which tracks global real-time payment volumes and growth forecasts, the Middle East has been recognized as the fastest-growing real-time payments market in the world for two consecutive years. Additionally, real-time payments are a powerful enabler for economic advancement and inclusion. ACI’s Real-Time Payments: Economic Impact and Financial Inclusion report indicates that by 2028, real-time payments are forecast to create more than 167 million new bank account holders and generate \$285.8 billion of additional global GDP growth.

“Kuwait’s rapid adoption of real-time payments has been impressive and stands out as one of the fastest adoption rates around the globe. The rising demand for real-time payments drives innovation in payments, forges new use cases that stimulate economic growth, promotes financial inclusion, and meets customers’ evolving expectations,” commented Craig Ramsey, global head of account-to-account payments at ACI Worldwide. “Together, ACI and KNET have created one of the most secure and future-proof real-time payment systems in the world – one that puts Kuwait at the forefront of the global real-time payments revolution.” ACI Worldwide has a strong track record of powering real-time schemes around the world as well as helping banks, fintechs and other payment service providers in the ecosystem to connect to the schemes and offer new, innovative financial services for consumers and businesses. ACI currently powers 26 domestic and pan-regional real-time schemes across six continents – including 11 central infrastructures. Globally, ACI serves all 10 of the world’s largest financial institutions by asset value and provides solutions that move trillions of dollars through more than one billion transactions daily.

### Nasdaq hits record on Nvidia

## Global shares mixed after US inflation signals tariff impact

BANGKOK, July 16, (AP): Shares were mixed Wednesday in Europe and Asia after an update on U.S. inflation pulled most Wall Street stocks lower, though gains for Nvidia pushed the Nasdaq to another record.

The report showed inflation in the United States accelerated to 2.7% last month from 2.4% in May. Economists said higher prices for clothes, toys and other goods that usually are imported suggest stiffer tariffs that President Donald Trump has imposed on other countries are fueling inflation.

Germany’s DAX edged 0.1% higher to 24,074.54, while the CAC 40 in Paris shed 0.1% to 7,755.90. Britain’s FTSE 100 was up 0.1% at 8,950.11.

The future for the S&P 500 fell less than 0.1% while that for the Dow industrials was little changed.

In Asian trading, Tokyo’s Nikkei 225 edged less than 0.1% lower, to 39,663.40. Investors are focusing on the potential impact of an election for the Upper House of Parliament on Sunday that is expected to lead to tax cuts and higher spending as lawmakers try to restore the waning popularity of the ruling Liberal Democrats.

Worries over a deterioration in Japan’s fiscal health have pushed yields of long-term Japanese government bonds to their highest levels in years.

“What’s at stake isn’t simply which party hands out the biggest bundle of goodies. It’s whether the walls holding up Japan’s house of debt can withstand another round of fiscal fireworks...” Stephen Innes of SPI Asset Management said in a commentary.

Elsewhere in Asia, Hong Kong’s Hang Seng shed 0.3% to 24,517.76, while the Shanghai Composite index slipped less than 0.1% to 3,503.78.

South Korea’s Kospi lost 0.9% to 3,186.38 and in Australia, the S&P/ASX 200 declined 0.8% to 8,561.80.

Taiwan’s Taiex jumped 0.9% and India’s Sensex added 0.2%. Thailand’s SET dropped 0.3%.

In Jakarta, shares rose 0.7% after President Donald Trump said on Truth Social that he plans to charge imports from Indonesia a tariff of 19%, while American goods sent to the Southeast Asian country will face no tariffs. Trump also said Indonesia committed to buying U.S. energy, agricultural products and aircraft.

Indonesia’s central bank cut its key interest rate by 0.25 percentage points on Wednesday, to 5.25%.

Protecting millions of workers from mass layoffs was a crucial consideration in reaching the tariff deal, Indonesian President Prabowo Subianto said.

“We have calculated everything and discussed everything. The most important thing for me is my people, as I must protect the interests of our workers,” Subianto told reporters, adding that “this is our offer, and we are not able to give more (to the US).”

On Tuesday, the S&P 500 fell 0.4%, staying near its all-time high set last week. The Dow Jones Industrial Average dropped 1%, while the Nasdaq composite rose 0.2% to a record 20,677.80 thanks to Nvidia, the market’s most influential stock.

Nvidia said the U.S. government has assured it that licenses will be granted for its H20 chip, used for artificial intelligence, again and that deliveries will hopefully begin soon. Its 4% gain was by far the strongest force pushing upward on the S&P 500.

Wall Street loves lower interest rates because they goose prices higher for stocks and other investments, and Trump himself has been clamoring for the Federal Reserve to cut rates more quickly. But the Fed has been keeping interest rates on hold this year since lower rates can give inflation more fuel while they boost the economy. Fed Chair Jerome Powell has insisted he wants to see more data about how tariffs affect the economy and inflation.



A currency trader watches monitors near a screen showing the Korea Composite Stock Price Index (KOSPI) at the foreign exchange dealing room of the Hana Bank headquarters in Seoul, South Korea, Wednesday, July 16, 2025. (AP)

PITTSBURGH, July 16, (AP): President Donald Trump touted tens of billions of dollars of recent energy and technology investments Tuesday in Pennsylvania while boasting of a “true golden age for America” in energy policy and artificial intelligence.

Trump traveled to Pittsburgh at a summit helmed by Republican Sen. David McCormick that included dozens of top executives from companies aiming to make the city and the state a hot spot for advancements in robotics, artificial intelligence and energy. McCormick announced more than \$90 billion of investments in the state - spurring tens of thousands of jobs - although some of the projects had already been in progress ahead of the summit.

“I think we have a true golden age for America. And we’ve been showing it, and it truly is the hottest country anywhere in the world,” Trump said at the Pennsylvania Energy and Innovation Summit, held at Carnegie Mellon University. “I’m honored to be in Pennsylvania, and I’m honored to be in Pittsburgh. And you’re going to see some real action here. So get ready.”

Trump has repeatedly pledged U.S. “energy dominance” in the global market, and Pennsylvania - a swing state critical to his wins in 2016 and 2024 - is at the forefront of that agenda, in large part due to its coal and gas industry that the Republican administration has taken steps to bolster.

Both the president and senior administration officials on Tuesday framed the investments as part of a race against China for the most advanced deployment of artificial intelligence, with Trump saying, “We are way ahead of China, I have to say.”

“China and other countries are racing to catch up to America on AI, and we’re not going to let them do it,” Trump said during the hourlong roundtable held in a university gymnasium, speaking often from prepared notes. Flanked by several of his Cabinet members, company executives and local political leaders, Trump added that the U.S. will be “fighting them in a very friendly fashion.”

Before Trump spoke, his Cabinet members spoke of the need to produce as much energy as possible - especially from coal and natural gas - to beat China in the AI race for the sake of economic and national security.

“The AI revolution is upon us,” Commerce Secretary Howard Lutnick

### Google, Blackstone lead \$90bn push



President Donald Trump speaks at the 'Inaugural Pennsylvania Energy and Innovation Event' at Carnegie Mellon University, Tuesday, July 15, 2025, in Pittsburgh, as Sen Dave McCormick, R-Pa., left, and Jon Gray, President and Chief Operating Officer, Blackstone, right, look on. (AP)

said during an earlier panel discussion. “The Trump administration will not let us lose. We need to do clean, beautiful coal. We need to do natural gas, we need to embrace nuclear, we need to embrace it all because we have the power to do it and if we don’t do it we’re fools.”

Some of the investments on a list released by McCormick’s office were not necessarily brand-new, while others were. Some involve massive data center projects - such as a \$15 billion project in central Pennsylvania - while others involve building power plants, expanding natural gas pipelines, upgrading power plants or improving electricity transmission networks.

Google said it would invest \$25 billion on AI and data center infrastructure over the next two years in PIM’s mid-Atlantic electricity grid, while investment firm Brookfield said it had signed contracts to provide more than \$3 billion of power to Google’s data centers from two hydroelectric dams on the Susquehanna River in Pennsylvania.

Frontier Group said it would transform the former Bruce Mansfield coal-fired power plant in western Pennsylvania into a new natural gas-fired plant, and AI cloud computing firm CoreWeave said it will spend more than \$6 billion to equip a data center in south-central Pennsylvania.

### Trump plans to put 10% tariffs on smaller nations, including in Africa and Caribbean

WASHINGTON, July 16, (AP): President Donald Trump told reporters that he plans to place tariffs of over 10% on smaller countries, including nations in Africa and the Caribbean.

“We’ll probably set one tariff for all of them,” Trump said, adding that it could be “a little over 10% tariff” on goods from at least 100 nations.

Commerce Secretary Howard Lutnick interjected that the nations with goods being taxed at these rates would be in Africa and the Caribbean, places that generally do relatively modest levels of trade with the U.S. and would be relatively insignificant for addressing Trump’s goals of reducing trade imbalances with the rest of the world.

The president had this month been posting letters to roughly two dozen countries and the Eu-

ropean Union that simply levied a tariff rate to be charged starting Aug. 1.

Those countries generally faced tax rates on the goods close to the April 2 rates announced by the U.S. president, whose rollout of historically high import taxes for the U.S. caused financial markets to panic and led to Trump setting a 90-day negotiating period that expired July 9.

Trump also said he would “probably” announce tariffs on pharmaceutical drugs at the “end of the month.”

The president said he would start out at a lower tariff rate and give companies a year to build domestic factories before they faced higher import tax rates. Trump said computer chips would face a similar style of tariffs.

### H20 chip meets export rules

## Nvidia cleared to sell AI chips to China

BANGKOK, July 16, (AP): Nvidia’s CEO Jensen Huang says the technology giant has won approval from the Trump administration to sell its advanced H20 computer chips used to develop artificial intelligence to China.

The news came in a company blog post late Monday, which stated that the U.S. government had “assured” Nvidia that licenses would be granted - and that the company “hopes to start deliveries soon.” Shares of the California-based chipmaker were up over 4% by midday Tuesday.

Huang also spoke about the coup on China’s state-run CGTN television network, in remarks shown on X.

“Today, I’m announcing that the U.S. government has approved for us filing licenses to start shipping H20s,” Huang told reporters in Beijing.

He added that half of the world’s AI researchers are in China. “It’s so innovative and dynamic here in China that it’s really important that American companies are able to compete and serve the market here,” he said.

Huang recently met with President Donald Trump and other U.S. policymakers - and is in Beijing this week to attend a supply chain conference and speak with Chinese officials. The broadcast showed Huang meeting with Ren Hongbin, the head of the China Council for Promotion of International Trade, host of the China International Supply Chain Expo, which Huang was attending. Nvidia is an exhibitor.

Nvidia has profited enormously



CEO of Nvidia Jensen Huang speaks to journalists during a press conference at the Mandarin Oriental Qianmen after attending the third China International Supply Chain Expo, in Beijing, Wednesday, July 16, 2025. (AP)

from the rapid adoption of AI, becoming the first company to have its market value surpass \$4 trillion last week. However, the trade rivalry between the U.S. and China has been weighing heavily on the industry.

Here’s what we know.

The H20 graphics processing unit, or GPU, is an advanced AI chip - a type of device used to build and update a range of AI systems. But it’s less powerful than Nvidia’s top semiconductors today.

That’s because the H20 chip was developed to specifically comply with U.S. restrictions for exports of AI chips to China. Nvidia’s most ad-

vanced chips, which carry more computing power, are off-limits to the Chinese market.

Washington has been tightening controls on exports of advanced technology to China for years, citing concerns that know-how meant for civilian use could be deployed for military purposes. And in January, before Trump began his second term in office, President Joe Biden’s administration launched a new framework for exporting advanced computer chips used to develop AI - in an attempt to balance national security concerns about the technology with the economic interests of producers and other countries.

### Drones reshape logistics, farming and tourism

## China’s low-altitude economy takes flight

CHONGQING, July 16, (Xinhua): Amid the pines of a scenic area in southwest China’s Chongqing, two drones rose with a low hum, weaving through branches to hover 10 meters above the treetops as a fine mist of pesticide drifted down to target hidden pine caterpillars below.

“This canopy-level spraying hits where pests hide, boosting efficiency 30-fold over manual work and eliminating blind spots,” said Ni Liufa, deputy director of Liangping District’s forest resources monitoring and pest control station.

This scene exemplifies the quiet revolution of China’s booming low-altitude economy, evolving from novelty to essential practical use.

Anchored by its inclusion in China’s central government work reports for 2024 and 2025, the sector is soaring. The Civil Aviation Administration of China projects the market size to reach 1.5 trillion yuan (about 209.8 billion U.S. dollars) by 2025, with potential growth up to 3.5 trillion yuan by 2035.

The 1st West China Low-altitude Economy Expo in Liangping, which concluded Sunday, showcased the rapid diversification. Exhibits ranged from 5-tonne cargo drones and 4-passenger eVTOL (electric vertical take-off and landing) aircraft to advanced communication and air traffic management systems. The applications

spanned logistics, passenger transport, tourism, public safety, emergency response, surveying, and agriculture.

“Low-altitude economy is evolving from traditional services to integrated formats,” said Liu Daxiang, professor at Beihang University. “Deep development in agriculture, logistics, tourism, and emergency response is reshaping entire value chains.”

Growth is expanding from China’s eastern hubs to the central and western regions, reaching beyond cities into the countryside.

Chongqing, leveraging its unique landscape, is actively building an ecosystem integrating low-altitude operations with urban life and industry. The city recorded 190,000 flight hours in the first half of 2024, a surge of 109.2 percent year on year, with flight operations jumping 67.3 percent to over 1.15 million.

Drones are transforming logistics, especially in less accessible areas. “Our ‘air-to-air intermodal transport’ connects drones with China Postal Airlines cargo flights,” said Sun Liye, vice president of United Aircraft. “Fresh plums from Chongqing’s Wushan County can now reach supermarkets in eastern coastal regions such as Nanjing or Shanghai the same afternoon, 17 times faster than before.”

In south China’s Shenzhen, 483 low-altitude takeoff and landing points and a pioneering city-wide

safety network have been established. In Jinzhai County, east China’s Anhui province, drones are used to overcome the mountainous “last mile,” delivering more than 1,000 tonnes of produce each year. In Altay Prefecture, northwest China’s Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region, drones are boosting the efficiency of grassland ecological monitoring.

“Low-altitude economy isn’t some distant industry; it’s right here,” said Zhou Yuyun, a Chongqing resident exhilarated by a powered paragliding experience. “Seeing the world from above instead of the ground is breathtaking.”

Experts at the expo concurred that China’s low-altitude economy is experiencing an unprecedented boom, driven by rapid advancements in aircraft manufacturing, flight services and diverse application scenarios, alongside a strengthening industrial chain and accelerating innovation.

“With continuous policy refinement and technological breakthroughs, China’s low-altitude economy will continue to expand,” said Wang Huizheng, deputy head of the low-altitude economy branch of the China Information Industry Association.

“This vast ‘blue sky’ market holds immense potential, and is poised to inject powerful new momentum into economic and social development,” Wang added.



‘I connected with that character so deeply’

# Rogen, Milioti, Wyle and more react to Emmy noms

LOS ANGELES, July 16, (AP): This year’s crop of Emmy nominees were announced Tuesday. “Severance” led with 27 Emmy nominations, while “The Studio” led comedy nominees with 23 in a dominant year for Apple TV+.

The 77th Primetime Emmy Awards will air on CBS from the Peacock Theater in Los Angeles on Sept. 14. Nate Bargatze is slated to host.

Here are the reactions for some of the day’s notable nominees:

“Being at this point in our lives and making a thing that has this type of attention is just so kind of novel in a lot of ways, and really exciting and thrilling and very validating in a way that I’m not used to being validated. – **Rogen**, nominated for best actor in a comedy series as well as writing and directing, in an interview.

“My mother never wanted me to grow up to make a bunch of filthy R-rated comedies, but she is really proud today.” ≠ **Goldberg**, nominated for outstanding writing for a comedy series, in an interview.

“What I love about this job is that when you do the work so wholeheartedly, even when you move on you learn lessons. The things that she said to me just really saved me, and she didn’t need to do that. It was just emotional generosity on her part, and I brought all of that into Dana.” – **LaNasa**, nominated for best supporting actress in a drama series, in an interview after a day of filming “The Pitt” Season 2.

“I’m overjoyed that the nominations were spread across all the different departments as it reflects our collective effort. A heartfelt congrats to all my fellow nominees. I’m humbled and grateful.” – **Wyle**, nominated for best lead actor in a



This image released by Netflix shows Cristin Milioti in a scene from ‘Black Mirror.’ (AP)

drama series, wrote in a statement.

“It’s been so beautiful to see how many nominations the show has gotten. I’m so, so thrilled for my fellow cast and crew. It has been a really thrilling day...really wonderful.

“I had been wishing for a role like that for a long time and searching for one, and I just had the time of my life. You know, I connected with that character so deeply.” – **Milioti**, nominated for best actress in a limited series, heard about the nomination while running errands. She spoke in an interview.

“I cannot begin to express how excited I am to return to the Emmys and see if

the sunglasses I left in the bathroom 3 years ago are still there. – **Erickson**, who created “Severance,” in a statement.

“People wanted to watch it. They wanted to talk about it. They wanted to dress as the characters. They wanted to drink pina colodas. They wanted, they wanted to meet, you know, and watch it together.

“Look, the real world, the clouds are gathering and it’s not that easy to be in. It’s complicated and challenging to be in and to stay sane and happy and it gave people a happy place to be. And so they just wanted to continue it and so expand it into the periphery of us and our private lives, which seemed a bit odd, but I get why. They wanted to stay talking ‘White Lotus’ stuff.” – **Isaacs**, nominated for best supporting actor in a drama series, said in an interview.

“I think there’s something about the show that gives people permission to take care of their own mental health. And that is, I feel like, kind of a new thing for us, humans in this society, that we’re allowed to talk about it and relish in it ... and ask for help. So I’m glad that we’re doing and I’m glad that the industry is into it too.

“I didn’t really think this would ever happen. I mean, I certainly was aware that Emmys were a thing and that I might someday be in consideration for one, but it didn’t seem like it was possible. So it does feel kind of dreamy.” – **Urie**, nominated for best supporting actor in a comedy series, said in an interview.

“I’m really happy to see that the technical side of our show got recognized and Michael Wilkinson and Luke Hall and the sound departments and the visual effects department. I thought that really got a little bit overlooked last time. I wish there’d been more for the actors. – **Gilroy**, nominated for best drama series and outstanding original music and lyrics, in an interview.

“Poleaxed is a good word, is it not? (I’m) just so happy and so full of gratitude for the ensemble, for the piece itself as a whole, as a collective... Just the fact that there’s not one specific person or there’s no one specific thing, but each element has been acknowledged, and to be a part of such a wonderful ensemble, to me, is what it’s all about. – **Graham** was nominated both for best actor and outstanding writing in a limited series or movie. He spoke in an interview.

“That’s amazing...I feel like a leprechaun on St. Patrick’s Day.” – **Connor** Tomlinson, a reality star on “Love On The Spectrum,” reacting in a video message to the show’s five nominations.

## Variety

**LOS ANGELES:** As expected, Emmy voters heaped love on the so-called “Big Four” of comedy - “Hacks,” “The Bear,” “Abbott Elementary” and “Only Murders in the Building.” Many of those competing in the drama categories were likely just happy the Emmy-gobbling “Shogun” is between seasons.

Emmy voters are creatures of habit but there were some happy differences this time around, like “Matlock” star **Kathy Bates** becoming the oldest performer ever nominated in the lead drama actress category at age 77. And “Severance,” which last year only won for dramatic score and title design, looks in better shape for its second season.



Bates

Here are other talking points, “snubs” and surprises from the

Emmy nominations: “Shrinking,” the Apple TV+ comedy about a group of funny, complicated therapists, didn’t get much Emmy attention last year during its debut season, with only two nominations for stars Jason Segel, a co-creator, and Jessica Williams. This time, “Shrinking,” well, expanded - with seven nods, including best comedy, and nods for Segel, Williams, Michael Urie and Harrison Ford’s first Emmy nomination.

“Adolescence,” the Netflix four-part series that traces the emotional fallout after a UK teen stabbing, became a sensation, a sort of 2025 version of “Baby Reindeer,” and has earned a boatload of Emmy nominations, with 13. Owen Cooper, who plays the young attacker, became the youngest nominee in the history of his category - best supporting actor in a limited/anthology series or TV movie.

“The Daily Show,” “Jimmy Kimmel Live” and “The Late Show With Stephen Colbert” filled up the outstanding talk series category, dashing hopes that newcomers might crash the party. Like John Mulaney’s “Everybody’s Live With John Mulaney” on Netflix, which features a quirky mix of guests, the host doing odd things like fighting three 14-year-old-boys and an episode when Mulaney was completely in a blindfold. There’s also the spicy wing YouTube interview series “Hot Ones,” hosted by Sean Evans, which has attracted A-list talent and often pulls in an audience higher than the established network late-night boys.

The first season of “Squid Game” became an international phenomenon after its release in 2021 and was embraced by the Television Academy the next year, racking up 14 Emmy nominations and winning six, including best actor for Lee Jung-jae. Three years later, the second season continued to captivate audiences, logging over 192 million views on Netflix. But not a single Emmy nomination went to its cut-throat look at life.

After six harrowing, powerful seasons, Hulu’s “The Handmaid’s Tale” ended its exploration of an alternative America taken over by a totalitarian theocracy with a meek showing. The dystopian drama had garnered 76 nominations and 15 wins over its lifetime going into Tuesday’s announcement - including a historic outstanding drama series win in its first season, the first ever for a streaming platform. But the series got a sole nomination Tuesday, for guest actress.

“The Studio” received 23 Emmy nominations - the most ever for a comedy series in its first season. Seth Rogen’s critically acclaimed Apple TV+ series is about a Hollywood head struggling to balance his love of cinema with the mercenary demands of the market. Rogen got four individual nominations, including lead actor, writing and directing. Five of the six guest actor nods went to the show, including to Bryan Cranston, Dave Franco, Ron Howard, Anthony Mackie and Mar-

## Television

‘The Studio’ tops comedies

# ‘Severance’ leads Emmy nominees with 27

LOS ANGELES, July 16, (AP): “Severance” separated itself from the field with 27 Emmy nominations Tuesday, while “The Studio” led comedy nominees with a record-tying 23 in a dominant year for Apple TV+.

No other dramas came close to the dystopian workplace series “Severance,” which achieved a convergence of acclaim and audience buzz for its second season that brought an expected Emmy bounty.

“It’s been the best kind of morning,” Apple TV+ head of programming Matt Cherniss told The Associated Press.

Lead acting nominations came for “Severance” stars Adam Scott and Britt Lower for what amounted to dual roles as their characters’ “innie” work selves and “outie” home selves. Tramell Tillman got a supporting nod for playing their tone-shifting, pineapple-wielding supervisor. Patricia Arquette was nominated for supporting actress for playing an ousted outcast from the sinister family business at the center of the show. And Ben Stiller got a nomination for directing the Season 2 finale.

Apple’s Hollywood satire “The Studio” was expected to make a significant showing for its first season, but it romped over more established shows like “Hacks,” which got 14, and “The Bear,” which got 13. It tied a comedy record set last year by “The Bear” with 23 nominations.

Seth Rogen, who co-created the series with longtime collaborator Evan Goldberg, personally got three nominations - for acting, writing and directing.

Rogen told the AP that “my ego is in shock” and called the raft of nominations “very validating in a way that I’m not used to being validated.”

His show’s A-list roster of guest stars brought in a bounty, with nominations for Martin Scorsese, Ron Howard, Bryan Cranston, Anthony Mackie, Dave Franco and Zoë Kravitz. The men made for five of the six nominees in the guest actor in a comedy category.

“The Penguin,” HBO’s dark drama from the “Batman” universe, was surprisingly dominant in the limited series category with 24 nominations, including nods for leads Colin Farrell and Cristin Milioti.

### Supporting

Netflix’s acclaimed “Adolescence” got 13 limited series nominations, including a supporting actor nod for 15-year-old Owen Cooper, who plays a 13-year-old suspected of a killing.

Many expect Cooper to become the youngest Emmy winner in more than 40 years, largely because of a breathtaking episode that is one long therapy session inside a juvenile jail. Like all “Adolescence” episodes, it’s done in one long shot.

His psychologist scene partner, Erin Doherty, was also nominated, for limited series supporting actress.

“If you just sit and listen, and let someone talk, that is such a gorgeous offering,” Doherty told the AP. “I don’t think we do it that often. I’m trying to take that forward.”

HBO’s high-end soap “The White Lotus” got its usual flowering of drama acting nominations for its Thailand-set third season, with four cast members



Brenda Song presents the 77th Emmy Awards nominations announcements on Tuesday, July 15 at the Wolf Theatre, the Saban Media Center in Los Angeles. (AP)

including Carrie Coon getting supporting actress nods, and three including Walton Goggins up for supporting actor. It pulled in 23 nominations overall.

“The Pitt,” HBO Max’s prestige medical procedural, got 13 nominations, including best drama and best actor for its star, “ER” veteran Noah Wyle. One of its nurses, Katherine LaNasa, was able to squeeze in among the women of “The White Lotus” for a supporting actress nod.

“I love telling stories about the human condition and I really love acting,

and so to suddenly get recognized and sort of applauded for it is just a delightful surprise,” LaNasa told the AP.

Wyle, who was nominated five times without a win for “ER,” could join Scott to make best actor in a drama a two-man race, with both seeking their first Emmy.

The broadcast networks have largely become Emmy non-entities in the top categories. Oscar-winner Kathy Bates was a big exception this year. She’s considered a heavy favorite to win best actress in a drama for CBS’ “Matlock.”

She’s the first person nominated in the category from a network show since 2019, and would be the first to win it since 2015. At 77, she’s also the oldest ever nominee in the category.

ABC’s “Abbott Elementary,” which has kept hope alive for the networks in recent years, got six nominations including acting and writing nods for creator Quinta Brunson.

“The Last of Us” brought in 16 nominations in drama categories for HBO to add to its totals run up by “The White Lotus,” “The Pitt” and “The Penguin.”

Bella Ramsey got a nod for best actress in a drama for “The Last of Us.” Pedro Pascal was nominated for lead actor despite appearing in only about half of the season’s episodes.

HBO with its streaming counterpart HBO Max has been so prolific for decades in Emmy nominations that it almost felt like an off year without it having a “Succession” or a “Game of Thrones” atop the drama category. But it definitely wasn’t. It led all outlets with 142 nominations, the most it’s ever gotten.

Netflix followed with 120 nominations overall, including 11 for “Monsters: The Lyle And Erik Menendez Story” and 10 for “Black Mirror.”

Apple TV+ had 79 nominations overall.

“Shrinking” added to that total with seven in the comedy categories, including acting nominations for Harrison Ford and Jason Segel.

“Andor” represented Disney+ with 14 nominations. The gritty series from the “Star Wars” galaxy is up for best drama series and a slew of technical categories. Forest Whitaker was nominated for best guest actor in a drama.

He’s one of several Oscar winners in the guest acting categories along with Scorsese, Howard and Jamie Lee Curtis and Olivia Colman for their performances in “The Bear.”

### Categories

“Andor” star Diego Luna was surprisingly omitted from best actor in a drama. Other snubs included former Emmy powerhouses “The Handmaid’s Tale,” which got just one nomination, and “Squid Game,” which got none.

“Severance” has become a signature show for Apple TV+. The streamer has gotten plenty of Emmy nominations for dramas including “The Morning Show” and “Slow Horses,” and “Ted Lasso” thrived the comedy side.

But Apple has lacked the kind of breakaway prestige drama that HBO seems to produce perennially. “Severance” became its most-nominated show ever and could easily become its biggest winner when the Emmys are handed out in September, reaching the upper echelons previously enjoyed by “Succession” and “Shogun,” which left room for others by taking this year off.

Cherniss said Apple TV+, which has been knocked as the streamer with big stars and big budgets for shows that go unnoticed, was rewarded for taking big swings.

“‘Severance’ is such an ambitious show,” he said, adding that “all of the shows that have been nominated took big risks.”

All the shows are living in the splintered world of the streaming era, and the like the Oscars its most acclaimed nominees rarely have the huge audience they once did. While an impressive average of 10 million people per episode watched Wyle on “The Pitt” on HBO Max, 30 years ago an average of 30 million watched him on “ER” on NBC.

The broadcast networks rotate on who airs the Emmys. This year is CBS’s turn. It will air the 77th Primetime Emmy Awards from the Peacock Theater in Los Angeles on Sept. 14. Nate Bargatze is slated to host.



This image released by Apple TV+ shows Patricia Arquette in a scene from ‘Severance.’ (AP)



Ike Barinholtz, (from left), Kathryn Hahn, Chase Sui Wonders and Seth Rogen in a scene from ‘The Studio.’ (AP)



This image released by HBO shows Deirdre O’Connell in a scene from ‘The Penguin.’ (AP)





Northern Lights, or Aurora Borealis, shining over the Sycamore Gap tree, on Hadrian's Wall in Northumberland, England, July 3, 2016. (AP)

'Iconic tree was a marker of memory, history, belonging'

Sycamore Gap tree destroyers face over 4 years in jail

LONDON, July 16, (AP): Vandal

Daniel Graham and Adam Carruthers set out with a chainsaw on a dark and stormy night in 2023 to carry out what a prosecutor called a "moronic mission" and toppled the majestic sycamore onto Hadrian's Wall.

Graham, 39, and Carruthers, 32, were each convicted of two counts of criminal damage - one for destroying the tree, the other for damaging the ancient wall that is a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

Justice Christina Lambert sentenced the pair in Newcastle Crown Court to four years and three months in prison because there was a high degree of premeditation and planning to destroy the tree and because the act had angered and saddened so many people.

Lambert concluded the two had largely done it for the "sheer bravado."

"Felling the tree in the middle of the night and in the middle of a storm gave you some sort of thrill," she said. "You reveled in the coverage, taking evident pride in what you had done, knowing that you were responsible for the crime which so many were talking about."

Sarah Dodd, a lawyer specializing in tree law, said it was the first time in the UK that someone had been sent to prison for illegally felling a tree.



Daniel Graham, 39, (left), and Adam Carruthers, 32, who were sentenced on Tuesday, July 15. (AP)

"Today felt profoundly sad. There are no winners," Dodd said. "The Sycamore Gap tree wasn't just wood and leaves. It was a marker of memory, history, belonging."

The tree, in a saddle between two hills, had been known to locals but became famous after a cameo in Kevin Costner's 1991 film "Robin Hood: Prince Of Thieves." It drew tourists, lovers, landscape photographers and those who spread the ashes of loved ones. It was voted English "Tree of the Year" in 2016.

At trial, the two men testified they were at their homes on the night in question and had nothing to do with destroying the tree.

But faced with spending up to 10 years behind bars,

they changed their tune when interviewed by a probation officer in advance of sentencing, though they sought to minimize their culpability, the judge said.

Carruthers said he drank a bottle of whisky after a rough day and everything was a blur, Lambert said. While Graham admitted he had joined Carruthers on the journey, he said he was shocked that his former friend had actually cut the tree down.

"Although there may be grains of truth in what you have each said, I do not accept that your explanations to the probation officers are wholly honest or the whole story," Lambert said.

The tree's felling in Northumberland National Park on Sept. 28, 2023, caused fury and condemnation as news quickly spread beyond the ancient wall built by Emperor Hadrian in A.D. 122 to protect the northwest frontier of the Roman Empire.

Messages of heartbreak poured in from around the world, said Andrew Poad, general manager of the heritage and nature conservation charity National Trust.

"This iconic tree can never be replaced," Poad said in a statement read by a prosecutor. "It belonged to the people. It was a totemic symbol for many; a destination to visit whilst walking Hadrian's Wall, a place to make memories, take photos in all seasons; but it was also a place of sanctuary."

Prosecutors said the tree's value was estimated at about 460,000 pounds (\$615,000), while Graham's lawyer said it was valued at about 150,000 pounds (\$200,000).

Variety

LOS ANGELES: An "American Idol" music supervisor and her husband were both found dead in their Los Angeles home Monday afternoon.

Officers were conducting a welfare check at a home in the Encino neighborhood when they found the bodies of a man and woman with gunshot wounds.



Kaye

An "American Idol" spokesperson confirmed the deaths of Robin Kaye and her husband, Thomas Deluca, both 70. The couple owned their home, according to public records.

"Robin has been a cornerstone of the Idol family since 2009 and was truly loved and respected by all who came in contact with her," an "American Idol" spokesperson said in a statement. "Robin will remain in our hearts forever and we share our deepest sympathy with her family and friends during this difficult time."

Los Angeles police said Tuesday afternoon they arrested 22-year-old Raymond Boodarian in connection with the couple's deaths. Boodarian was allegedly burglarizing their home while the couple was away July 10. He is accused of shooting and killing Kaye and her husband when they returned and then fleeing on foot. Boodarian has not yet been assigned a public defender and could not be reached for comment.

Police responded that same afternoon to reports of a burglary at the Encino home, but said in a press release there were "no signs of forced entry or trouble." (AP)

LONDON: Fauja Singh, an Indian-born runner nicknamed the Turbaned Torpedo who was believed to be the world's oldest marathon runner, has died after being hit by a car. He was 114.

Local media in India reported that Singh sustained severe head injuries in a hit-and-run accident on Monday while he was crossing the road at his native village near Jalandhar in Punjab. He was taken to the hospital where he later died. His London-based running club and charity, Sikhs In The City, confirmed his death.

India's Prime minister Narendra Modi paid tribute to Singh, saying he was "extraordinary because of his unique persona and the manner in which he inspired the youth of India on a very important topic of fitness."

Singh became the oldest man to run a full marathon in 2011 at the age of 100 in Toronto. His accomplishment was not recognized by Guinness World Records because he did not have a birth certificate to prove his age. Singh had a British passport that showed his date of birth as April 1, 1911, while a letter from Indian government officials stated that birth records were not kept in 1911.

A torchbearer for the 2012 London Olympics, Singh took up running at the age of 89 as a way to get over depression after his wife and son died in quick succession in India. The death in 1994 of his son took a particularly hard toll on him because of its grisly nature. (AP)

Music



The Weeknd performs in Vancouver, on Tuesday, July 15. (AP)

Rock 'n' register

Festival-goers can now marry mid-show in China

BEIJING, July 16, (Xinhua): Last week at a music festival in Urumqi, capital of northwest China's Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region, a woman in a wedding dress and her partner in a suit caught curious glances as they moved through the crowd.

Amid pulsing beats and roaring cheers from festival-goers, the couple did more than just enjoy the music as they officially registered their marriage and received their certificates right at the venue.

The romantic twist was made possible by a temporary marriage registry set up by the local civil affairs bureau, where several couples said "I do" that day.

"We had already planned to register soon," said the 31-year-old bride Yao Yuyang, radiant in her white gown. "This music festival happened to offer on-site registration, and one of my favorite bands was performing. So we thought, why not make it official right here?"

This was not an isolated case. Across many cities in China, registry staff are stepping out of traditional offices to connect directly with young people, catering to their desire for personalized and unique experiences, while also creating new business opportunities for the local economy.

At another music festival in the eastern city of Ningbo in June, couples didn't just register their marriages; 10 pairs tied the knot in a group wedding ceremony. Meanwhile, the southwestern city of

Chengdu set up a registry atop Xiling Snow Mountain, more than 3,000 meters above sea level, where newlyweds exchanged vows amid rolling sea clouds and snow-capped peaks.

Such moves come after a policy shift in May, when China streamlined its rules to make it easier for couples, especially those working away from home, to register their marriages across regions. Local authorities have also extended marriage leave to take the stress out of wedding planning and give couples more time to enjoy a carefree honeymoon.

Measures

These incentive measures were rolled out amid a decline in marriage registrations in China. Official data show that 1.81 million couples registered their marriages in the first quarter of 2025, down 8 percent year-on-year. After a brief rebound in 2023, registrations fell again last year, reaching their lowest level since 1980.

Experts attribute the overall decline to a shrinking population of marriageable-age individuals, shifting attitudes toward marriage, and financial concerns related to tying the knot.

In a country where tradition holds that marriage should precede childbearing, declining marriage rates have become one of the factors in falling birth rates, sparking growing public concern.

While tying the knot at a music festival may not dramatically

boost marriage rates, it reflects a growing desire among couples to make their big moment more memorable, heartfelt and full of spark.

Similarly, a new travel trend with a matrimonial twist is gaining momentum, giving a boost to the burgeoning "sweet economy."

The scenic area of Sayram Lake, a lovers' paradise in Xinjiang, has rolled out a lifetime free entry policy for newlyweds who register their marriage there. On the morning of May 20, one of China's most romantic dates, eager couples lined up at the registry before sunrise.

The coastal city of Qingdao is creating marriage-themed hotspots with a local flair, from a cruise ship home port to a beer museum. Since the beginning of 2025, the number of couples married in Qingdao has soared, up more than 60 percent year-on-year. Each year, around 200,000 couples take wedding photos in the city, with about 70 percent coming from outside the city.

"Qingdao's 'sweet economy' is enjoying a powerful surge," said Wang Qiang, deputy secretary-general of the Qingdao wedding ceremony industry association, adding that the city will create more trendy attractions to draw newlyweds from across the country.

Lin Fangfei, associate professor at the school of politics and public administration, Xinjiang University, believes that the "sweet economy" holds strong potential as it taps into people's desire for a more meaningful marriage and a richer life experience.

Streaming now dominates TV time

Broadcast networks struggling amid evolving media trends

NEW YORK, July 16, (AP): Two milestones revealed this week illustrate the diminishing power of broadcast television in the media world - one fueled by the habits of young people and the other by their elders.

During June, viewers spent more time watching streaming services than they did for broadcast and cable television combined. That happened for the first time ever in May, by a fraction of a percentage point, but the Nielsen company said on Tuesday that gap widened considerably in June.

Also, for the third straight week, Nielsen said that Fox News Channel had more viewers in prime-time on weeknights than any of the main broadcast networks ABC, CBS, NBC and Fox entertainment.

For years, the mantra of media executives was that streaming represented the future for in-home entertainment. Now, that future has clearly arrived.

In June, 46% of Americans' TV time was spent on streaming services, led by YouTube and Netflix. Cable

television networks represented 23.4% and broadcast was 18.5%, for a total of just under 42%, Nielsen said. It was the first time broadcast TV had ever slipped below 20% of total TV viewing.

"It kind of felt like the right time," said Brian Fuhrer, Nielsen's senior vice president for product strategy and thought leadership. "A lot of people thought it would happen more quickly."

The driving force in June was school ending for young people, meaning they had more time to watch TV, where Netflix series like "Ginny & Georgia" and "Squid Game" were big hits. Roughly two-thirds of people aged 6 to 17 watched streaming ahead of conventional TV, Nielsen said.

In June 2024, the numbers were roughly reversed - 47.7% of people were watching conventional TV in an average minute, with 40.3% logged on to a streaming service.

While the direction is clear, it's not a death knell for conventional TV. June and July are fallow months, and



A sign marks the exterior of CBS Television City studio, July 3, 2020, in Los Angeles. (AP)

their viewing will increase when football season begins and original episodes of comedies and dramas return, Fuhrer said.

It's also not a strict either-or situation; media companies are doing a better job spreading their content out on different platforms to give viewers a choice, he said. The growth of YouTube, which many consumers can access for free and is a portal for "traditional" TV, has also fueled streaming services.

Fox News has occasionally eclipsed the broadcast networks in viewership before, but last week represented the seventh week it has done so in 2025, already more than 2024 and 2023 combined. It averaged 2.4 million viewers in prime time on weeknights last week, Nielsen said.

Fox News is also taking advantage of what is traditionally the least-watched time of the year for broadcast networks, when summer nights and barbecues keep people outside. The difference this year is it has won a few weeks outside of the summer, during President Donald Trump's inauguration week in January, for example.

Its audience - among the oldest of all television networks - tends to stay pretty steady throughout the year.



Benefits and barriers

# AI in healthcare could save lives and money

**By Turgay Ayer**  
Georgia Institute of Technology

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

Imagine walking into your doctor's office feeling sick - and rather than flipping through pages of your medical history or running tests that take days, your doctor instantly pulls together data from your health records, genetic profile and wearable devices to help decipher what's wrong.

This kind of rapid diagnosis is one of the big promises of artificial intelligence for use in health care. Proponents of the technology say that over the coming decades, AI has the potential to save hundreds of thousands, even millions of lives. What's more, a 2023 study found that if the health care industry significantly increased its use of AI, up to US\$360 billion annually could be saved.

But though artificial intelligence has become nearly ubiquitous, from smartphones to chatbots to self-driving cars, its impact on health care so far has been relatively low.

A 2024 American Medical Association survey found that 66% of U.S. physicians had used AI tools in some capacity, up from 38% in 2023. But most of it was for administrative or low-risk support. And although 43% of U.S. health care organizations had added or expanded AI use in 2024, many implementations are still exploratory, particularly when it comes to medical decisions and diagnoses.

I'm a professor and researcher who studies AI and health care analytics. I'll try to explain why AI's growth will be gradual, and how technical limitations and ethical concerns stand in the way of AI's widespread adoption by the medical industry.

## Medicines

Artificial intelligence excels at finding patterns in large sets of data. In medicine, these patterns could signal early signs of disease that a human physician might overlook - or indicate the best treatment option, based on how other patients with similar symptoms and backgrounds responded. Ultimately, this will lead to faster, more accurate diagnoses and more personalized care.

AI can also help hospitals run more efficiently by analyzing workflows, predicting staffing needs and scheduling surgeries so that precious resources, such as operating rooms, are used most effectively. By streamlining tasks that take hours of human effort, AI can let health care professionals focus more on direct patient care.

But for all its power, AI can make mistakes. Although these systems are trained on data from real patients, they can struggle when encountering something unusual, or when data doesn't perfectly match the patient in front of them.

As a result, AI doesn't always give an accurate diagnosis. This problem is called algorithmic drift - when AI systems perform well in controlled settings but lose accuracy in real-world situations.

Racial and ethnic bias is another issue. If data includes bias because it doesn't include enough patients of certain racial or ethnic groups, then AI might give inaccurate recommendations for them, leading to misdiagnoses. Some evidence suggests this has already happened.

Health care systems are labyrinthine in their complexity. The prospect of integrating artificial intelligence into existing workflows is daunting; introducing a new technology like AI disrupts daily routines. Staff will need extra training to use AI tools effectively. Many hospitals, clinics and doctor's offices simply don't have the time, personnel, money or will to implement AI.

Also, many cutting-edge AI systems operate as opaque "black boxes." They churn out recommendations, but even its developers might struggle to fully explain how. This opacity clashes with the needs of medicine, where decisions demand justification.

## Transparency

But developers are often reluctant to disclose their proprietary algorithms or data sources, both to protect intellectual property and because the complexity can be hard to distill. The lack of transparency feeds skepticism among practitioners, which then slows regulatory approval and erodes trust in AI outputs. Many experts argue that transparency is not just an ethical nicety but a practical necessity for adoption in health care settings.

There are also privacy concerns; data sharing could threaten patient confidentiality. To train algorithms or make predictions, medical AI systems often require huge amounts of patient data. If not handled properly, AI could expose sensitive health information, whether through data breaches or unintended use of patient records.

For instance, a clinician using a cloud-based AI assistant to draft a note must ensure no unauthorized party can access that patient's data. U.S. regulations such as the HIPAA law impose strict rules on health data sharing, which means AI developers need robust safeguards.

Privacy concerns also extend to patients' trust: If people fear their medical data might be misused by an algorithm, they may be less forthcoming or even refuse AI-guided care.

The grand promise of AI is a formidable barrier in itself. Expectations are tremendous. AI is often portrayed as a magical solution that can diagnose any disease and revolutionize the health care industry overnight. Unrealistic assumptions like that often lead to disappointment. AI may not immediately deliver on its promises.

Finally, developing an AI system that works well involves a lot of trial and error. AI systems must go through rigorous testing to make certain they're safe and effective. This takes years, and even after a system is approved, adjustments may be needed as it encounters new types of data and real-world situations.

Today, hospitals are rapidly adopting AI scribes that listen during patient visits and automatically draft clinical notes, reducing paperwork and letting physicians spend more time with patients. Surveys show over 20% of physicians now use AI for writing progress notes or discharge summaries. AI is also becoming a quiet force in administrative work. Hospitals deploy AI chatbots to handle appointment scheduling, triage common patient questions and translate languages in real time. (AP)

## People prefer human over AI in emotional talk: study

# AI-driven blood test detects breast cancer early

SYDNEY, July 16, (Xinhua): Scientists have developed Australia's first artificial intelligence (AI)-powered lipid-based blood test, enabling earlier and less invasive breast cancer detection.

The test is already in clinical use in specialist clinics across Sydney and Melbourne after transitioning from research in March 2025, according to a statement from the University of New South Wales (UNSW) published by Medianet on Wednesday.

Unlike traditional imaging and biopsies, which can miss tumors and carry risks, the new AI-powered blood test detects subtle molecular signals in blood, allowing for cancer diagnosis months or even years before symptoms appear, said UNSW Associate Professor Fatemeh Vafaei.

AI drives the breakthrough by analyzing millions of molecular markers to detect early cancer signs, according to Vafaei and her Vafaei Lab, Biomedical AI Laboratory at UNSW.

"By integrating explainable AI techniques, we ensure that the models provide not only accurate outcomes but also clinically interpretable insights, crucial for building trust and supporting decision-making in real-world healthcare settings," Vafaei said.

The lab is contributing to global efforts to make AI-driven blood tests part of standard breast cancer screening, offering a valuable new option, especially for women with dense breast tissue where traditional imaging may be less effective, said the UNSW team in collaboration with Australian biotechnology company BCAL Diagnostics.

The team is now developing multi-analyte tests that combine various biomarkers for more precise cancer detection across multiple types, including lung, liver, and brain tumors, exploring tests using other biofluids like urine and saliva, while working to integrate diverse data for a complete view of patient health, Vafaei said.

US researchers have found that people value empathetic responses more when they believe they came from a human, even when the responses were written by artificial intelligence (AI), researchers said in a statement on Thursday.

## Practice improves balance, coordination and strength

# Parkinson's patients in Brazil turn to capoeira to alleviate symptoms

RIO DE JANEIRO, July 16, (AP): Nilma Teles de Freitas, an 80-year-old retired teacher in Brazil who was diagnosed with Parkinson's disease more than a decade ago, says she used to fall over all the time.

That changed after she began attending a capoeira class in downtown Rio de Janeiro especially designed for people with the neurodegenerative illness.

Capoeira is a movement practice that originated within the large enslaved communities in Brazil, where nearly 5 million kidnapped Africans disembarked during the transatlantic slave trade that started in the 16th century.

It is considered both a martial art and a dance, combining ritual, exercise, spirituality and music.

"Capoeira gives me freedom to work on my body. What I can do. What I can't do. So I can have balance and a more comfortable life," Teles de Freitas said during a recent class.

Practiced for centuries by Afro-Brazilians, it has since become popular around the world. UNESCO recognized the practice in 2014 as Intangible Cultural Heritage.

The project started in 2018 with physical therapist Rosimeire Peixoto, 60, who at that point had been attending capoeira classes herself for over a decade.

After working with many patients with Parkinson's, she said she became convinced that introducing them to capoeira may help alleviate some of their symptoms.



Physical therapist Rosemeire Peixoto, left, founder of a project called 'Parkinson's in the swing,' leads a capoeira class for people with Parkinson's disease at the Progress Foundry cultural center, in Rio de Janeiro, Tuesday, July 15. (AP)

Parkinson's has a range of different symptoms, and along with difficulties in balancing, some common ones include slowness of movement, tremors and stooped posture. Patients can also experience anxiety, depression, sleeping disorders and nausea.

"I had the idea after reading an article that said alternating both hands when using a cell phone stimulates both hemispheres of the brain," she said. "And as a physiotherapist treating neurological patients, I was lacking ex-

ercises that would motivate them."

Peixoto's project was dubbed "Parkinson na ginga" - or "Parkinson's in the swing" - a reference to the first fluid, rhythmic step that capoeira practitioners learn. She now holds classes twice a week in the Progress Foundry, a sprawling cultural center in downtown Rio next to a famed white 18th century aqueduct and surrounded by palm trees.

Capoeira helps improve balance, coordination and strength, with music loosening up tense bodies, Peixoto says.

## 2 in 5 US teens struggle with sadness

# Screen time blamed for teen suicide surge

SACRAMENTO, July 16, (Xinhua): American adolescents are facing a mounting mental health crisis, with two in five high school students reporting persistent feelings of sadness or hopelessness, according to newly released data highlighting the devastating impact of addictive screen use on young people's well-being.

The 74, a nonprofit news organization covering education in the United States, published a commentary Tuesday highlighting the scale of the crisis. Citing new findings from the Coalition to Empower our Future, it reported that nearly 60 percent of parents consider their children's mental health to be "very or somewhat poor."

The article highlights the fact that the quality of screen engagement, such

as compulsive social media or phone use, is more detrimental than the total time spent online. These behaviors, experts say, are contributing to deeply-rooted mental stress in US youth.

This growing crisis gained scientific backing when researchers published groundbreaking findings in the Journal of the American Medical Association on June 18, tracking nearly 4,300 American children over four years. The study revealed that adolescents with addictive patterns of social media, mobile phone, or video game use face double the risk of suicidal behaviors compared to their peers with low addictive use.

Dr. Yunyu Xiao, assistant professor of population health sciences at Weill Cornell Medicine and lead author of

the study, emphasized that "addictive use is crucial and is actually the underlying issue, rather than just the amount of time spent."

The research found that about 31 percent of participants developed increasingly addictive social media use patterns, while 25 percent showed similar trajectories with mobile phones.

The study's findings challenge conventional wisdom about screen time limits. Total screen time at age 10 showed no association with later suicide-related outcomes, but children exhibiting compulsive usage patterns, characterized by inability to stop, distress when not using devices, or using screens to escape problems, demonstrated significantly higher risks.

## 'Acute phase'

# Cholera cases climb in DRC

KINSHASA, July 16, (Xinhua): The Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) is facing a sharp resurgence of cholera, with cases reported in 17 of its 36 provinces and over 35,000 infections recorded since the beginning of the year, authorities said.

Minister of Public Health Roger Kamba told a briefing in Kinshasa, the capital, late Monday that the country remains in the "acute phase" of the outbreak.

"Being in the acute phase means that we are still seeing the number of cases rising," Kamba said.

The outbreak, which has remained endemic in several eastern provinces since it first appeared in the country over half a century ago, is now spreading rapidly, especially in the capital, Kinshasa, a city of over 17 million people.

"Cholera arrived in our country in 1973, and since then, it has never left. It has remained mostly in the eastern regions," the minister said.

"From time to time, the disease resurfaces as an epidemic. More often, it's endemic -- meaning there is a constant presence of cases in some areas, although they are quickly contained," Kamba said. "However, sometimes it leads to large-scale outbreaks."

Tshopo province is currently the most affected, followed by Kinshasa, South Kivu, Maniema, and North Kivu. Sporadic cases have also been reported in the central provinces, raising concern among authorities.

The national case fatality rate has reached 3 percent, with a peak of 9 percent previously recorded in Kinshasa.

□ □ □

**Chronic diseases:** Australians who have a poor diet, smoke or are overweight are more likely to have multiple chronic illnesses, according to a government report.

The report, which was published on Tuesday by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW), explored the prevalence of people living with two or more chronic conditions, known as multimorbidity.

It found that 9.7 million Australians, almost 40 percent of the national population, were estimated to be living with multimorbidity in 2022.

According to the report, multimorbidity is more common among people with more health risk factors, including smoking, poor diet, high blood pressure, insufficient physical activity and being overweight or obese.

AIHW spokesperson Amy Young said in a statement that 59 percent of Australian adults with four or more risk factors were living with multimorbidity in 2022 compared to 29 percent of adults with no risk factors.

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‘No timetable for how long the process will take’

# NBA will take a harder look at expansion, Commissioner says

LAS VEGAS, July 16, (AP): The NBA may finally be one step closer on the long road to expansion.

Saying owners have a “curiosity” about the notion, Commissioner Adam Silver said Tuesday that the league will now study the issue more formally as part of an in-depth analysis, which would be the first official move in a long process toward adding franchises.

There’s no timetable for how long the process will take, nor have any decisions been made on what the expansion fee will be, when the new teams will start play - or even if expansion is going to actually happen.

“A lot of analysis still needs to be done and nothing has been predetermined,” Silver said after the end of the league’s board of governors meeting in Las Vegas.

The league isn’t creating a new committee to study expansion; the duties, for now, will fall primarily to a pair of existing groups, with the advisory finance committee leading and the audit and strategy committee also involved.

The decision to take a harder look at expansion wasn’t totally unexpected, since the notion of adding clubs has been a talking point for several years. Cities like Las Vegas and Seattle - long perceived to be the front-runners should the NBA decide to expand past its current 30-team footprint - will surely continue to push to be the eventual picks. And Silver himself has said previously that he expects expansion will happen at some point.

“I think there is a significant step now in that we are now engaging in this in-depth analysis, something we weren’t prepared to do before,” Silver said. “But beyond that, it’s really Day 1 of that in-depth analysis. And so, in terms of price, potential timing, it’s too early to say. ... It is truly a complicated issue.”

The next board of governors meeting will likely take place in September.

Expansion has long been a difficult issue, since it’ll mean, among other things, that the current owners will have decided to sell equity in a league that is on a financial roll right now.

“For every team you add, you’re diluting the economics of the current league,” Silver said.

A new series of media rights deals worth \$76 billion kicks in for this coming



NBA Commissioner Adam Silver speaks during a news conference following a meeting of the NBA's board of governors in Las Vegas. (AP)

season and franchise values across the league have soared. The two most title-laden franchises in the NBA, the Boston Celtics and Los Angeles Lakers, clubs that have combined for about half of the titles handed out in league history, are in the process of being sold with a combined valuation of at least \$16.1 billion.

The Celtics are being sold to private equity mogul Bill Chisholm with a valuation of at least \$6.1 billion, which was a record until the Buss family agreed to sell the Lakers to businessman Mark Walter - also the owner of the Los Angeles

Dodgers - with a valuation of \$10 billion.

“There’s no question that those purchase prices have an impact on any economic analysis of teams, so it doesn’t necessarily complicate it more, but it certainly is an indication of value,” Silver said. “And one other factor we have to look at: we’re trying to think what is the value of expansion, what does it mean to dilute the existing equity, and how additive is this potentially to the league by adding an additional team.”

Another team that could be sold before long: The Portland Trail Blazers.

Paul Allen’s estate announced in May that it has begun the process of selling the Portland Trail Blazers.

“It’s the league’s preference that that team remain in Portland,” Silver said. “We’ve had great success in Portland over the years. ... I know there are groups that are actively engaged with the estate and have demonstrated interest in that team.”

Silver said a factor in the sale is that the “city of Portland likely needs a new arena,” which he said would be part of the challenge for any new ownership group.

Allen, the billionaire co-founder of Microsoft, died in 2018 at age 65 from complications of non-Hodgkin lymphoma. Since then, his sister, Jody Allen, has served as chair of the Trail Blazers and the NFL’s Seattle Seahawks and trustee of the Paul G. Allen Trust.

The league has added seven franchises since 1988, but none since 2004. There have been several instances of rebranding and relocating since - most notably, the Seattle SuperSonics moving to Oklahoma City in 2008 and becoming the Thunder - but the league has been at 30 teams for the past two decades.

Las Vegas has a long relationship with the NBA, as a Summer League host and now the host of the title round of the NBA Cup. And Seattle is among the cities that has clamored for a team since the Sonics left.

“It’s an incredible market,” Silver said of Seattle. “I wish, standing here as the commissioner, I had lots of teams to dispense to many different markets who are interested in NBA basketball. I just think that we also have this greater obligation to expand, if we do so, in a very deliberate fashion and in a way that makes sense holistically for the league. So, that’s really the best I can do.”

# Fever edges Sun despite off night from Clark at packed TD Garden



Indiana Fever’s Caitlin Clark (22) drives past Connecticut Sun’s Leila Lacan during the first half of a WNBA basketball game in Boston. (AP)

Sparks win back-to-back games for first time this season

**BOSTON, July 16, (AP): Indiana Fever star Caitlin Clark left Tuesday night’s game in the final minute holding back tears after grabbing at her leg - an apparent injury that would be her third this season.**

Clark walked back downcourt holding her right groin after assisting on the Fever’s final basket of an 85-77 victory over the Connecticut Sun in front of a sold-out crowd of 19,156 at the TD Garden in Boston. As teammate Aliyah Boston tried to console her, Clark walked to the basket stanchion and banged her head against it before heading to the bench. During the timeout, she covered her head with a towel and appeared to be holding back tears.

Clark, who has already missed nine games this season for two separate left leg injuries, struggled with her shooting in the rare WNBA game at the home of the Celtics and Bruins, scoring 14 points while making 4 of 14 shots. She committed five turnovers and made her only 3-pointer in seven tries with just three minutes left, giving the Fever a nine-point lead that was their biggest of the game.

The second-year phenom was not available to reporters after the game. The Fever were sched-

uled to play the New York Liberty on Wednesday night at the Barclays Center - their second straight game in an NBA arena.

Clark’s struggles didn’t dampen the mood for the fans who filled the Garden to see New England’s only WNBA team play in Boston for the second year in a row. Both have been sellouts - the biggest crowds to see a basketball game in the building’s history.

And this year, it was the visiting Indiana Fever and their breakout star that most of them were there to see.

Fans wearing Clark’s No. 22 crowded toward the court before the game trying to get her autograph, waving her jersey or homemade signs begging for a selfie. Among those in attendance were Celtics Jaylen Brown and Georges Niang, Bruins Jeremy Swayman and Mason Lohrei, Red Sox pitcher Lucas Giolito and Massachusetts Gov. Maura Healey.

Clark added seven assists and eight rebounds for the Fever, who pulled away in the fourth quarter. She committed one of her turnovers on the Fever’s first possession and another when she stepped on the sideline at the end of the third quarter - guarded too closely to launch one of her logo 3-pointers.

Clark said before the game that she took time

to appreciate the opportunity to play in a building where so much basketball lore had been written. The Iowa native said she grew up respecting the Celtics as an organization, even though she now counts herself an Indiana Pacers fan.

**Sparks 99, Mystics 80**

In Los Angeles, Dearica Hamby scored 26 points, Rickea Jackson had 22 and Los Angeles used a big first-half run to beat Washington.

Shakira Austin had 16 points and eight rebounds for Washington. Sug Sutton added 14 points and Aaliyah Edwards scored 13.

The Sparks closed the first half on a 17-2 run over the final four minutes to reach their most points scored in any half this season at 59. Hamby scored 18 in the first half, including a 3-pointer just before the buzzer for a 25-point lead.

The Mystics, who were held to 12 points in the second quarter, scored 12 points in the opening four minutes of the third. But the Sparks held onto their double-digit lead for the entire second half.

Los Angeles (8-14) won consecutive games for the first time this season to match its win total from last season.

Washington (11-11) had won three in a row.

‘I made a mistake that I deeply regret’

# Oakmont bans Wyndham Clark for damaging locker

OAKMONT, Pa., July 16, (AP): Former U.S. Open champion Wyndham Clark won’t be allowed back at Oakmont Country Club until he pays to fix the locker he damaged and gets counseling for his anger.

Golf Digest obtained a letter that club president John Lynch sent to Oakmont members this week about the incident during last month’s U.S. Open, when Clark smashed up his locker out of frustration. Media were not allowed in the locker room, but a photo was leaked and went viral.

“Following multiple discussions with the USGA and the OCC Board, a decision has been made that Mr. Clark will no longer be permitted on OCC property,” Lynch said in the letter.



Wyndham Clark of the US on day four of the Scottish Open 2025 at The Renaissance Club, North Berwick, Scotland. (AP)

“Reinstatement would be contingent upon Mr. Clark fulfilling

a number of specific conditions, including full repayment for damages, a meaningful contribution to a charity of the Board’s choosing, and the successful completion of counseling and/or anger management sessions.”

Clark received a 10-year exemption for winning the U.S. Open at Los Angeles Country Club in 2023. The exemption ends in 2033, the next time Oakmont is to host the U.S. Open. The storied club has held the U.S. Open nine times, the most of any U.S. Open site.

Clark said a week later at the Travelers Championship that “I made a mistake that I deeply regret” and he was sorry.

“But I’d also like to move on, not only for myself but for Oakmont, for the USGA, and kind of

focus on the rest of this year and things that come up,” he said.

Last week at the Scottish Open he told reporters that he had turned the page. According to Oakmont, he has offered to pay for repairs.

“Yeah, I mean, I made a mistake in a moment of rage with a bad year and everything coming together and it just was more than anything a good wake-up call for me to say, ‘Hey, you know what, let’s get back on track and things aren’t that bad,’” Clark said.

Clark, who reached as high as No. 3 in the world last year, has only one top 10 on the PGA Tour in the 2025 season. He has dropped to No. 28 in the world, No. 22 in the Ryder Cup standings and at No. 78 in the FedEx Cup is in danger of missing the postseason.

‘We are in a rebuilding phase’

# Lara & Viv Richards to help beleaguered Windies team

JAMAICA, July 16, (AP): Only a day after West Indies endured one of its worst performances in nearly a century of playing test matches, the president of the Caribbean cricket board was looking to the past to improve the future.

WICB president Kishore Shallow on Tuesday said he plans to enlist Caribbean cricket greats such as Viv Richards and Brian Lara to help a West Indian lineup that scored just 27 runs in its second innings - one run short of the all-time test record for low totals - while losing the third of three tests to Australia.

The batting collapse continued a pattern for the West Indian test team - it hasn’t won a test series since 2022-23, when it beat Zimbabwe in the Caribbean.

Since then it has drawn three and lost five series. It was swept in 3-0 over the last few weeks at home against Australia, culminating in the humiliating defeat in the third test on Monday.

Shallow had seen enough.

“The result hurts deeply, not only because of how we lost, but because of what West Indies Cricket has always represented to our people: pride, identity, and possibility,” Shallow said in a statement.

“There will be some sleepless nights ahead for many of us, including the players, who I know feel this loss just as heavily. We are in a rebuilding phase, steadily investing in the next generation, and reigniting the spirit that has long made West Indies cricket a force in the world.”

Indeed it was a force. By the late 1970s, the Caribbean side was recognized as unofficial world champions, a title they retained throughout the 1980s thanks to batters like Richards complemented by feared bowlers like Curtly Ambrose.

Now, Richards, known fondly at times as Sir Viv after receiving a British knighthood for his services to cricket, will be part of the rescue package. Shallow said he had ordered an emergency meeting to review the Australia test series, “particularly the final match.”

Some of the fast bowling produced against Australia in the series resembled the days when West Indies’ pacemen dominated the world of cricket, but batting deficiencies let the team down badly.



West Indies’ Shamar Joseph celebrates after bowling Australia’s Scott Boland on day three of the third Test cricket match at Sabina Park in Kingston, Jamaica. (AP)

“To strengthen the discussions, I have extended invitations to three of our greatest batsmen ever: Clive Lloyd, Vivian Richards and Brian Lara,” Shallow said. “They will join past greats Shivnarine Chanderpaul, Desmond Haynes and Ian Bradshaw.”

Lloyd, who is 80, was a West Indies captain and leading figure of the team’s overwhelming success in his era. He scored 19 centuries in his 110-test career that ended in 1984. The 73-year-old Richards scored 24 centuries in 121 test matches.

Lara, who retired in 2006, scored 34 centuries in 131 tests. He holds the record for the most runs scored in a test innings - 400 not out against England in 2004. It remains the only quadruple century in test cricket.

It’s not clear whether the support group will help in the shorter formats of ODI and Twenty20 cricket. West Indies have had 3-0 series losses this year to England in both formats. On the plus side, the Caribbean team drew an ODI series and won a T20 series in Ireland.

Shallow insists he’s not paying lip service to the chaos surrounding the test team, which played its first test matches in England in 1928, losing the series 3-0.

“This engagement is not ceremonial,” Shallow said. “These are men who helped define our golden eras, and their perspectives will be invaluable as we shape the next phase of our cricket development.”

Best of the Rest

**Derby County signs Agyemang:** Second-division club Derby County signed United States forward Patrick Agyemang to a four-year contract Tuesday after paying a reported fee of \$7.7 million to Major League Soccer team Charlotte.

The 24-year-old Agyemang scored eight goals in 18 appearances during the first half of Charlotte’s current season before adding two more for the U.S. in the CONCACAF Gold Cup tournament.

Charlotte described the transfer fee as a club record, though neither team revealed the figure. British media reported it to be \$7.7 million.

“Agyemang has been playing for most of the 2025 Major League Soccer season with a hernia injury that has been managed without surgery but meant he has been playing in discomfort,” Derby said in its announcement. “With a long-term view in mind, all parties have agreed he will undergo routine surgery and is therefore likely to miss the opening games of the 2025-26 season.”

The East Hartford, Connecticut native was selected 12th overall in the 2023 MLS SuperDraft. (AP)

**Atletico reaches deal to sign Almada:** Atletico Madrid has reached an agreement to sign Argentina international Thiago Almada from Brazilian club Botafogo.

Atletico said Tuesday the 24-year-old attacking midfielder, who was playing on loan with French club Lyon, will sign his contract with the Spanish club after passing a medical.

Atletico did not disclose the transfer fee or give details on the length of the contract.

Spanish media said the transfer was worth about 25 million euros (\$29 million), with Botafogo receiving a percentage of a possible future transfer to another club.

Almada arrives after forward Ángel Correa left Atletico to sign with Mexican club Tigres. He’ll join an attack that includes countryman Julián Álvarez, Antoine Griezmann and Alexander Sorloth.

Atletico had already boosted its squad by signing midfielder Álex Baena from Villarreal and 22-year-old Italian left back Matteo Ruggeri from Atlanta.

Diego Simeone’s team finished third in the Spanish league last season, behind Real Madrid and champion Barcelona. It was eliminated in the group stage of the Club World Cup. (AP)



Kuwaiti squash team ready for global challenge in Cairo

CAIRO, July 16: The Kuwaiti junior squash team has departed for Cairo to participate in the World Junior Championships set to take place from this Sunday through August 1 at the Black Bull courts in the Egyptian capital.

The delegation is headed by Suleiman Al-Habib, Vice President of the Kuwait Squash Association, who serves as delegation chairman.

He is joined by Board Member Ahmed Al-Adwani (Administrator), Coach Ahmed Abdel-Aal, and four players: Khaled Al-Fawzan, Abdullah Hani, Abdul-Rahman Al-Sanea, and Abdul-Rahman Al-Kandari.

Upon arrival, the national squad began training at the Cairo Stadium squash courts and played several friendly matches as part of their final preparations.

The team had previously conducted an intensive training camp in Kuwait, which featured daily morning and evening sessions under the supervision of Abdel-Aal, technical advisor Majed Khan, and fitness coach Ahmed Al-Sayed.

They were supported in training and matches by senior national team players Ammar Al-Tamimi, Ali Al-Ramzi, Adhbi Jumaan, and Abdul-Rahman Al-Maghribi.

Al-Habib underlined the significance of the upcoming championship, noting that it brings together some of the top junior squash talents from around the world.

He expressed confidence in the Kuwaiti players' ability to progress to the advanced stages, highlighting their promising potential and the continued growth of the sport at home.



The Kuwaiti squash delegation.

Al-Qabandi resigns; Alves leads first training with 20 players

Al-Alwan on Al-Arabi's radar after double signing

KUWAIT CITY, July 16: Al-Arabi strengthened its squad ahead of the new season by signing two key foreign players: Ugandan international Kenneth Simakola and French-Guinean midfielder Hassimi Fadiga. They join the club's existing foreign professionals, Nigerians Aiyanu Iwuala and Christopher John. Meanwhile, negotiations are underway with Jordanian international Ali Al-Alwan, who has also attracted interest from Iraqi club Al-Zawraa.

Simakola, 22, played last season for Tunisia's Club Africain and has experience with several African clubs, including Villa SC, BUL FC, Gaddafi FC, and Sopotya United. Primarily a defensive midfielder, he can also play as a center-back or right-back. A right-footed player, Simakola has been a part of the Ugandan national team since 2022, earning 19 caps to date.

Fadiga, 28, is an attacking midfielder versatile enough to operate on either wing. He has competed in various tiers of French football and recently played for Levski Sofia in



Alves welcomes a player before the start of training.

Bulgaria's top division, where he appeared in 51 matches, scoring 7 goals and assisting twice.

Al-Arabi commenced its pre-season training two days ago, with 20 players participating in the first session. Portuguese coach Marco Alves led the training, supported by his technical team. New signing Ha-

mad Al-Harbi also took part in his debut session with the club.

The team will continue training until it embarks on a two-week training camp in the UAE starting July 25, during which it will play three friendly matches. Afterwards, Al-Arabi will travel to the Maldives for a crucial AFC Challenge League

playoff against Maziya Sports Club on August 12, a decisive match for progression to the group stage.

Club official Abdullah Al-Hayri thanked the players for their dedication at the opening training and confirmed that Nigerian forward Christopher John is expected to join the squad today, with Fadiga arriving tomorrow.

Al-Hayri expressed strong confidence in coach Alves, stating, "The management trusts the coach fully. He brings valuable experience, and we have seen lesser-known coaches succeed here in Kuwait." Alves has already reviewed over ten of Al-Arabi's matches from last season and is well-acquainted with the squad's strengths and weaknesses.

In a notable development, Khaled Al-Qabandi resigned from his position as Head of Football Operations due to personal reasons. A replacement has yet to be announced.

Al-Qabandi remarked, "I gave my all last season, but due to other commitments, I have decided to step down and allow someone else to take over."

Kuwait Shooting Club trains 1,000 athletes

New program aims to build next generation of champs



KUNA photo

Kuwait Shooting Club training course in progress.

KUWAIT CITY, July 16, (KUNA): President of the Kuwait Shooting Club, Duaij Al-Otaibi, affirmed that the club's organization of a training course at the Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Olympic Shooting Range, in cooperation with the Public Authority for Sports, aligns with its strategic goal of expanding the shooting community and identifying promising Kuwaiti talents.

Speaking to KUNA yesterday, Al-Otaibi revealed that the course will host more than 1,000 male and female participants, covering all Olympic shooting disciplines — shotgun, rifle, and Olympic archery. The two-month program aims to develop participants' skills using the latest training methodologies under the supervision of internationally accredited coaches.

Al-Otaibi highlighted the importance of collaboration with the Public Authority for Sports, emphasizing the club's commitment to supporting youth passionate about the sport by helping them improve their technical abilities and productively utilizing their time during the summer break. He commended the Authority — particularly acting Director General Bashar Abdullah and his deputies — for their support in facilitating the program's success.

He also praised the strong commitment and skill shown by the young shooters in the course, noting it as a promising sign of a new generation of Kuwaiti champions. These athletes, he said, are well-positioned to continue the country's legacy of achievements in Olympic, international, continental, and regional competitions.

Al-Otaibi concluded by expressing his gratitude to Kuwait's political leadership for its ongoing support and encouragement of shooting sports, reaffirming the club's dedication to fulfilling its mission and achieving continued progress.

Sheikh Joaan officially announces candidacy for president of the Olympic Council of Asia

DOHA, July 16: Sheikh Joaan bin Hamad Al Thani, President of the Qatar Olympic Committee and First Vice President of the Association of National Olympic Committees (ANOC), formally declared his candidacy yesterday for the presidency of the Olympic Council of Asia. His decision underscores his commitment to advancing sports development across Asia and promoting greater unity and cohesion on the continent in the years to come.

This announcement comes following the opening of the nomination period for the Asian Olympic Council presidential elections on July 15, in



Sheikh Joaan bin Hamad Al Thani, President of the Qatar Olympic Committee.

preparation for the upcoming General Assembly scheduled for January 2026 in Tashkent, Uzbekistan.

Sheikh Joaan extended his sincere gratitude to the current Council president, Raja Randhir Singh, lauding his significant contributions and leadership in promoting Asian sports during his tenure.

He praised Singh's ongoing commitment to strengthening collaboration and teamwork among Asian National Olympic Committees and fully supports the Executive Board's decision to appoint Singh as Honorary Lifetime President of the Council, honoring his enduring legacy and exceptional service to the Asian Olympic movement.

Al-Faraj & Ashkanani selected for Asian Youth Championship

By Hassan Mosa

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, July 16: Kuwaiti referees Hamad Al-Faraj and Hussein Ashkanani arrived in China yesterday to officiate matches at the Asian Women's Youth Handball Championship, scheduled from July 18 to 28.

Their selection reflects the Asian Handball Federation's confidence in the quality and expertise of Kuwaiti referees. Al-Faraj and Ashkanani bring extensive experience and a high level of competency, which will contribute significantly to the successful execution of the tournament's refereeing duties.

In club news, Burgan Club has signed player Nasser Al-Faraj on a two-season deal to bolster the first handball team ahead of the new season. This move follows the club's earlier signing of Serbian national team standout Jovica Nikolic as the team's third foreign professional, joining Japanese player Kasuke Yasuhira and Croatian Stipe Mandalinic.

The club also renewed the contracts of key local players, including goalkeeper Mahdi Khan, Hamoud Al-Adwani, and Ahmed Mazal. Additionally, national coach



The two Kuwaiti referees Al-Faraj and Ashkanani

Hussein Habib will continue at the helm, following a contract renewal.

Burgan Club made history last season by finishing second in the Premier League for the first time, securing qualification for the upcoming AFC Club Championship.

Charlotte to host MLS All-Star game in 2026 for first time

Mercado brace fires Independiente past Vasco

RIO DE JANEIRO, July 16, (Agencies): Patrik Mercado scored twice as Independiente del Valle cruised to a 4-0 home win over 10-man Vasco da Gama in the Copa Sudamericana playoff round.

The Brazilian side suffered a major blow in the 12th minute when defender Lucas Piton was shown a straight red card for a dangerous challenge on Darwin Guagua.

Mateo Carabajal put the Ecuadorian team ahead with a close-range strike just before halftime and Mercado doubled the lead with a clinical finish into the bottom-left corner shortly after the restart.

Claudio Spinelli tapped home after combining with Ronald Briones and Mercado put the result beyond doubt by drilling a shot into the top-left corner eight minutes from time.

The decisive second leg will be played in Rio de Janeiro on



Juan Cazares of Ecuador's Independiente del Valle, left, and Joao Victor of Brazil's Vasco da Gama fight for the ball during a Copa Sudamericana playoff soccer match at Olympic Stadium in Quito, Ecuador. (AP)

July 22. The winner on aggregate will advance to the round of 16.

Elsewhere in the Copa Sudamericana on Tuesday, Central Cordoba was held to a goalless home draw by Cerro Largo and Bahia drew 0-0 at America de Cali.

Charlotte will host the Major League Soccer All-Star game for the first time in 2026, according to a person familiar with the decision.

The person spoke on condition of anonymity because the announcement has not been made official. MLS commissioner Don Garber is expected to confirm the venue on Wednesday at a news conference in Charlotte.

Charlotte FC, owned by Carolina Panthers owner David Tepper, was named the league's 28th franchise in 2019 and began play in the league in 2022.

The game will be played at Bank of America Stadium, which is also home to the Panthers.

Charlotte has recently hosted Copa America and Club World Cup games.

This year's All-Star game is set for Austin, Texas, between the MLS All-Stars and the Liga MX All-Stars.

The opponents for the 2026 All-Star game will be announced at a later date.

Los Angeles FC defender Aaron Long will miss the rest of the season after having surgery to repair a ruptured left Achilles.

The team - which said the surgery was successful - made the announcement on Tuesday, three days after Long was injured in the 76th minute of a 2-0 win over FC Dallas.

The 32-year-old Long is in his third season with LAFC and has started all 15 games this year, scoring one goal.

He's started 60 games for the club over the past three seasons.

Long has also made 35 career appearances with the U.S. men's national team, with three goals and two assists.

He was part of the 2022 World Cup roster and last played for the national team in 2023 at the Gold Cup.

LAFC is currently in sixth place in the MLS Western Conference standings with a 9-5-5 record.

Audit finds \$21m financial irregularities in Pakistan Cricket Board

ISLAMABAD, July 16, (AP): An audit report has found financial irregularities to the tune of more than rupees 6 billion (\$21 million) and governance issues within the Pakistan Cricket Board dating back two years.

The Auditor General of Pakistan's report for the 2023-24 financial year was published in The News and highlighted the non-recovery of outstanding sponsorship worth rupees 5.3 billion (\$18.6 million) as the major discrepancy identified.

PCB chairman Mohsin Navqi is the third person in four years to lead the sport's national

administration, following Ramiz Raja and Zaka Ashraf. He is also a government minister.

The report also questioned the rupees 63.39 million (\$220,000) the PCB spent on meals for police and law enforcement personnel assigned for the security of foreign teams during international matches in Pakistan.

The auditors said providing security was the responsibility of governments, and disagreed with the PCB's explanation that visiting international teams were given extra safety guarantees that required heavy police deployment.

The audit report also flagged the hiring of

three junior regional coaches who didn't meet the eligibility criteria and the appointment of a media director outside the proper procedure.

Compensation paid to cover utility charges, fuel and accommodation for the PCB chairman between February and June of last year was also highlighted as unauthorized because Navqi received that as part of his government benefits.

The auditors rejected the cricket board's response that the PCB chairman "is authorized for utility expense as per bylaws"

The PCB is yet to comment on the audit report.

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South Korea's head coach Shin Sang-woo, second from bottom, celebrate with his team players and members during the award ceremony after winning the East Asian Football Federation E-1 Women's Football Championship at Suwon World Cup Stadium in Suwon, South Korea. (AP)

# Sports

Blues wrap up training camp in Tunisia

## Kuwait heads to Bahrain for inaugural West Asian Volleyball Championship

By Hassan Mosa  
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, July 16: The Kuwaiti national volleyball team wrapped up its training camp in Tunisia and is scheduled to arrive in Bahrain today to take part in the inaugural West Asian Volleyball Championship, which begins tomorrow and runs through July 26.

During the camp, Kuwait played three friendly matches – securing victories against Tunisia and Algeria, while losing their final match against Libya 3-1.

The training camp successfully achieved its main objectives, particularly improving player readiness and fostering on-court cohesion. Under the guidance of Argentine head coach Julian Alvarez and assistant coach Zaid Al-Kazemi, the technical staff focused on boosting team chemistry, tactical understanding, and building the experience of the squad, which includes several promising young players.

The squad features 14 players: Abdulaziz Najm, Yousef Mandil, Fahad Saad, Abdunnasser Al-Enezi, Abdullah Al-Enezi, Abdulrahman Al-Mutawa, Saud Al-Duwisan, Ahmed Al-Munayyes, Rashid Anbar, Athbi Malik, Fares Suleiman, Talal Abdulrazzaq, Ibrahim Mandil, and Abdulrahman Mohammed.

Kuwait has been placed in Group A, alongside Saudi Arabia, Qatar, and Oman, while Group B includes Bahrain (the host), Jordan, the UAE, and Lebanon.

Kuwait's campaign begins tomorrow against Oman, followed by a matchup with Saudi Arabia the next day. The team will then conclude its group stage fixtures on Monday with a crucial match against Qatar.

The championship was initially scheduled for last year but was postponed to this summer in coordination with the International Volleyball Federation to ensure its inclusion in the official world rankings. According to Mohammed Salem Al-Kuwari, Secretary-General of the West Asian Volleyball Federation, this move aims to elevate the status of the participating teams and provide them with valuable technical and motivational momentum.



Kuwaiti players pose for a group photo before playing Libya.

## Uncertainty looms over Arab Cup

Arab Football Federation considers postponing 2025 edition

**RABAT, July 16: New reports have surfaced regarding the status of the Arab Cup football tournament, originally scheduled for December next year.**

According to Moroccan newspaper Al-Mountakhab, the Arab Football Federation is leaning toward postponing the 2025 Arab Cup due to a heavily congested international calendar.

The report highlights that the upcoming 2025 Africa Cup of Nations, 2026 World Cup qualifiers, and the physical and health toll on players throughout last season may adversely affect their performance and well-being.

The local organizing committee had earlier announced that the tournament's prize fund would exceed \$36.5 million, setting a new benchmark and positioning the Arab Cup among the world's premier international competitions.

The draw, held in Doha last May, placed Kuwait against Mauritania in a playoff match set for late November. The winner will advance to the group stage (Group C), which also features Egypt, Jordan, and the United Arab Emirates.

The Arab Cup has re-emerged as a significant tournament after a long break since 2009, making a strong comeback in 2021 when Qatar hosted the event under FIFA's supervision. It was subsequently included in the international calendar to be held every four years.

Kuwait Olympic team gears up for tough friendly against Egypt



Players training for the friendly against Egypt.

CAIRO, July 16: The Kuwaiti Olympic football team is set to face the Egyptian national team today at 6:30 pm in Cairo, playing their third friendly match of the overseas training camp.

The team kicked off the camp with a 3-1 defeat against Kafr El Zayat Club, followed by a 0-0 draw against El Ra'a Club. Their final friendly against Egypt will take place on Sunday, after which the squad will return to Kuwait to begin a new domestic training program.

This camp is part of the preparations for the AFC U-23 Asian Cup qualifiers,

scheduled to be hosted by Saudi Arabia in January. Kuwait will compete in Group B alongside Japan, Afghanistan, and Myanmar, with Myanmar hosting the group matches from September 1 to 9.

In parallel, Kuwait's youth national team has launched its training camp in the Czech Republic ahead of upcoming competitions. The coaching staff is conducting morning and evening training sessions and arranging several friendly matches to assess the players' readiness.

Scientists urge shift from summer scheduling

## FIFA faces rising heat challenges ahead of World Cup

GENEVA, July 16, (AP): Soccer had a fierce reckoning with heat at the recently concluded FIFA Club World Cup in the United States - a sweltering preview of what players and fans may face when the U.S. co-hosts the World Cup with Mexico and Canada next summer.

With temperatures rising worldwide, scientists warn that staging the World Cup and other soccer tournaments in the Northern Hemisphere summer is getting increasingly dangerous for both players and spectators. Some suggest that FIFA may have to consider adjusting the soccer calendar to reduce the risk of heat-related illnesses.

"The deeper we go in the decade, the greater the risk without considering more dramatic measures, such as playing in the winter months and/or cooler latitudes," said Prof. Piers Forster, director of the Priestley Centre for Climate Futures in Leeds, England. "I'm getting increasingly worried that we are only one heatwave away from a sporting tragedy, and I would like to see governing bodies lean into the climate and health science."

Tournament soccer in June and July is a tradition going back to the first World Cup in 1930.

Since then, the three-month period of June, July, and August globally has warmed by 1.05 degrees Celsius (1.89 degrees Fahrenheit), according to the U.S. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. Meanwhile, European summer temperatures have



In this file photo, Auckland City's Gerard Garriga cools off under the sprinklers during a water break in the Club World Cup Group C soccer match between Auckland City and Boca Juniors in Nashville, Tenn. (AP)

increased by 1.81 degrees C. The rate of warming has accelerated since the 1990s.

Climate scientists say that's a factor that needs to be considered when playing high-intensity outdoor sports like soccer.

"If you want to play football for 10 hours a day, they'll have to be the hours of the early morning and late evening," climatologist Friederike Otto from Imperial College, London, told The Associated Press in an email, "if you don't want to have players and fans die from heatstroke or get severely ill with heat exhaustion."

Extreme heat and thunderstorms made an impact on FIFA's newly expanded tournament for club teams. The Club World Cup was held in 11 American cities from June 14 to July 13.

FIFA adapted by tweaking its extreme heat protocol to include extra breaks in play, more field-side water, and cooling the team benches with air fans and more shade.

Still, Chelsea midfielder Enzo Fernández said the heat made him dizzy and urged FIFA to avoid afternoon kickoffs at the World Cup next year.

The global soccer players' union, FIFPRO, has warned that six of the 16

World Cup cities next year are at "extremely high risk" for heat stress.

FIFA president Gianni Infantino addressed the heat concerns on Saturday, saying the handful of World Cup stadiums that are covered would be used for daytime games next year.

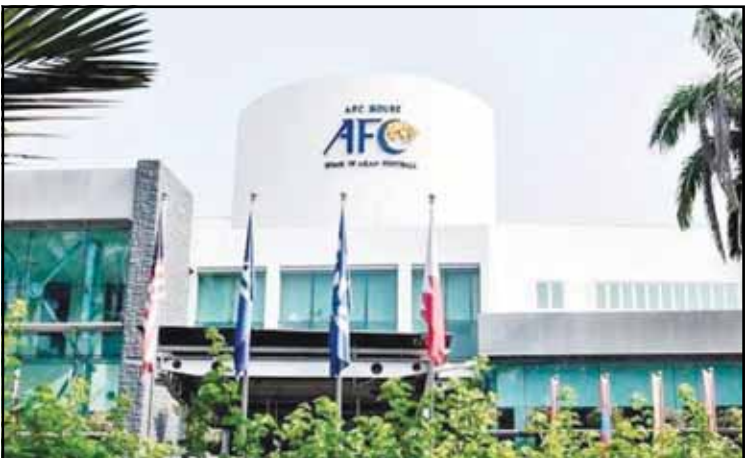
Extreme heat could become an even bigger challenge at the following World Cup in 2030, which will be co-hosted by Spain, Portugal, and Morocco. Games are scheduled to be played in the afternoons and early evenings from mid-June to mid-July. All three countries have already seen temperatures rise above 40 degrees C (well above 100 Fahrenheit) this summer.

FIFA downplayed the heat risk in its in-house evaluation of the 2030 World Cup bid, saying "weather conditions are difficult to predict with the current development in global and local climate, but are unlikely to affect the health of players or other participants."

The physical effects of playing 90 minutes of soccer in direct sunshine during the hottest part of the day can be severe and potentially result in hyperthermia, abnormally high body temperatures.

"When players experience hyperthermia, they also experience an increase in cardiovascular strain," said Julien Périard of the University of Canberra.

"If core temperature increases excessively, exertional heat illness can occur," leading to muscle cramping, heat exhaustion, and even life-threatening heat stroke, he said.



The Asian Football Confederation headquarters in Malaysia.

## Asian teams 'await' draw for 2026 World Cup playoff stage

KUALA LUMPUR, July 16: The Asian Football Confederation (AFC) will hold the draw for the 2026 World Cup Asian playoff round today at its headquarters in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. The 2026 World Cup is set to be hosted by the United States, Mexico, and Canada.

Following the conclusion of the third qualifying round last month, six of the eight direct World Cup spots allocated to Asia have been confirmed. The teams finishing third and fourth in each group – Indonesia, Iraq, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates – will now compete in the upcoming playoff round, scheduled from October 8 to 14.

The playoff stage will see the six teams divided into two groups of three. Only the winner of each group will earn direct qualification to the 2026 World Cup, as announced on the official AFC website.

Matches in each group will be played in a single round-robin format at centralized venues. Qatar and Saudi Arabia have been confirmed as hosts for these matches.

Teams will be seeded into three pots based on the FIFA rankings released on June 13, which were used for the draw. Qatar and Saudi Arabia, as hosts, will be kept apart in the group stage.

**The seeding pots are:**

- Pot 1: Qatar, Saudi Arabia
- Pot 2: Iraq, United Arab Emirates
- Pot 3: Oman, Indonesia

After the group stage, the two teams finishing second in their respective groups will face off in a two-legged playoff on November 13 and 18. The winner will advance to the intercontinental playoff, offering one last opportunity to qualify for the World Cup.

A subsequent draw will determine the home and away teams for these matches after the playoff group draw.

## Gold for Wellbrock and Johnson after Singapore water scare

SINGAPORE, July 16, (AP): Open water competition at the World Swimming Championships went off Wednesday after two postponements because of water-quality problems at Sentosa, the island area on the coast.

Florian Wellbrock of Germany won the men's 10-kilometer race in 1 hour, 59 minutes, and 55.50 seconds. Gregorio Paltrinieri of Italy was almost four seconds behind in second place, and Kyle Lee of Australia was third in 2:00.10.30.

Wellbrock took gold in the Tokyo Olympics in the 10-kilometer race and was the bronze medalist there at 1,500 meters in the pool. This is his eighth gold in world championship events.

Moesha Johnson of Australia won the women's 10-kilometer race in 2:07.51.30. Ginevra Taddeucci of Italy took silver in 2:07.55.70, with bronze for Lisa Pou of Monaco in 2:07.57.50.

Johnson was the silver medalist in this event a year ago at the Paris Olympics. She also took gold in the 2024 Doha worlds and was the bronze medalist two years ago in Fukuoka, Japan.

The open water swimming program had been initially scheduled to open on Tuesday.

Event organizers said water-quality samples taken on Tuesday afternoon showed "a significant improvement with levels of E. coli falling between the ranges of good and excellent" in regulations set by the governing body, World Aquatics.

The Mayo Clinic says that "E. coli bacteria normally live in the intestines of healthy people and animals. Most types of E. coli are harmless or cause relatively brief diarrhea."

It said a few strains can cause "severe stomach cramps, bloody diarrhea, and vomiting." Exposure is often from contaminated water that may contain hu-

man and animal waste.

The open water events in the Seine River in last year's Paris Olympics were a constant cause of concern. The Tokyo Olympics also had problems in 2021 because of warm water in a shallow bay and related pollution issues.

Water pollution was a major problem in the Rio de Janeiro Olympics, where pollution levels were often high on Copacabana Beach, the venue for distance swimming, and in Guanabara Bay, the venue for sailing.

Other open water races in Singapore are set for Friday, Saturday, and Sunday.

Water polo competition at the World Championships is underway at an indoor venue.

The main event of the championships is eight days of swimming competition in the pool, which opens on July 27